

Strategic Framing and the Case of Stateless Children: How Europe and Russia Influence Policymaking toward Russian- Speakers in Estonia and Latvia

Jennie L. Schulze

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2:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Dunning Hall, Room 27



About the Speaker: Jennie L. Schulze is an Associate Professor of comparative politics and international relations at Duquesne University. Her research focuses on the influence of European institutions and kin-states on minority policies and minority integration in Central and Eastern Europe. She is the author of *Strategic Frames: Europe, Russia, and Minority Inclusion in Estonia and Latvia* (University of Pittsburgh, 2018). She held a three year EU Marie Curie research fellowship in the context of “The Integration of the European Second Generation Project” in Estonia, and has been invited to serve as an expert on the Baltic States by both the US Department of State and the US Department of Defense.

About the Lecture: Prior to EU accession, policymakers in Estonia and Latvia were slow to adopt minority-friendly policies for Russian-speakers in the areas of citizenship and language, despite mandates from the European Union and significant pressures from Russia. While pre-accession reforms have often been credited to the democratizing influence of European institutions, an analysis of parliamentary debates reveals that European frames have rarely produced significant policy changes alone, and then only when domestic constraints were low. Whenever domestic opposition was high, Russian frames were crucial for the passage of reforms. The case study of naturalization requirements for stateless children in Estonia and Latvia highlights how domestic elites are more than just passive targets of external pressures, as well as the ways in which both European and Russian pressures have influenced the path and form of minority policies in these cases.

