“Worrier Nation”: Quebec’s Value Codes for Immigrants

Presented by: Daiva Stasiulis, Carleton University

This lecture explores the political and policy discourses of Quebec’s integration toolkit for immigrants. Focusing on value codes for immigrants in one of Quebec’s largest cities (Gatineau), Professor Stasiulis argues that recent debates on accommodation of immigrants and religious minorities resuscitate the dominant historical narrative of Quebec’s fragility as a conquered settler colonial nation. In this case, however, the threat is defined as the “cultural otherness” of racialized immigrants and religious minorities. Such value codes instantiate a form of governmental strategy that combines neo-liberal and communitarian rationalities and insist on cultural assimilation as the price of Quebec citizenship. Finally, she explores how Quebec’s current national imaginary of the ‘worrier nation’ maps spatially onto the urban-rural divide.

Daiva Stasiulis is Professor of Sociology at Carleton University. She has published extensively on citizenship, race and migration, feminism, and diversity. Her books include: Gender and Multiculturalism: North-South Perspectives (ed. with A. Gouws, forthcoming); Negotiating Citizenship: Migrant Women in Canada and the Global System (with A. Bakan); Not One of the Family: Domestic Workers in Canada (ed. with A. Bakan); and Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class (ed. with N. Yuval-Davis). Her current book project, The Emotional Cartography of Dual Citizenship in the Lebanese Diaspora, explores the manner in which people seek ontological security, form affective ties, and negotiate their lives spatially to live and access citizenship in two markedly different nation-states.

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