

Editorial

John C. Weaver

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Editorial

The foundation work of those who built the Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine and the robust state of research on Canada's urban past permit experimentation, some of which is immediately visible in this issue. The special requirements of authors who write about communities has been recognized for many years by the UHR/RHU. Now, as the current issue demonstrates, from cover to cover, there will be more opportunities and greater flexibility for the presentation of material important to the special requirements of urban history: maps, prints, photographs, tables, graphs, and charts. The UHR/RHU offers editorial and design features based on a familiarity with the needs of geographers, planners, architectural historians, sociologists, political scientists, and urban historians.

The redesigning of the journal is consistent with the principal asset of the UHR/RHU, namely its interdisciplinary character. Design and editorial direction are meant to be complementary, both expressing openness. The openness in past has enabled writers from many disciplines to demonstrate the notion, expressed by sociologist Peter McGahan, that "Canadian urban communities" in their structure, diversity, and pattern of change "are deserving of our sense of wonder." The openness of the UHR/RHU has been and will continue to be more than a result of pragmatic searches for good material. There has been a guiding assumption that cities are created by concrete decisions made by people over time. From the bottom up, city builders have included consumers who express shelter preferences, pressure groups which have influenced government policy, assorted protest and reform movements, and the operation of democracy at three levels of government. From the top down, the city-builders depicted in the UHR/RHU have numbered businessmen, land developers, architects, landscape architects, planners, and civil servants. The current issue illustrates this mix of actors and exemplifies

the belief that urbanization is merely an abstraction and that people make and remake cities. How they do this is a matter for analysis from theoretical perspectives, but human agency has been the point of contact for the disciplines served by the UHR/RHU. That will not change.

In recent years, the UHR/RHU has produced two types of issues. Most have contained an assortment of articles, because of a sense of responsibility toward scholars; it remains an editorial tenet that a journal must sponsor the variety of works undertaken by its constituents. From time to time, there were theme issues which directed attention towards topics deemed significant by the editorial board. During the next four years, the current editorial board intends to prepare both "mixed menu" issues and theme issues. Here are some of the topics, presented in descending order of their state of development: women and the city, the automobile and the city, Montreal (1642-1992), police and the city, financial institutions and their role in the city-building process. I would like to hear from readers who might wish to contribute to these theme issues. Of course, all papers are welcome and authors can expect peer review and editorial advice. The editorial statement spells out a variety of submissions - articles, research notes, notes and comments - sought by the journal.

On behalf of the Urban History Association of Canada, the editorial board, and the editorial staff, I am delighted to introduce the new look of the UHR/RHU and to reaffirm some of its traditions.

John C. Weaver
Editor-in-Chief