INTRODUCTION

MYER SIEMIATYCKI
Program Director
MA in Immigration & Settlement Studies
Ryerson University

The articles in this collection remind us how many meanings and variations may be contained in the single words: 'immigrant' and 'citizenship.' In the process, they convey an enriched research and policy agenda for understanding and shaping global migration to Canada.

To be sure, each term contains a core, common-denominator definition. Immigrants are foreign-born permanent residents in Canada; and citizenship is the formal acquisition of membership in the Canadian polity. From these foundational understandings have arisen some defining narratives of 'the Canadian condition.' We self-regard as 'a nation of immigrants', united by the shared citizenship of equal rights and responsibilities.

Our self-understanding as a nation of 'immigrant-citizens' (and their descendents) may well stem from a desire to construct a narrative of commonality for so diverse a socio-political entity as Canada. Underlying this has been an impulse to emphasize what unites rather than divides Canadians. Positive outcomes have included: a communitarian re-definition of Canada as open and accepting of immigrants from around the world, and a rapid pathway to citizenship rights for these immigrants.

But our generic emphasis on a universal 'immigrant-citizen' may also generate a 'one-size-fits-all' mindset about the immigrant experience in Canada. Nothing could be more at odds with reality. Differences *among* immigrants in Canada (often even *within* the same newcomer community!) are as great as differences *between* immigrants and native-born Canadians.

The reasons flow back to the many different circumstances and characteristics combined under the simple, singular term 'immigrant.' Consider the multiple intersections of diversity which distinguish any of Canada's 5.4 million immigrants today. Did they enter Canada through the Independent, Family Unification or Refugee Class? Where did they come from? Where in Canada did they settle? How old were they when they arrived? How long have they been here? What is their mother tongue? What is their facility in French or English? What is their religion? How much education do they have? Was it attained in Canada and/or abroad? Are they male or female? What is their ethno-racial identity? What is their gender? What is their sexual orientation? Do they have any disabilities? What was their class background when they arrived? What is it now?

Different answers to *any* of these questions can significantly impact the settlement and integration experience of immigrants in Canada.

Nor is there only a single trajectory for the citizenship experience of Canadian immigrants. There are multiple scales of citizenship attachment for immigrants to Canada. Their overwhelming tendency to settle in a small number of urban areas suggests there is a potent attachment which newcomers have for our largest cities, particularly Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Immigrants to Canada are declaring – with their feet – a form of urban citizenship, committed to the local setting they regard as most conducive to their aspirations and attachments.

Beyond the local scale, some immigrants feel a strong provincial/regional affinity. Francophone immigrants, for instance, are overwhelmingly drawn to settle in Québec. Provincial funding support for minority religious schools has also encouraged the settlement of non-Christian immigrants in Québec. Nationally, citizenship has meant different things to different Canadians. Some have emphasized active citizen engagement in political and associational spheres, while others adopt a more passive, consumer-approach to claiming citizenship goods. Finally, at a global scale, transnationalism increasingly makes claims on the identity and behaviour of immigrants to Canada. The apparently shared currency of citizenship too, then, has turned into a highly varied set of belongings, identities, claims and responsibilities.

As the articles in this collection reveal, acknowledging multiple intersections of diversity adds nuance and depth to our understanding of immigration and citizenship. Some articles take as their starting point significant dimensions of immigrant diversity (eg. life-cycle location, sexual orientation, race, religion or region of settlement within Canada.) Others work back from specific spheres of immigrant experience (eg. labour market integration, housing access, occupational health and safety benefits coverage) to assess the impacts of diverse newcomer identity markers.

The result is a reminder of the great variations in what it means to be an 'immigrant-citizen' in Canada.

Several articles explore age and life-cycle dynamics of immigration. Jean Lock Kunz argues for immigrants' integration needs to be understood through a 'life-course lens'. She shows how policy and program attentiveness to the different stages of immigrant integration could materially improve a newcomer's adaptation to Canada. Reporting on their pan-Canadian study of immigrant and refugee children from close to twenty different homelands, Morton Beiser *et al* make a compelling case that the health status of young immigrants is under-researched. Among the significant determinants of newcomer youngsters' mental health, they contend, are: age at migration, refugee status, visible minority

status and family income. Complimenting this is an article by Hieu Van Ngo and Barbara Schleifer examining the particular needs of immigrant children and youth, and the challenges posed for service agencies and government. At the other end of the age spectrum, Douglas Durst cautions that generalizations about immigrants and aging can lead us astray. Thus, he shows, the assumption that immigrants are young is erroneous, and the needs of the elderly will vary depending (among other things) on the length of their residency in Canada. Tracy Wityk and Myrta Reyes illustrate the sensitivities required for successful immigrant senior services with a case study of one agency's approach to caring for immigrant seniors.

Two articles focus on the treatment of same-sex couples in immigration law. Marika Willms examines the changes to Canadian immigration law which first permitted the legal entry of gays and lesbians into Canada, and then added same-sex couples to the family class of immigrants. Brian Ray effectively demonstrates the greater spousal immigration sponsorship rights available to gay and lesbian bi-national couples in Canada than in the United States. Both Willms and Ray contend that Canadian immigration policies have been responsive to considerations of social inclusion and the reality of family formations.

Challenging assumptions about race in Canada is the subject of two articles. Joseph Mensah convincingly shows that the Black community in Canada is extraordinarily diverse, not the homogenous presence it is often portrayed to be. And Mythili Rajiva cautions us not to think automatically of visible minorities as immigrants. Assessing the generation gap between immigrant parents and their Canadian-born children, Rajiva emphasizes the distinctive status of Canadian-born visible minority children.

Two articles address Canada's increasing religious diversity. Paul Bramadat examines the interplay of immigration, ethnicity and religious practice. He shows how our understanding of religious belief systems has not kept pace with the unprecedented patterns of religious observance now evident in Canada. Solange Lefebvre identifies a host of challenges liberal democracies face making place for religion in the public sphere. Setting boundaries of state and religion, she shows, in such realms as government, the courts, schools and health care can be problematic and paradoxical.

Two papers in this collection take the perspective of regions under-represented by immigrant settlement in Canada. Jason Azmier and Chedley Belkhodja arrive at similar conclusions for western Canada and francophone New Bruswick respectively. Both areas would benefit from more immigrant settlements, and part of the solution lies in greater local acceptance of immigrant diversity. Azmier reviews impediments to immigrant settlement in a variety of western cities, and Belkhodja perceptively shows how francophone community perceptions to immigrants differ in western and Atlantic.

Two papers explore language as a marker of identity and integration. Francoise Armand and Diane Dagenais discuss multi-lingual awareness as a public good, and the role schools play in its development. Jack Jedwab shows how ethnicity and place of residence affect minority community preservation of mother tongue among diverse groups, and their acquisition of one of Canada's official languages.

Considerable concern has recently focused on evidence of deteriorating economic conditions of immigrants in Canada. Five articles address this situation with shared concerns. Grant Schellenberg and Feng Hou carefully present the data on adverse immigrant economics, and review a range of explanations for the difficulties newcomers now face. Patrick Mackenzie and Clarence Lockhead survey the advanced human capital immigrants bring to Canada, and identifies key measures required to enhance newcomer labour market integration. J.S. Frideres emphasizes the roles discrimination and government inaction play in the economic difficulties faced by immigrants. Grace-Edward Galabuzi places the problems in a broader context of globalization, a changing labour market and the racialization of poverty in Canada. Kareem Sadiq suggests that everyday practices at the workplace create barriers to the acceptance and advancement of visible minorities.

A cluster of articles explore the links between immigrants, housing and homelessness. Michael Farrell presents insightful data on the housing conditions of immigrants in Canada. Then he explores how newcomer diversities and marginalization makes recent immigrants vulnerable to homelessness. Rick Enns shows how rising immigrant poverty rates and discrimination against visible minority immigrants prevent core housing needs being met. Importantly, Fran Klodawsky *et al.* demonstrate that paths to homelessness for immi-grants and non-immigrants in Canada differ significantly. Accordingly, Klodawsky and colleagues contend, differing solutions are required to assure housing for immigrants and non-immigrants. Yet all articles agree that part of the solution to hopmelessness lies in renewed government commitment to social housing. In interview, Canada's Minister of Labour and Housing – the Hon. Joe Fontana – explains the renewed research and policy initiatives underway to address homelessness among newcomers. In an interview with Canada's Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Hon. Joe Volpe addresses the goals and administrative challenges underlying Canada's immigration system.

Relatively little academic research has been devoted to recent working class immigrants in Canada. Foreign-born professionals and entrepreneurs have garnered significantly more attention. S. Gravel *et al.* provide a welcome counterbalance, with their article on immigrant workers injured on the job. The authors convincingly demonstrate that immigrant workers fare considerably worse than non-immigrant workers after they have been hurt at work. They call on all stakeholders in the field of occupational health and safety to be more attentive to the particular needs and vulnerabilities of immigrant workers.

While remarkably wide-ranging, the essays in this collection do not cover all the important identities intersecting with immigration. Thus for instance, the dynamics of gender, (dis)ability and ethnicity require greater attention. Unfortunately, authors who had agreed to contribute articles on these topics were, in the end, unable to do so.

However literature reviews on these subjects can be found on-line at http://canada.metropolis.net/events/Diversity/litreview_Index_e.htm

The articles assembled in this collection demonstrate that immigration researchers and policy-makers do best when they keep sight of identity intersectionalities, and the different (often unequal) ways citizens experience being Canadian.