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Laurier-Ipsos Reid lecture to explore “framing of Islam”

WATERLOO – The Wilfrid Laurier University-Ipsos Reid Speaker Series presents a lecture from Christopher Cochrane, a political science professor from the University of Toronto, on “Public Opinion and the Framing of Islam.” The lecture takes place March 10, from 10 a.m. to noon, in the Paul Martin Centre on Laurier’s Waterloo campus.

A number of recent controversies have emerged in Canadian politics about the integration of Muslim minorities. Critics of integration often explain their positions as defending tolerance against intolerance, and equality against inequality. Cochrane’s presentation addresses this argument in an analysis of public opinion evidence regarding the attitudes of, and about, Canadian Muslims.

“Christopher Cochrane is very interested in making use of the public opinion data that Ipsos Reid has donated to Laurier. No one has dug into it as deeply,” said Andrea Perrella, director of the Laurier Institute for the Study of Public Opinion and Policy (LISPOP).

Cochrane’s analysis suggests that Canadian Muslims – as a group – do have distinctively negative opinions about same-sex marriage, but that there is substantial and systematic variation in opinions about this issue within the Muslim-Canadian community that is normally invisible to public opinion surveys. Cochrane argues that it is religiosity in general, rather than Islam in particular, that generates negative opinions about gay marriage.

Cochrane is a LISPOP associate and an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Toronto and the University of Toronto-Scarborough. Cochrane studies ideological disagreement and its implications for political decision-making and party competition in Canada and elsewhere. He conducted research at Laurier as a postdoctoral scholar.

The Wilfrid Laurier University-Ipsos Reid Speaker Series is based on presentations making use of the public opinion data that Ipsos Reid has donated to Laurier since 2007. There are two lectures a year: one speaker is an industry practitioner from a polling firm, while the other speaker is a university researcher. The speaker series is supported by the offices of the President and Dean of Arts, and coordinated by LISPOP.

This event is free and open to the public.

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