

Editorial

It has now been 10 years since the last *Canadian Woman Studies* journal that focused specifically on immigrant and refugee women and it has been over 20 years since the last *Immigration Act* was introduced in Canadian Parliament. This new issue of *CWS* on immigrant women is timely as we now stand at the precipice of a new *Canadian Immigration Act*. None of us are certain what this change will yield for immigrant women, but many of us have serious concerns. A disquietude weaves through this volume in the issues raised by researchers and activists vis-a-vis immigration entry requirements, access to skills training and to employment, definitions of family, sponsorship, conditions of work and definitions of citizenship.

New changes to immigration policy and subsequent service delivery principles, policy and programs will affect the situations of immigrant and refugee women, depending on their race, class and other locations. This special issue explores four dimensions of immigrant women's experiences: the gendered nature of state policies and how they affect women; how women reconstruct their lives in Canada; labour market and learning opportunities available to women in the climate of globalization and restructuring; and gendered violence. The range of materials included in this issue is by no means representative of the diverse materials on immigrant and refugee women but they cover major themes that affect women's lives, from policy and labour market issues to violence against women.

The authors challenge the mainstream view of "valuable" immigrants. They offer a gendered perspective on the meaning of settlement that exposes the many issues—including systemic racism—that shape the experience of immigrant and refugee women. Women from the third world are particularly vulnerable to racism and sexism in the segregated labour market. Globalization and the restructuring of manufacturing industries further exacerbates their situations. Many become homeworkers, receiving less than minimum wage, with no benefits. At the local level, cutbacks and closures of community-based settlement agencies create additional problems. The articles on gendered violence explore the multiple burdens of immigrant and refugee women, including the burden of carrying blame for any disappointment or disharmony in family life. These are the kinds of difficulties that unite women's otherwise diverse experiences.

The mainstream media, the government, and politicians have been openly discussing many issues close to the lives of immigrant and refugee women. The authors in this volume add their voice to this discourse. Their contribution is part of the larger struggle that activists, community groups, and academics have been waging against inequalities that immigrant and refugee women continue to confront in Canada.

Il y a maintenant dix ans que *Les Cahiers de la femme/CWS* on publié un numéro sur «les immigrantes et réfugiées» et il y a plus de 20 ans que le Parlement canadien a voté la Loi sur l'immigration.

Ce nouveau numéro sur les immigrantes tombe à point nommé parce que bientôt nous aurons à faire face à une nouvelle loi canadienne sur l'immigration. Personne ne sait ce que ce changement apportera aux immigrants, mais plusieurs d'entre nous avons de sérieux doutes, dont les chercheuses et activistes qui ressentent une inquiétude face aux conditions d'entrée des immigrants, à l'accès à la formation et à l'emploi, à la définition des familles, au parrainage, aux conditions de travail et aux définitions de la citoyenneté.

Les changements dans la politique de l'immigration, la gestion des services subséquents, la politique et les programmes vont sûrement affecter le statut des immigrantes et des réfugiées selon leur race, leur sexe, leur rang social ainsi que d'autres aspects.

Ce numéro spécial explore les quatre facettes des expériences vécues par les immigrantes: les politiques de l'Etat selon le genre, et comment elles touchent les femmes; comment les femmes refont leur vie au Canada; le marché du travail et les possibilités d'apprentissage offertes aux femmes dans le climat de mondialisation et de restructuration; la violence sexuelle.

Nous ne présentons ici qu'une partie de tout ce qui a été écrit sur le sujet des immigrantes et des réfugiées, mais ce que vous lirez couvrent les thèmes majeurs, depuis les politiques du marché du travail jusqu'à la violence faite aux femmes.

Les auteures mettent en doute l'idée dominante des immigrantes valable. Elles dénoncent la notion de placement selon le genre, laquelle expose de nombreux problèmes dont le racisme systémique qui fait partie intégrante de l'expérience des immigrantes et des réfugiées. Les femmes des pays en voie de développement sont particulièrement vulnérables au racisme et au sexism dans le monde ségrégationniste du travail. La mondialisation et la restructuration vont exacerber leur statut. Plusieurs d'entre elles seront des aide-ménagères sous-payées, sans bénéfices marginaux.

Les articles sur la violence sexuelle explorent les multiples fardeaux des immigrantes et des réfugiées, incluant celui de porter le blâme pour les désappointements ou le disfonctionnement au sein des familles.

Les médias de masse, les gouvernements, les politiciens ont discuté sur la place publique des problèmes inhérents aux immigrantes et réfugiées, dans ce numéro, les auteures ont ajouté leur voix à leur discours. Leur contribution fait partie du combat plus large que les activistes, les groupes communautaires et universitaires ont mené contre les inégalités que les immigrantes et les réfugiées continuent d'affronter au Canada.

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