

Director's Message 2017

Dear CITY members,

As we start to become engaged in the new semester, I wanted to send a brief update about the City Institute and the exciting activities we have set up for the rest of 2017. First of all, we have had a bitter-sweet change over of staff as our Co-ordinator, Sara MacDonald, left us earlier this year to start her doctoral studies at Utrecht University (good luck Sara!) and we welcomed Leeann Bennett in her place. We have been blessed with two such dedicated and competent staff members at the Institute.

Linda Peake Director, the City Institute

We have already had one meeting on Healthy Cities with the CIHR's Institute of Population & Public Health (chaired by one of our Executive Committee members, Professor Harris Ali), which has recently relocated to the York campus. As a funding body, they are interested in building up work on Healthy Cities—which they recognise crosses over into the social sciences and humanities— and we will be arranging a future meeting for all those interested in research (and funding) in this field.

Earlier this year, the City Institute was also successful in securing a major SSHRC Partnership grant (more information about this will follow, once it has been officially announced by the Federal Government) and we now have a Research Project Manager in place, Prabha Khosla (welcome Prabha!). Meanwhile, we are entering into the last phase of Professor Roger Kiel's MCRI grant on Global Suburbanisms with a series of Towards Suburbia seminar presentations taking place throughout the year as well as a major international conference (After Suburbia) that will be taking place from the 19th – 21st October (or register here for the conference). The conference organisers are still looking for volunteers to help with the meeting and you can contact them at suburban@yorku.ca. Another York held conference—the 33rd Biennial Conference of the Canadian Council for Southeast Asian Studies—being held from the 26th – 28th October, with a strong urban content, is being led by the Director of the Centre for Asian Studies, Professor Abidin Kusno.

The City Institute is also holding its own seminar presentations this semester, starting on Friday 29th September, with Professor Simon Bekker from Stellenbosch University in South Africa with a presentation on African capital cities. Other meetings this semester include Karl Gardner on From Sanctuary to Solidarity: Migrant Justice in an Age of Trump and Trudeau and a presentation of the film It takes a Riot with a discussion by Professor Simon Black, Brock University, members of Black Lives Matter Toronto and the Black Action Defence Committee.

Following on from the very successful professional training session we held for early career folks in November 2015, we have made the decision to continue this as an event to be

organised jointly by ourselves and the Program in Planning at the University of Waterloo. The next meeting will be held on November 16th to 17th at Waterloo with details forthcoming.

This semester has also seen a large influx of visitors (currently 9 visiting scholars and two Frankfurt University exchange students), including Professor Andre Ortega from the University of the Philippines, who has been awarded one of the prestigious Urban Studies Foundation International Fellowships to fund his visit. Professor Kevin Ward, Manchester University, England, will also be visiting for a two-week period from the 9th – 21st October. He has a number of engagements scheduled including a joint City Institute / Geography Department talk on the 13th October and a meeting with City Institute graduate students on Comparative Urbanism on the 10th October. Arriving later in October is Dr. Elsa Kolet as a two year Post Doctoral Visitor working on feminist approaches to comparative urbanism. Anyone wishing to meet with any of our visitors can email city@yorku.ca to set up a meeting.

The CITY listserv has also been busy with calls for papers for next year. 2018 is already proving to be a busy time for urban scholars in Toronto as the city hosts two major urban conferences. The Urban Affairs Conference, with Professor Roger Kiel as one of the local organisers, will be held at the Sheraton Hotel from 4th -7th April (deadline for abstracts is this week: 1st October). And the International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology (will be held from 15th – 21st July at the Metro Convention Centre. Research Committee 21 (Urban and Regional Studies) of the WCS (deadline also this week: 30th September, local organisers are Professors Ute Lehrer and Roger Kiel).

In house, we are currently upgrading the City Institute website, preparing a fundraising plan, and working on a diploma for graduate students. There is also a forthcoming theme issue of the journal *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* on critical engagements with planetary urbanization (a number of the articles are already available online) that follows up from the workshop that was held at the City Institute in April 2015. Finally, if you want to find out more about us and what we do, please join us at the City Institute's Meet and Greet that will be held on Friday 13th October at 3pm in CITY's Lounge (in front of 734, Kaneff Tower).

With best wishes and looking forward to seeing you at one or more of these many events!

Linda Peake

Director, the City Institute