

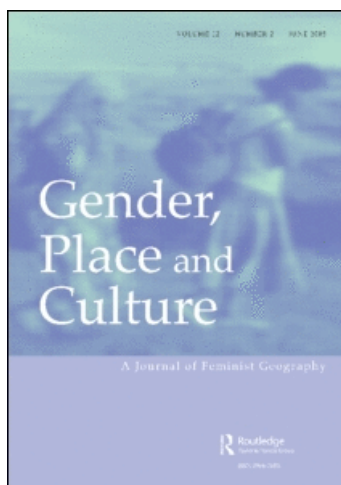
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Winner of the 2007 *Gender, Place and Culture* Award for New and Emerging Scholars: Alena Rochovská

In 2007 the editorial team introduced the *Gender, Place and Culture* annual award for new and emerging scholars with funds supplied by Taylor & Francis (please see the 2008 GPC Award announcement and call for applications in this issue). We are pleased to announce that Dr. Alena Rochovská, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, was the 2007 award winner. Congratulations Alena and best wishes for your continued work in the field of feminist geography in Slovakia!

Alena used the award to present a paper at the following conference:

Sustainable public places. Feminist perspectives on appropriation, representations and planning of public spaces (International Geographical Union (IGU), Commission on Gender and Geography)

Title and abstract of Alena's paper:

ALENA ROCHOVSKÁ & MATEJ BLAŽEK

Gender and changing public spaces in post-socialist housing estates: the case of Petržalka, Bratislava

ABSTRACT Petržalka, a district of Bratislava, capital city of Slovakia, is the largest housing estate in Central Europe. In the context of economic, political, social, and cultural changes bonded to post-socialist transformation processes in Central European cities, Petržalka is still specific by virtue of its detachment from the rest of the city in physical, social, historical and cultural terms. Significant is the lower quality of housing, income inequalities, low job opportunities, social stratification and a historical traditional label of being a 'concrete jungle', with aspects of alienation, anonymity, criminality, etc.

There is a relatively sufficient amount of literature concerning various aspects of post-socialist transformation, even concerning gender issues, mainly in relation to economic changes. However, there is a lack of studies focusing on everydayness and micro-level livelihoods in city environments from a gender perspective. This paper aims to deal with the issue of public spaces in the context of gender relations from two independent positions. Applying approaches from social and cultural geography we want to link two separate studies into a mutual context of gender constellation in public spaces in the dynamically changing environment of post-socialist urban environments. First, we are concerned with how women's affiliation with the household is projected in the 'outside' area of public spaces. Second, we explore how gender is embodied in everyday performative production of public spaces by youth hip-hop subculture.

We want to contribute to scientific discussion in three ways. First, we propose opening and exploring hidden social and cultural contexts of gender subsumed in the everyday

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constellation of public spaces. Second, we attempt to evaluate specific approaches of social and cultural geography in the research area of post-socialist urban transformation. Third, there is the aspect of the authors reflecting on the interconnection of their initially independent studies.

Biographical note

Alena Rochovská graduated from the Faculty of Nature Sciences, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia where she studied geography and mathematics. She finished her PhD in 2005 with a thesis related to the feminisation of poverty in Slovakia in the period of the post-socialist transformation. In her current position she works as a lecturer of social geography at the Department of Human Geography and Demography. During 2005–06 she was based at Queen Mary's, University of London, where she closely co-operated on the ESRC project on Social Exclusion, Spaces of Household Economic Practice and Post Socialism with Professor Adrian Smith. This period had a strong positive influence on her research orientation.

Currently in Slovakia, Alena is 'struggling' for social (and especially feminist) geography, trying to bring qualitative research methods to human geography and introducing the Anglo-American view on social geography to the Slovak geographical community. Last year she succeeded in publishing a book entitled *Feminist Geographies* together with Matej Blažek.

Within her research she is interested mainly in socio-geographical issues: social inequalities, poverty, feminism, and disadvantaged groups of people.