



Chasing Dragons: Security, Identity, and Illicit Drugs in Canada

Kyle Grayson

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Canada has received significant attention of late for initiating a government-sponsored medical marijuana program and for its flirtation with marijuana decriminalization. At best, these initiatives have contributed to Canada being seen as a reluctant ally by Washington, and, at worst, as a potential threat. The result of this impression is increasing American pressure to adopt more robust domestic security policies. At the same time, the Canadian public sees itself as holding unique values that differ from those held by its neighbour to the south. Supposedly these values are best reflected by a distinctive security outlook which produces reasonable responses to potential threats, a sharp contrast to the manic actions of the United States.

Chasing Dragons challenges these presumptions of difference and exposes the security politics and policy that they make possible. Focusing on the issues surrounding illicit drugs, Kyle Grayson examines how discourses and practices of security policy actually contribute to the construction of Canadian national and cultural identity. This analysis is also relevant beyond Canada. Crucially, this book identifies the dangers of underestimating the centrality of race and geopolitics to civic conceptions of nationality in liberal societies.

Chasing Dragons reconsiders the meaning of security. Additionally, it discusses avenues for resisting the insecurity produced by liberal states in the post-9/11 world. This critical approach reveals the pervasiveness of power in contemporary Canadian society, how this power is hidden, and the consequences for progressive social politics.

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