

Diversity, Democracy, Justice

Some challenges for theory and practice

Official Statistics System Seminar

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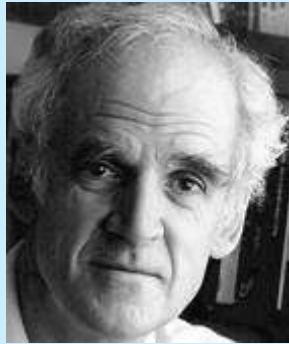
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Multiculturalism as Normative Theory

- ***abstraction and critical reflection*** – a step back from practical, concrete actions and “what works”
- **moral and political philosophy** – what *ought* to be the case; theories of justice/fairness
- ***situated*** – relevance and applicability to public policy in the NZ context



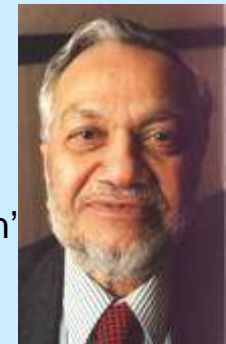
Michael Sandel
Political philosopher, USA
'Civic republicanism'



Charles Taylor
Philosopher and social theorist, Canada
'Communitarian', 'politics of recognition'



Will Kymlicka
Political philosopher, Canada
'A liberal theory of multicultural citizenship'



Bhikhu Parekh
Political philosopher, UK
'The future of multi-ethnic Britain'



Brian Barry
Political philosopher, UK
'Egalitarian liberalism'

Ghassan Hage
Anthropologist, Australia
'Against paranoid White nationalism'



Iris Marion Young
Political philosopher, USA
'A politics of difference'

Population Diversity and Normative Theory

A work in progress (± 20 years) – we don't yet have a normative theory of diversity, democracy and justice that is clear, coherent, complete, concrete and compelling.

- How to recognise publicly BOTH the 'embeddedness' of individuals in families, communities and cultures, AND the fact of dual, multiple and hybrid identities, and identity mobility?
- Are 'ethnicity' and 'culture' even the most important things to be talking about?
- How to effect intercultural dialogue and evaluation between liberal and non-liberal cultures?

Four features of NZ's population challenge aspects of normative theory developed within other national contexts:

1. NZ has a small total population (4.23 million)
2. A significant proportion of NZ's population (14.6%) identifies at least one of their ethnic groups as Maori
3. 10.4% of NZers identify with more than one ethnicity
4. NZ has a highly mobile and increasingly transnational population

Some theoretical issues:

- **Beyond 'evidence-based policy'**
- **Diversity as fact and norm**
- **The individual, the group, and the state**
- **Ethnicity, race and indigeneity**
- **Inequalities and 'recognisable difference'**

- **Nation building**

- commitment to the polity and its safety, security and continuing existence
- acceptance of existing constitutional arrangements and the rule of law, including existing human rights commitments – *on the understanding that these can be re-negotiated and changed through democratic process*
- disavowal of resort to violence and the threat of violence
- ability to use a common language.

- **Democracy as citizen participation in self-government**

- deliberative, not aggregative democracy
- keeping inequity of outcomes within acceptable bounds
- public space, differentiated solidarity, and the ‘togetherness of strangers’ (Young)

Recommendations for Public Policy in NZ

- ‘Managing diversity’
 - some public management is necessary
 - BUT be reflective about the role of the state and the governmental ‘we’ who does the managing (and in whose interests)
 - broaden the national ‘we’
- Go lightly on nation building
 - ‘don’t worry, be happy’ – everyday multiculturalism *happens*
 - attend to anxiety and resistance
 - consistently neutralise religion as a political force
 - don’t try to define a national character or anything other than ‘thin’, procedural values

- **Maori as first settlers**

- settle historical grievances through the agreed Treaty of Waitangi settlements process
- adopt neither biculturalism nor multiculturalism as official policy, but keep recognising Maori publicly as *tangata whenua* (*primo inter pares?*) through symbolic biculturalism, without resorting to:
 - racist conceptions of indigeneity (*whakapapa*, ‘one drop of blood’)
 - weak, ‘finders keepers’ moral claims
 - all-or-nothing discourse about sovereignty
- research why Maori appear to be doing so well in Australia
- make room for the indigenisation of non-Maori New Zealanders

- **A fair suck of the sav.**
 - focus on reducing inequalities – not recognising identities
 - develop models for analysing structural inequality that are broader than ethnicity/race
 - develop, implement, monitor and evaluate policies to give all Kiwis a fair go
 - support migrant and refugee settlement
 - enforce strong protections against group-related discrimination, harassment and violence, and maintain and resource robust and trustworthy mechanisms to mediate conflict

***“An imbalance between rich and poor
is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics”***

– Plato

- **International citizenship**
- **Foster deliberative democracy**
 - identify and remove barriers to citizen participation in self-government at local, regional and national levels (diffused sovereignty over multiple sites of engagement)
 - address low voter turnout (about 41%) in local body elections 2007
 - generate a broad sense of ‘common purpose’ without negating deep diversity, build dialogical consensus, and negotiate priorities and trade-offs through the exchange of public reasons
 - muddle through, via the mechanism of parliamentary democracy and trusting in the common sense of ‘we the people’.

***“If liberty and equality, as is thought by some,
are chiefly to be found in democracy,
they will be best attained when all persons alike
share in the government to the utmost.”***

– Aristotle