

AMERICAN GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Geographical Society Awards Wrigley-Fairchild Prize

Description: The Wrigley-Fairchild Prize, awarded by the American Geographical Society (AGS), is one of several prestigious honors given by the Society. Dr. Cynthia Gorman, Assistant Professor at the Department of Geology and Geography at West Virginia University, will receive the prize during the AGS Fall Symposium, to be held virtually next month, November 2020.

[New York City, NY] – [October 20, 2020] — The American Geographical Society announced today that Dr. Cynthia Gorman, Assistant Professor at the Department of Geology and Geography at West Virginia University, has been selected to receive the eighth Wrigley-Fairchild Prize. The prize will be presented in November of 2020 during the Society's annual Fall Symposium to be held online due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Gorman's *Geographical Review* paper "Singled Out: Scaling Violence and Social Groups as Legal Borderwork in U.S. Asylum Law" was selected as the winner from 25 articles published in *Geographical Review* that were under consideration for the award.

The Wrigley-Fairchild Prize was established in 1994 as a way to promote scholarly writing among new scholars. The prize is given every year to the author of the best article by an early-career scholar published in the most recent three volumes of the *Geographic Review*. It is named for two storied editors of the journal, Gladis Wrigley and Wilma Fairchild, whose combined editorships covered 60 years of publication.

"Cynthia Gorman's article demonstrates how geographical research reveals the basis of many pressing social issues. In this instance, she examines how different interpretations of the scale of political asylum ends-up denying many refugees the protections they seek and deserve. Gorman's article shows why and how the law is intertwined with socio-spatial conflicts," stated editor-in-chief of *Geographical Review*, Dr. David Kaplan.

Dr. Gorman is an Assistant Professor at West Virginia University in the Department of Geology and Geography. Her research examines the spatialities of political asylum law, including how layered histories of legal decision-making shape the geographies of contemporary border enforcement and human mobility. She was recently awarded the Wilma Dykeman "Faces of Appalachia" Post-doctoral Research Fellowship from the Appalachian Studies Association and a National Geographic Society Explorers Grant to study the experience of refugees who are negotiating bordering practices and social life in Appalachia and the South.

The American Geographical Society (AGS) is a 21st-century learning society dedicated to the advancement of geographic thinking, knowledge, and understanding across business, government, academe, social sectors, and most importantly with teachers and students. Established in 1851, AGS is the oldest professional geographical organization in the United States. It is recognized worldwide as a pioneer in geographical research and education for over 169 years. The mission of AGS is to advance and promote geography in business, government, science, and education. Our goal is to enhance the nation's geographic literacy to engender sound public policy, national security, and human well-being worldwide. AGS seeks to engage the American public, from its youngest to its oldest citizens, with new and amazing ways to understand and characterize our changing world. The Society maintains its headquarters in New York City.



Dr. Cynthia Gorman

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