

**A Pigment Of Your Imagination:
The Foreign Credentials Crisis In Canada**

Lorne Foster

Public Policy and Administration

Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, York University

1. ABSTRACT	5. RESEARCH FINDINGS	
<p>The devaluation of immigrant educational credentials is now recognized as a major public policy concern in this country, and it is also a crowded intellectual field of study. Though many scholars and others have lamented the ways in the devaluation and discounting of skills and accreditation blockage imposed on foreign trained workers, this research goes further and critically analyzes how regulated and unregulated profession actually do this. The research argues that Canada's policy makers need to get their heads around this potentially explosive trend, both economically and socially.</p>	<p>The research focuses on case studies of the major professions like medicine and the law, exposing the way they construct concern about the cultural competency of newcomers. It exposes how the major self-regulated professions use supposed differences in culture and cultural competency as a new form of exclusion.</p>	<p>This study has the first detailed analysis of the relationship between foreign credentials and taxi driving in Canada. This research traces both the shifting labour force in the industry and the ways that its newly racialized workforce experiences the condition of work. In the last two decades the job of taxi driving has shifted from a white-working class job to a primarily newcomer and 'visible minority' job: 'a brown collar ghetto'. This research into the hidden injuries of race in the industry adds insight into the formation of racialized niches in the labour market</p>
2. POLICY PROBLEM	6. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION	7. POLICY ALTERNATIVES
<p>To improve our productivity and position ourselves to effectively compete in the global knowledge-based economy, current discussion about Canadian immigration in general, and foreign credentialed workers in particular, could benefit greatly from a more systematic perspective of the intersection of race and political economy.</p>	<p>The study applies a Critical Race Theory to Canadian immigration policy, and immigrant employment policy in particular, through a systematic analysis of the intersection of race and political economy.</p>	<p>The research argues for a sustained focus on the difference between equality and equity, and offer policy directions for embracing diversity and the varied perspectives and approaches to work that different identity groups bring to society's multicultural framework.</p>
3. BACKGROUND & KEY TERMS	8. POLICY EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATIONS	
<p>As a postindustrial/ knowledge-based/ immigrant-receiving nation, the foreign credentials gap indicates that we have not strategically thought through how we should manage our single largest human and capital resource. Given the critical importance, and magnitude, of immigration to Canada's growth and national development, the relative lack of focused public policy debate on the issue is both curious and short-sighted.</p>	<p>The thesis of this study is that to improve our productivity and position ourselves to effectively compete in the global knowledge-based economy, current discussion about Canadian immigration in general, and foreign credentialed workers in particular, could benefit greatly from a more systematic perspective of the intersection of race and political economy.</p>	<p>The project proposes a theoretical and investigative framework for examining race-based double standards for competence in the professional workplace. The focus on the ways that constructed notions of cultural difference inform the exclusionary practices and social closure of the profession will help shift the public debate away from a purely human capital level focus to where the true source of the barriers are: ethno- and racially-specific understandings of what constitutes competence and an ability to 'fit in'.</p>
4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY		
<p>The manuscript examines the significance of race in contemporary immigration policy and society, the conditions that give rise to racial discrimination in various forms, the extent to which it permeates the workplace and professions, and how immigrant workers and groups of colour have organized against it.</p>	<p>The research is a continuation or extension of the major public policy interests of immigration multiculturalism and employment equity initiatives in Canada.</p>	<p>The research offers an updated analysis of trends and a more comprehensive view of the intricacies and potentials of Canada's evolving immigration policies.</p>
REFERENCES AND NOTES		
<p>Foster, Lorne .2009. Lawyers of Colour and Racialized Immigrants with Foreign Legal Degrees:An Examination of the Institutionalized Processes of Social Nullification." <i>International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory</i>, Vol. 2, No. 1, June 2009, 189-217.</p>	<p>Foster, Lorne. 2008. "Foreign Trained Doctors in Canada: Cultural Contingency and Cultural Democracy in the Medical Profession." <i>International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory</i>, Vol. 1, No. 1, June 2008, 1-25.</p>	<p>Foster Lorne. 2006. "Foreign Credentials in Canada's Multicultural Society." In Merle Jacobs and Stephen E.Bosanac (Eds.), <i>The Professionalization of Work</i>. Toronto: de Sitter Publications pp. 283-335</p>