

Building Nations from Diversity: Canadian and American Experience Compared (McGill-Queen's Studies in Ethnic History)

Garth Stevenson

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Building Nations from Diversity explores the question of whether the Canadian "mosaic" has differed from the American "melting pot" and provides an informative comparison of both countries' historical and present-day similarities and differences. Garth Stevenson examines the origins of Canada and the United States and their past experiences with incorporating selected immigrant groups, particularly Irish, Chinese, and Jews. Establishing the foundational ways in which they placed new groups within their societies, Stevenson then outlines how the US and Canadian systems developed immigration policy and handled difference, detailing their treatment of "enemy aliens" during both world wars, their experience with minority languages, and recent Islamophobia. He also studies the introduction of multiculturalism into the lexicon and policy of the two countries and presents a nuanced analysis of how its meaning is understood differently on opposite sides of the border. An accessible and illuminating work, Building Nations from Diversity highlights the substantial differences between the US and Canada but ultimately concludes that they are more similar than most realize and are probably becoming more alike.



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