

Dr John Round

Senior Lecturer in Human Geography

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About

John Round is a socio-economic geographer whose main research interest is concerned with how people/households develop tactics to cope with marginality in all its forms. His PhD examined how senior citizens survive in the Russian far north east city of Magadan in the face of extreme economic marginalization and hostile climatic conditions. After this he researched the experiences of middle aged men in St Petersburg in relation to changing notions of work in the early post-Soviet period. From this he developed an interest in informal economic practices as a coping tactic to economic exclusion and this led to a large scale project, funded by the ESRC, exploring the nature and role of the informal economy in Moscow and Kyiv concluding that informality is an integral part of the post-Soviet everyday.

John's research is influenced by the work of Lefebvre in relation to (non)theories of the everyday and state/society relationships and de Certeau with regard to the construction, and difference between, the strategies and tactics of everyday life. He is currently working on a major long-term project, supported by the Open Society Foundation, to explore the everyday experiences of labour migrants in Moscow and Kazan from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. This project, undertaken alongside Dr Irina Kuznetsova from Kazan Federal University and Professor Sergei Sergei Ryazantsev, of the Russian Academy of Sciences, examines the problems labour migrants face in Russia and the impact of migration on those remaining at 'home'. It is particularly interested in how migrants access social welfare, such as health services; the precarious nature of their employment; problems with registration and housing and interactions with the state.

He is currently spending most of his time at the National Research University, Higher School of Economics in Moscow, where he is part of the Faculty of Sociology and the Centre of Advanced Studies. He recently completed a five month fellowship at the University of Hokkaido and will be undertaking a fellowship in 2014 at the University of Helsinki.

Qualifications

PhD Geography 'The Social Costs of Transition. A Case Study of Magadan Oblast' (University of Birmingham, Geography) 2003

MSc World Space Economy (University of Birmingham, Geography) 1998

BA Geography (University of Liverpool) 1995

Biography

John joined the school in 2007 as a Lecturer in Human Geography and became a Senior Lecturer in 2010. Since 2011 he has spent most of his time as an Associate Professor at the National Research University, Higher School of Economics in Moscow. He has also spent five months at the University of Hokkaido as a senior visiting research fellow during 2012 and will undertake a similar position at the University of Helsinki during 2014.

Previous to moving to the University of Birmingham he held a similar post, and an ESRC postdoctoral fellowship, at the University of Leicester. Prior to this he completed a PhD in 2003 entitled 'The social costs of Transition: A case study of Magadan Oblast', in the University of Birmingham's School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences. This followed an MSc in Human Geography in 1998, from the same school, and a BA in Human Geography from the University of Liverpool in 1995.

Teaching

While currently spending most of his time in Moscow John contributes to the following modules in GEES;

Berlin Field Trip

GM333 Post-Socialist Transformation: Moscow

GM406 Critical Globalisations

Postgraduate supervision

John has contributed to the supervision of the following students;

Rebecca Morris (2009) 'Bloody geographies: relating, connecting, giving and caring in blood. Donation and transfusion'

Paul Richardson (2010) The Southern Kuril Islands and their Role in Defining and Contesting Contemporary Russian Identity

Katsiaryna Padvalkava (2012) 'The challenges of retirement in Belarus'

Arshad Isakjee (2013) 'Under The Microscope: Identity, Politics and Governance of Young Muslims in Birmingham'

Darren Roberts (completing revisions, 2013) 'Analysing the reciprocal relationships between music, place, and power: an examination of local music practices in Birmingham, UK'

Thom Davies (to be submitted 2013) 'Social Fallout: marginalized communities and state-society relations in post-Chernobyl Ukraine'

Olga Verbilovich (Higher School of Economics, Moscow) 'The construction of disability in Russia'

Ivan Klimov (Higher School of Economics, Moscow) 'The experience of higher education in Russia'

Research

My main research areas are currently;

'The everyday experiences of Central Asian Migrants in Russia' (supported by the Open Society Foundation). This research looks at the everyday experiences of labour migrants from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan employ in Moscow and Kazan. This includes the formal/informal nature of their work, their exploitation by enterprises and the state and the entrepreneurial behavior that some migrants develop. It also looks at how migrants organize themselves through informal networks and more formal diaspora organizations in order to find work and to provide protection. Furthermore, it examines the role of remittances and the economic impact of the migration on the donor countries.

'Entrepreneurship in Russia: motivations, barriers and opportunities'. This project looks at the current experiences of entrepreneurs in Russia, looking at motivations for entrepreneurship, the challenges they face and their tactics to negate them, the benefits of such economic behavior and their future goals. Particular emphasis is given to such activities within the creative economy sphere and the creation of new economic spaces within Moscow. The research to date has shown that places within Moscow that appear to stimulate creative economic activity are exclusionary due to extremely high prices. Russia's high levels of informality (such as cash in hand work, corruption etc.) provides many challenges to entrepreneurs thus the project looks at how they provide barriers to enterprise growth and state attempts to combat the issue. The research also has a comparative regional element as it examines the above issues in Moscow, which was the lowest ranked city in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Survey in Russia, and Tatarstan which was one of the highest ranked regions.

'The nature of 'political' protest in Russia'. This research examines the nature of the current protests in Moscow, and why protests are not occurring in other Russian cities. It reveals that often the motivation for protest is concerned more with the urban and economic environment for those who could be classed as 'middle class' rather than broader notions of social justice. For example, there is frustration that they cannot buy property in Moscow due to the extremely high prices or they cannot set up their own enterprises due to the city's high levels of informality. This marginalisation from the urban in Moscow leads to great frustration as it is Russia's only city that can offer an international style lifestyle to this group

The above projects are alongside my long running interest in the coping tactics of households in Russia. This explores the practices that people employ to cope with economic and social marginalisation; how they approach state/society interactions; the nature of corruption and rent-seeking in everyday life; access to health care and education and the nature of (non)protest in Russia.

Other activities

International Editor for The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy

Academic Lead for International Laboratory for Comparative Urban Studies: Kazan Federal University

I am currently acting as an international expert on the 'Пересматривая социальную политику на постсоветском пространстве: идеологии, акторы и культуры' (Revision of Social Policy in Post-Soviet Space: ideologies, actors and cultures) seminar series run by the Saratov Centre for Social Policy and Gender Research, 2010 – 2013. The aim of this course is to support the teaching development of young Russian academics, especially in the context of research led teaching. Part of this role also includes running classes on publishing in English language journals.

I am a member of the ESRC's peer review council. I also fulfil similar roles for the Russian Federal government's humanities research fund and for the Ministry of Science for the government of Kazakhstan.

I am the International Academic Advisor for the EU Centre VOICES at Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University.

I am the academic lead for the CARUS (Central Asia to Russia migration) migration network which brings together Russian academics, policy makers and NGOs working on labour migration issues.

Publications

Books

Williams, C., **Round, J.** and Rodgers, P. (2013) *The role of informal economies in the post-Soviet world: the end of transition?* Routledge, Oxford.

Дж. Раунда и И.Б. Кузнецовой-Моренко (Под ред) (2013) *Новые вызовы городского развития: глобальное и локальное. Коллективная монография.* Под ред... - Казань: Издательство Казанского университета.

Prokrovsky, N. and **Round, J.** (Eds.) (2011) *Virtualization of inter-university and academic communication: Methods, structure, communities,* Higher School of Economics Publishing House, Moscow.

Peer Reviewed Journal Articles and Book Chapters

Round, J. (2013) *Transformações urbanas de Moscou: Em direção a uma cidade do mundo pós-soviético.* In Veloso, S, Erthal Abdenur, A. and Esteves, P. (Eds.) *As Cidades e os BRICS,* Centro de Estudos e Pesquisas, Rio de Janeiro.

Round, J. and Kuznetsova, I. (2013, forthcoming) *Russia's move towards protest: why now and challenges for the future.* *Social Movement Studies.*

Kuznetsova, I. and **Round, J.** (2013, forthcoming) *Communities and Social Work in Russia: The role of religious welfare provision in everyday life in Russia's Tatarstan region.* *International social work.*

Round, J. and Williams, C. (2012) *Coping with the social costs of 'transition': everyday life in post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine.* In White, S. and Moore, C. (Eds.). *Post-Soviet Politics.* Sage Publications, London.

Williams, C., Nadin, S., Rodgers, P. and **Round, J.** (2012) *Rethinking the nature of community economies: some lessons from post-Soviet Ukraine.* *Community Development journal* 47 (2): 216-231.

Round, J. (2012) *Russia's forgotten middle-aged men.* In Salmenniemi, S. (Ed.) *Rethinking Class in Russia.* Ashgate, London. pp. 241 – 257.

Williams, C., **Round, J.** and Rodgers, P. (2011) *Explaining the normality of informal employment in Ukraine: A product of exit or exclusion?* *American Journal of Economics and Sociology.*

Williams, C. and **Round J** (2011) Beyond competing theories of the hidden economy: Some lessons from Moscow. *Journal of Economic Studies* 38(2): 171–185.

Round, J., Williams, C. and Rodgers, P. (2010) The Role of Domestic Food Production in Everyday Life in post-Soviet Ukraine. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*. Vol. 100, No. 5, pp. 1197 – 1211.

Раунд, Дж. Уильямс, К, and Роджерс, П. (2010) Повседневные тактики и пространства власти в повседневной жизни: роль неформальных экономик в постсоветской Украине и аспекты социальной политики. *Журнал исследований социальной политики*. Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 405 – 424.

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2010) Explaining Participation in Undeclared Work. *European Societies*. Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 391 – 418.

Round, J. and Williams, C. (2010) Coping with the social costs of 'transition': everyday life in post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine. *European Urban and Regional Studies*. Vol. 17, No. 2, pp. 183 –196.

Moran, D. and **Round, J.** (2010) "A Riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma": Teaching post-socialist transformation to UK students in Moscow. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. Vol. 34, No. 2, pp. 265 – 282.

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2010) 'Spatial variations in the character of off-the-books entrepreneurship: some lessons from a study of contrasting districts of Moscow'. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business*. Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 287 – 300.

Round, J. (2009) *The boundaries between informal and formal work*. Beyond Current Horizons: Work and Employment. Report written for Futurelab and the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Available at <http://www.beyondcurrenthorizons.org.uk/the-boundaries-between-informal-and-formal-work/>

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2009) Explaining participation in off-the-books entrepreneurship in Ukraine: a gendered evaluation. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*. Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 497 – 513.

Round, J. and Rodgers, P. (2009) 'The Problems of Corruption in Post-Soviet Ukraine's Higher Education Sector'. *International Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 80 – 95.

Williams, C., **Round, J.** and Rodgers, P. (2009) Evaluating the Motives of Informal Entrepreneurs: Some Lessons From Ukraine. *Journal of Developmental Entrepreneurship*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp 59 – 71.

Round, J. (2009) Transitional economies. In Kitchin, R. and Thrift, N. (Eds.) *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*. Elsevier, Oxford. pp. 355 – 360.

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2008) 'The Prevalence and Impacts of 'Envelope Wages' in East-Central Europe', *Journal of East-West Business*, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 299 – 323.

Round, J., Williams, C and Rodgers, P. (2008) Everyday Tactics and Spaces of Power: the role of informal economies in post-Soviet Ukraine. *Social and Cultural Geography*, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 171 – 185.

Round, J., Williams, C. and Rodgers, P. (2008) Corruption in the post-Soviet workplace: the experiences of recent graduates in post-Soviet Ukraine. *Work, Employment and Society*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp. 149 – 166.

Williams, C. **Round, J.** and Rodgers, P. (2008) Explaining the off-the-books enterprise culture of Ukraine. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship & Small Business*. Vol. 10, No. 2, pp.

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2008) Gender variations in the nature of undeclared work: evidence from Ukraine. *Sociological Research Online*, Vol. 13, No. 4. <<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/13/4/7.html>>

Round, J. (2008) 'Surviving the Gulag: the social and cultural legacies of Stalin's forced labour system'. In Boren, T. (Ed.) *Kring Beringia: Expeditioner Och Folk*. Svenska Sällskapet För Anthropologi Och Geografi (Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography), Stockholm. pp. 42 – 64.

Round, J. (2008) The importance of place in everyday life in post-Soviet Russia. In Kay, R. (Ed.) *Trans-National Issues, Local Concerns and Meanings of Post-Socialism: Insights from Russia, Central and Eastern Europe and Beyond*. University Press of America, Lanham. pp. 125 – 140.

Round, J. (2008) The economic marginalisation of post-Soviet Russia's elderly population and the failure of state ageing policy. In Goodman, R and Harper, S. *Ageing in Asia: Asia's Position in the New Global Demography*. Routledge, Oxford. pp 68 – 84 (reprint of Oxford Development Studies article).

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2008) A critical evaluation of romantic depictions of the informal economy. *Review of Social Economy*. Vol. 66, No. 5, pp 297 – 323.

Rodgers, P., **Round, J.** And Williams, C. (2008) Workplace crime and the informal economy in Ukraine: employee and employer perspectives. *International Journal of Social Economics*. Vol. 35, No. 9, pp. 666 – 678.

Williams, C. and **Round, J.** (2008) Re-theorising the nature of informal employment: some lessons from Ukraine. *International Sociology*, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 367 – 388.

Round, J. (2008) Demographic Transformations. In Daniels, P., M. Bradshaw., D. Shaw. and J. Sidaway (Eds.) *An Introduction to Human Geography: Issues for the 21st Century*. Prentice Hall, London.