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SPRING ISSUE

# THE URBAN PLANET

*Center for Urban and Global Studies (CUGS) at Trinity College*



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# NOTE FROM THE DIRECTORS

**GARTH MYERS &  
YIPENG SHEN**

Directors, CUGS and Urban Studies

We hope that this newsletter reaches you in a safe and healthy place. What a strange semester we have had! We began our series of GVP talks, and we managed to hold our March 6 workshop on Revitalization, Diversity and Gentrification – one of the last public events at Trinity before the COVID-19 Pandemic upended the entire world. Nothing has been the same since then. But we are still looking forward, as we begin to feel the Spring sun on our shoulders. At the time of writing, we are still hoping to hold a retreat for Institute of International Education-Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) scholars and their families on campus in July, even as we are beginning to re-imagine that as a virtual event.

Who knows what Fall 2020 at CUGS will look like? We may have numerous virtual events. We know for certain that we will be welcoming Dr. Laura Delgado, who is currently completing her PhD in Urban Planning at MIT, as our next Kelter Post-Doctoral Fellow. We will also welcome a new cohort for the Cities Gateway Program, as we will welcome back around 35 urban studies majors in the classes of 2021 and 2022.

We hope to host a rescheduled version of our workshop on climate change and Connecticut's cities with UConn-Hartford and the University of Hartford (originally scheduled for March 26-27) sponsored by the Hartford Consortium on Higher Education. And other new initiatives are underway. We successfully submitted a major Undergraduate International Studies and Foreign Language grant with the US Department of Education in March, focused on "Enhancing Global Environmental Studies and Critical Languages at Trinity College." This was a collaboration of CUGS with urban studies, international studies, language & culture studies and environmental science, and we are thankful to all who helped put it together.

We are poised to submit a planning grant in early May to the Social Science Research Council's Transregional Collaboratory for the Indian Ocean on "China's Infrastructure-led Globalization in Myanmar and Tanzania." And we are looking to submit another major grant in the Summer to the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation. Finally, we invite you to join us in celebrating the contributions from 5 of the outstanding women (Salima Etoke, Na Fu, Julie Gamble, Emily Cummins, and Noor Malik) who have helped to make CUGS such a terrific place to teach, research and work over the years, as Trinity celebrates the 50th anniversary of coeducation on campus.

# THE FUTURE IS FEMALE (AND URBAN)

Conversations with CUGS women who will lead us into an increasingly urban and global future.



## FEATURING

**SALIMA ETOKA '15**

**NOOR MALIK '18**

**NA FU, LUCE VISITING  
SCHOLAR 2015-2016**

**EMILY CUMMINS, KELTER  
POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW  
2016-2018**

**JULIE GAMBLE,  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
OF URBAN STUDIES**

**Over** the past year, Trinity has celebrated "Women at the Summit," in honor of 50 years of coeducation at the college. Culminating with a celebratory event in February honoring 50 for the next 50: fifty women who will lead Trinity into the next fifty years, the year-long commemoration was an opportunity for the Trinity community to recognize the women who bring their talents to our college and continue on to make us proud.

In conversation with this celebration, we at CUGS wanted to take this chance to recognize a handful of the exemplary women who have worked with us over our 13 years on campus. We talked with them about their time at CUGS, their accomplishments, their mentors, and advice for current students.

Responses have been edited for length and clarity.





# SALIMA ETOKA '15

**Truman Scholar and Graduate Student,  
Kennedy School of Government,  
Harvard University**

## HOW DID YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH CUGS CONNECT WITH YOUR EXPERIENCES AFTER GRADUATING?

There was a direct connection between being interested in cities from taking classes at CUGS with Dean Chen and Garth, doing research to understand these topics in the African context, and coming back to the U.S. and working at an internship in city government in New York City after graduating. Now in grad school, I am looking through a comparative lens at how we work with people to be able to live in cities with the risks that climate change will bring.

## CAN YOU TALK ABOUT THE TRUMAN SCHOLAR PROGRAM AND ANY ADVICE YOU HAVE FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THE PROGRAM?

The Truman Foundation scholarship is awarded to juniors who have demonstrated an interest and a commitment to public service. It provides funding for graduate school and a community of people interested in public service.

After my experience with the Truman scholarship, I would like to encourage more Trinity students to apply for this scholarship. Other students at Trinity are qualified and could benefit from being a part of this program.

The New York City Urban Fellows program is another program I would encourage Trinity students to apply to. It is super competitive, and you apply in your senior year. It places young grads in city government. This was my first job after undergrad and I was exposed to so much around how you run cities and how decisions are made on the city level, including meeting commissioners and asking them questions. It would be a wonderful opportunity for students who are interested in urban studies, but don't know what a career in the field looks like.

## INVOLVEMENT WITH CUGS

- The Cities Program
- Urban Studies courses
- China summer program
- Received a research grant from CUGS to conduct research on urbanization in Senegal

# NOOR MALIK '18

**MSc Global Governance and  
Diplomacy, University of Oxford,  
Merit Scholar**



## **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS APPLYING FOR THE DAVIS PROJECTS FOR PEACE?**

Apply for something that you're truly passionate about and seek to make a difference in; this will transpire in writing your proposal. When writing your proposal, ask for help and reach out to people who have written proposals. The organization's website also makes the proposals of previous years available.

Make your proposal as realistic as possible; list out all of the potential difficulties that you might end up facing. When you can counteract those with solutions this will help you to devise a stronger proposal. Finally, the more specific that you can make your budget, the better!

## **WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE WOMEN AT TRINITY?**

Do as much as you can leave your mark, whether it's at Trinity or whether it's in your hometown; on whatever level possible. Be as active as possible. Particularly for women like myself that come from developing country backgrounds, where we have a lot to change and a lot of obstacles to go up

against, I would to say that the one thing is to not give up.

## **WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD YOU GIVE TO STUDENTS APPLYING TO POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS?**

The more that you can do to outside of the classroom, the better. Take advantage of opportunities. Get involved with research projects, whether it's working with a professor or applying to the independent grants at CUGS. Try to get published, this will be a game changer for your application. Also, be proactive and look into funding as early as possible.

## **WHO IS A WOMAN THAT INSPIRES YOU?**

Professor Janet Bauer is an incredible powerhouse that has been that has pretty much dedicated her entire life to the causes that she's passionate about. She does a lot of work with immigrants and refugees. One of the things that I love the most about her is the drive to investigate the lives of people that aren't from her own background, those that don't have the same kind of privilege that a lot of people in other societies might get.



## NA FU

**Ph.D. Student, The New School, Department of Politics, CUGS Luce Visiting Scholar, 2015-2016**

### **WHAT WERE SOME UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES YOU HAD AT TRINITY THAT HELPED YOU TO ADVANCE YOUR ACADEMIC CAREER?**

My time at Trinity helped me build up a network around the area. I invited two scholars to come talk to my class about their experience within sustainable development. I also had funding for academic travel. I went to Boston to meet with and present my work at the urban planning department at MIT and I visited the New School in NYC because that was going to be my home after Trinity.

Additionally, during summer 2017, I was invited to participate in the summer program in Asia. With my connections to production in Dongguan, China, I organized a visit in Cambodia to a factory that relocated from Dongguan. I knew the people at the factory, but it was my first time visiting the new location. That was a great experience and lesson for me.

### **ARE THERE ANY WOMEN IN YOUR INDUSTRY WHO INSPIRE YOU?**

When I moved back to China to work, I worked under Cressica Brazzier, who is now pursuing her Ph.D. at MIT. She was my boss and now she is my friend. I see her as my mentor. From the first time I met her, I was struck by how she approaches the world. I admire how she pushes against rules. It was important for me as someone who just started working to learn where the boundaries are and how you can keep pushing them. The important part is the way you push them, to keep pushing, and and to make sure you don't burn yourself out.

There is a lot of pressure as a woman to do things like get married and have a baby. However, I think that is not necessary. It was important for me in Chinese society to have a model for another way. Now society is much more open, and I tell younger people that they should not follow the traditional model if that is not what they want to do. In my early career, she [Brazzier] was someone who showed me there are other options.

# EMILY CUMMINS

Postdoctoral Fellow, Boston Medical Center

Kelter Postdoctoral Fellow, 2016-2018



## HOW HAS YOUR TIME AT CUGS IMPACTED YOUR CAREER?

An amazing first position, it gave me a lot of time to develop and teach new courses as well as allowing for time my research and writing. It gave me great experience at a small liberal arts college, which remains my optimal career trajectory. It really served as a springboard to the other opportunities I have had and was also a great collegial space; I made a lot of great connections with people I'm still in touch with.

My PostDoc at CUGS allowed for a comparison of my fieldwork in Detroit; how change and redevelopment was happening there and probing how different stakeholders and actors were responding, and the similarly deindustrialized city of Hartford. My current PostDoc at Boston Medical Center looks at the opioid crisis; so I'm specifically thinking about how urban space is shaping drug use and how drug use is shaping urban space in turn. I will be teaching a class at Tufts in the fall on urban space and drugs use; I'm looking

forward to combining my main research focus with the new interest of medical sociology.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO WOMEN AT CUGS?

Utilize the the network of junior faculty; they are really committed to mentoring each other and mentoring students. For women, there are a certain set of challenges. Find your own community and those mentors who are really committed to helping young women through the process.

## WHO IS ONE WOMAN WHO INSPIRES YOU?

One of my dissertation advisors continues to be an inspiration to me. She's a very smart, very committed and very dedicated woman who has found this amazing way to be both an amazing and productive scholar and a person who has a family and a life. She does not make any apologies for wanting both of those things and that has always been very inspirational to me.



# JULIE GAMBLE

Assistant Professor of Urban  
Studies, Trinity College

## WHAT IS YOUR RESEARCH FOCUS AND HOW DO YOU EXPLORE GENDER IN YOUR RESEARCH?

I study alternative mobilities like bikes and informal transport in Quito, Ecuador. Climate change has placed stress on cities around the globe and as a result have adopted sustainable transport approaches that aim to reduce emissions and curb motorization. The bicycle is not a means of transport accessible to everyone, but it is a low carbon option for many people. Yet, there remains a lot of work to transform social and cultural environments in cities to generate more friendly, safe places for cyclists and residents.

Starting from a feminist epistemological stand point, I study urban cycling in Quito, Ecuador where I have worked with a women's cycling collective, Carishina en Bici, which translates ironically from Quechua to "Bad Housewives that cycle". I have researched how their programming like women's cycling schools and

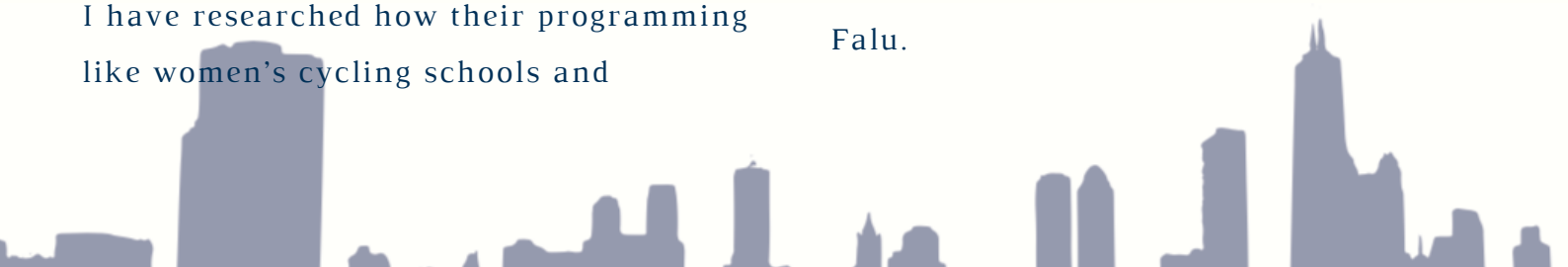
feminist activism has resulted in the empowerment of many women to moving around with more safety.

## WHY DID YOU CHOOSE GLOBAL URBAN STUDIES?

I'm originally from Houston, Texas and I am also Ecuadorean. Growing up and going back and forth between the US and Ecuador always shaped how I viewed the interdependencies between cities. This perspective inspired my research in Quito and is what motivates me to continue research on cities around the globe.

## WHO IS ONE WOMAN WHO INSPIRES YOU?

I wouldn't be in the position if it weren't for my advisors that paved the way for me in urban studies. I owe a lot to Ananya Roy, Teresa Caldeira, and Alison Post. I am also inspired by brilliant feminist urban thinkers like Linda Peake and Ayonna Datta. I am always motivated by Latin American women urban scholars like Paula Jirón, Raquel Rolnik and Ana Falu.





# UNDERSTANDING REVITALIZATION, DIVERSITY, AND GENTRIFICATION

In New England Cities and Beyond

## WORKSHOP RECAP

On Friday March 6, 2020 CUGS hosted a scholarly workshop centered on the topic Understanding Revitalization, Diversity, and Gentrification in New England Cities and Beyond. Inspired by a project brought to us by Stan Marcuss '63, the workshop brought together scholars from Trinity, New York University, Clark University, Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), and Providence College.



Trinity President Joanne Berger-Sweeney gave the welcome address. Berger-Sweeney emphasized Trinity's long-standing relationship with Hartford through partnership with the Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA), work with the Capital Region Development Authority, where Berger-Sweeney is on the board, and investment in the Learning Corridor.

**SESSION ONE** centered on the importance of having clarity on the concepts that were fundamental to the discussions at hand. After an introduction from Myers, Marcuss began the panel presenting his working definition of the three fundamental terms. Mark Davidson, Associate Professor of Geography at Clark University, probed the moral issue. Citing the well-known piece, *Is Gentrification a Dirty Word* by the New York Times, Davidson argued that there are four crucial points of emphasis needed to define gentrification: reinvestment of capital, social upgrading (the increase of middle class people in an area), landscape change and displacement.



# WORKSHOP WR ECAP

**SESSION TWO** was a discussion of methods for studying the phenomena. Sousan Arafeh, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at SCSU, discussed using grounded theory and rethinking the term revitalization.

When discussing revitalization, Arafeh said, the question of what type of vitality is sought after is important to ask, because working poor neighborhoods are already very vital. Deborah Martin, Professor of Geography at Clark University, added examples from Minnesota, where land trusts play a key role in stabilizing neighborhoods, while Garth Myers, Director of CUGS, discussed the necessity of place-based methods.

David Lukens, Visiting Assistant Professor at CUGS, talked about his research on gentrification in Seoul, South Korea, where an important part of his methodology was talking to women in the neighborhood to use their knowledge of where the people in their networks moved to when they moved out of the neighborhood.



“ This workshop allowed us to sit around the same table as experienced academics and practitioners that have been working on revitalization, gentrification, and diversity. Practitioners generate real-world questions, but they are normally focused on their most immediate context. Academics offer methods and tools, but they do not normally look for implementable solutions in a demanding timeframe. Only this mindset combined, that it is not easy to find, can allow us to move forward and produce social change. ”

-Victòria Alsina Burgués  
Industry Assistant Professor, NYU



During **SESSION THREE** on case studies, Abby Williamson, Charles A. Dana Research Associate Professor of Political Science and Public Policy and Law, at Trinity discussed immigration as an urban development strategy.

Her research reveals that local governments, regardless of political party affiliation of local leaders, tend to welcome new immigrants as an economic development strategy.

Victòria Alsina Burgués, Industry Assistant Professor and Academic Director at the NYU Center for Urban Science and Progress, discussed the case of Barcelona, where tourism and short-term rentals are a major problem. She focused on the 22@Barcelona innovation district, where they created a public-private partnership to develop a new neighborhood from a deindustrialized area of the city. Jim Murphy, Professor of Geography at Clark University, also added a perspective on urbanization in East Africa to the discussion.

The day wrapped up with a session taking the discussion from academic study to policymaking. Megan Brown, Director of the Liberal Arts Action Lab at Trinity, Jonathan Cabral, Manager of Planning, Development, & Evaluation at the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, Sean Fitzpatrick, Professor of the Practice in Public Policy at Trinity, and Stefanie Chambers, Professor of Political Science at Trinity, helped to bring the discussion of the principles in practice into focus.

# WORKSHOP RECAP

During lunch, **HARTFORD MAYOR LUKE BRONIN** stopped by to discuss Hartford's take on the topic. He discussed finding the balance of investment in the cities and opportunities for people living in the city, with a focus on the way Hartford has been segregated historically and the ways the city can heal those wounds.

“ Understanding how diversity, gentrification and urban revitalization relate to each other presents exceedingly difficult challenges. Yet nothing could be more vital to dealing with today's urban issues than a disciplined and informed analysis of what these terms actually mean and how their impact is to be measured. The workshop provided an extraordinary opportunity for scholars, practitioners and interested citizens to explore these issues and how they might use what they heard to take the subject from academic abstraction to actual policy-making. ”

-Stan Marcuss '63



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