

## **Social Justice in the City Graduate Student Workshop 2015**

**University of Toronto Multi-Faith Centre, Main Room**

**March 7, 2015, 9:30 am – 5 pm**

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### **Program**

**9:30 am – 10 am      Breakfast and Opening Comments**

**10 am – 11:30 am      SESSION 1**

### ***Right to the City: Democracy and Resistance***

Inclusionary democratic participation in the design, development and use of cities is essential, but challenging in an era characterized by deepening neoliberalism and growing social inequality. Cities are increasingly sites of struggle between citizen rights to space and the enactment of state-led neoliberal policies that prioritize urban environments welcoming to capital investment. As a result, state-citizen relations play out in complex social, spatial and legal ways within municipalities. Interrogating whose voices get heard, whose vision of the city is triumphant, and ultimately who has a right to the city remains crucial to ensuring the continued democratization of urban space and development. This panel considers these issues by first querying the extent to which state-led strategies can be democratizing of city spaces and processes in the cases of participatory budgeting in Brazil, and US public housing policies as “urban regeneration” in declining American cities. Citizen strategies of resistance to the regulation of city space are also considered through a discussion of graffiti as the creative reclamation of the “write” to the city, and the Occupy movement as a resistant disruption of the social, spatial and legal boundaries of the city.

Panelists:

“Deepening Democracy Through Public Participation”

Wesley Petite, Carlton University

“*Urban Regeneration and Gentrification in U.S. Declining Cities: The Role of Planning in Building a More Just City*”

Julie Mah, University of Toronto

“*Spray Paint and Resistance: The Write to the City*”

Joshua Hruschka, Carlton University

“*Boundary Setting and Urban Resistance: Occupy Vancouver and the Recontextualization of State/Space*”

Debra Mackinnon, Queen’s University

Facilitator: Brenna Keatinge, University of Toronto

**11:30 am – 11:45 am    Coffee Break**

**11:45 am – 1:15 pm    SESSION 2**

***Housing Rights: Affordable Housing, Home Ownership, and Homelessness***

Access to affordable housing and security of home ownership are essential to decreasing the social and economic exclusion of marginalized communities, and to fostering cities that are just, equitable, sustainable and creative. This session considers the impact of private developers and financial institutions, community organizations, local government, and policy initiatives in shaping urban housing and housing experiences. More specifically, the session will examine various strategies for: creating arts-oriented affordable housing in Toronto; overcoming barriers to affordable housing in York Region; responding to the foreclosure crisis and its disproportionate impact on racialized and low-income individuals and families in Chicago and Jacksonville; and making LGBTQ youth homelessness a priority for Toronto City Council.

Panelists:

*“Bringing Affordable Rental Housing to York Region”*

Diane Tan and Cian O’Neill-Kizoff, Queen’s University

*“Black Homeownership Matters: The Fight Against the Mass Eviction of Families”*

Nemoy Lewis, Queen’s University

*“Is Creativity Sustainable? Arts-Oriented Affordable Housing in Toronto”*

Emily McCrae, (TBA)

*“I understand that this is an issue, now how do we solve the problem?”: How LGBTQ Youth Homelessness Became a Priority for the City of Toronto*

Adam Garcia and Carli Melo, University of Toronto

Facilitator: Adriel Weaver, University of Toronto

**1:15 pm – 2 pm    Lunch**

**2 pm – 3:30 pm    SESSION 3**

***Criminal Justice in the City: Policing, Gangs and Offender Reintegration***

For many marginalized and racialized individuals, the realities of urban life are conditioned by negative experiences with crime and the criminal justice system, including gang involvement, over-policing and difficulty post-incarceration. This is of concern as perceptions of fair and equitable treatment in interactions with the police, courts and other criminal justice agencies have been found to be strong determinants in overall perceptions of social justice. The discussion of policing will be considered in relation to the growing concern over the militarization of policing, including the decision

to expand the use of Conducted Energy Weapons (Tasers) to Ontario police, the encroachment of private military and security companies (PMSCs) into the sphere of public policing in African nations, and the historical antecedents and present debates in U.S. police militarization. The lived experiences of women in conflict with the law will be examined through two perspectives, the specific challenges facing gang involved women in both Ontario and Quebec, and the strategies employed by women in Ottawa, Ontario when attempting to reintegrate into society, post-incarceration.

Panelists:

*"From the Constitution to Ferguson: Discourses on the Militarization of Policing"*

Colby Pereira, Queen's University

*"Militarizing the Police through Tasers?: An Analysis of the Ontario Government's Decision to Expand Taser Use for Front-Line Officers"*

Erick Laming, Carleton University

*"TBD"* - Terence Rudolph, (TBA)

*"Girls in Gangs: Listening to Women's Lived Experiences of Gang Life"*

Ashlin Kelly, University of Ottawa

*"Gendering Identity: People's Experiences of Reintegration after Incarceration"*

Dirk Boon, Carleton University

Facilitator: Julius Haag, University of Toronto

**3:30 pm - 3:45 pm      Coffee Break**

**3:45 pm – 4:15 pm      Closing Comments**

**4:30 pm – 7 pm      Social Networking Event @ Prenup Pub, 191 College Street**