

# Deschooling multiculturalism

**Will Kymlicka**

Queen's University, Kingston, Canada

Ethnicities

2019, Vol. 19(6) 971–982

© The Author(s) 2019

Article reuse guidelines:

[sagepub.com/journals-permissions](http://sagepub.com/journals-permissions)

DOI: 10.1177/1468796819840722

[journals.sagepub.com/home/etn](http://journals.sagepub.com/home/etn)



## Abstract

In recent work, Geoffrey Brahm Levey has argued that we can distinguish various schools of multiculturalism on the basis of their methodology (in particular, how they relate theory to practice), and their substantive normative commitments (in particular, their normative commitments regarding liberalism and nationalism). In this article, I offer some reservations about Levey's analysis. I suggest instead that the various authors Levey discusses in fact share a surprisingly similar diagnosis and remedy. They all seek to expose the selectivity in liberals' self-understanding of core liberal concepts such as impartiality, colour-blindness, equality, anti-discrimination, secularism, citizenship, civic nationalism, or constitutional patriotism. This selectivity operates in a way that impugns minority claims as always already sectarian, partial and exceptional, while rendering majority claims as always already universal, impartial, and normal. And these authors also broadly agree on the proper remedy to this bias, which is not to reject these core liberal values, but to reinterpret them in a more even-handed way. I offer several examples of how this shared mode of argument is found across the different authors that Levey identifies, and how Levey's attempt to put authors into distinct schools is potentially distorting.

## Keywords

Multiculturalism, liberalism, nationalism, citizenship

In this paper, and in previous work, Geoffrey Brahm Levey has taken on the challenging task of trying to organize the vast literature on multiculturalism into different 'schools'. In a previous volume, Levey identified what he considered a distinctly 'Australian' school of multiculturalism, best understood as a unique form of liberal nationalism (Levey, 2008). Australian ideas of multiculturalism,

---

## Corresponding author:

Will Kymlicka, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

Email: [kymlicka@queensu.ca](mailto:kymlicka@queensu.ca)

he argued, were rooted both in liberal individualism and in a strong sense of Australian nationhood, and multiculturalism in Australia was therefore an evolution in Australia's self-understanding as a liberal nation.

In this new paper, Levey identifies another school of multiculturalism: the Bristol School of Multiculturalism, or BSM (Levey, 2019). It shares with the Australian school a focus on multiculturalism as an attribute of evolving national identity – in this case, British national identity – but differs in not being tied to liberalism. In their commentary, Varun Uberoi and Tariq Modood (hereafter U/M) endorse the broad strokes of Levey's account, affirming their commitment to a model of multiculturalism that is tied to nationhood but not to liberalism (2019).

In articulating both the Australian and Bristol schools, Levey draws a contrast with what he takes to be mainstream political theories of multiculturalism, which are liberal (unlike the Bristol school) but not as tied to national identity (unlike the Australian school). These mainstream theories turn out to be disproportionately Canadian, and both Levey and U/M cite Canadian theorists, myself included, as exemplars of this mainstream approach.<sup>1</sup>

So we have then three potential schools of multiculturalism, defined by their respective views towards liberalism and nationhood:

- Australian: multiculturalism as liberal and national
- Bristol: multiculturalism as national but not liberal
- Mainstream/Liberal: multiculturalism as liberal but not national

This is a nice neat schema for organizing a complex debate, but I find it too schematic. I agree with Levey's focus on liberalism and nationhood as the relevant points of orientation. If we want to understand what sort of multiculturalism is being endorsed or defended by any particular author, we need to understand (inter alia) how they triangulate multiculturalism with liberalism and to nationalism.

However, when I try to trace how this triangulation works across the various authors, I don't see a clear division into three 'schools'. Rather, I see a broadly shared commitment to a liberal multicultural nationalism, a shared commitment that unites these theorists, while marking them out as a group from a wide range of other theorists who really do reject either nationalism (e.g., various cosmopolitan theorists) or liberalism (e.g., various postmodernist or biopolitical theorists).

So in this short comment, let me lay out what I see as the common core of liberal multicultural nationalism, and then address some of the alleged differences that both Levey and U/M purport to find between the different schools and why I find these misleading or unhelpful.

### **The shared multiculturalist project**

Whereas Levey and U/M emphasize differences between schools, I am struck by the extent of their shared premises and lines of argumentation, which I might summarize this way:

1. Western liberal-democratic states are not, and cannot be, ethnoculturally neutral;
2. In practice, they have favoured the majority nation's language, history, calendar and conceptions of public culture and public space;
3. This bias has been hidden/obscured by liberals' self-understanding of core liberal values or concepts such as impartiality, colour-blind, equality, anti-discrimination, secularism, citizenship, civic nationalism, constitutional patriotism;
4. These concepts/values have been interpreted selectively in a way that impugns minority claims as always already sectarian/partial/exceptional, while rendering majority claims as always already universal, impartial and normal;
5. The proper remedy to this bias is not to reject these core liberal values, but to reinterpret them in a more even-handed way. This does not require stripping public institutions of any and all traces of majority culture/identity, nor replacing nation-states with either anarchism or supranationalism. Rather the remedy is to ensure the even-handed or fair recognition of minorities – to level up, not level down;
6. What specific rights or policies this requires will depend on the history of each society and on the nature of the minorities. In some countries, for some groups, it may require language rights, devolution/autonomy, or land claims. In other countries, for other groups, it may require various forms of funding, accommodation or representation.
7. Therefore, we need to learn to live with the 'variable geometry' of multicultural citizenship, in which different groups belong to the state in different ways.<sup>2</sup>

It seems to me that this set of key ideas and arguments is broadly shared by all the authors that Levey and U/M cite, regardless of their assignment to Australian, Bristolian or mainstream liberal 'schools'. I would argue that these ideas capture key features of the real-world 'multicultural project' as it has emerged across the Western democracies, and since each of the schools seeks to defend this project, it is not surprising that they all converge on these premises.<sup>3</sup>

So what, if anything, distinguishes authors in the different schools? The most obvious difference is simply which zone of this variable geometry they focus on in their own research. Different authors enter the debate with different 'cases' in mind. Charles Taylor, famously, had the case of the Quebecois in mind when writing 'Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition' (1992), and this has been a central case for other Canadian authors (e.g., Carens, Patten, and myself). For BSM authors, by contrast, the central case has been postcolonial immigrants to the UK, and even more specifically Muslim immigrants. This choice of cases has obvious implications, not just for the types of claims at stake (say, federalism for the Quebecois versus faith-based claims for Muslim immigrants), but also for the specific liberal value or concept that is at stake. The debate over Quebec's claims for recognition challenged biases in Canadian liberals' self-understanding of 'equal citizenship' and 'civic nationhood', whereas the debate

over British Muslims' claims challenged biases in liberals' self-understanding of 'secularism'. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that secularism played a central role within the BSM dating back to the 1980s, whereas it was largely invisible in the Canadian debates of the 1980s and 1990s. But this is just a consequence of the case selection, not of any deep philosophical disagreement. And so, when the claims of Muslim immigrants to Canada started to supplement the earlier focus on the claims of the Quebecois in the 2000s, we predictably saw that Canadian theorists started to turn their attention to questions of secularism.<sup>4</sup> This is what we would expect, given that different liberal concepts govern different zones of the variable geometry. No matter what 'school' you belong to, if you look at the case of immigrant groups who self-organize around faith-based claims, then you will need to address liberal self-understandings of secularism, and how these self-understandings are systematically biased against minorities. And conversely, no matter what school you belong to, if you look at the case of stateless nations who organize around claims for self-government, then you will need to address liberal self-understandings' of civic nationalism, and how these are systematically biased against minorities.

The choice of cases also has another important implication: namely, that different zones of the variable geometry entail different legal and political decision-making processes. For certain groups in certain countries, the central obstacle to multiculturalism is constitutional provisions. There may be legislative support for affirmative action, say, or group representation, but these may be struck down by a constitutional court. If so, then the battle for (this case of) multiculturalism will necessarily take the form of engaging with judicial reasoning about the nature of constitutional 'rights'. For other groups in other countries, however, the courts may have little or no role. Whether and how multiculturalism is incorporated (or not) in school curriculum, for example, is a matter of democratic debate about good public policy, and cannot be resolved by the courts with reference to constitutional 'rights'. So here again, the choice of case will determine, not just what type of group claim is at stake, and which liberal concept is at stake, but also what type of decision-making is engaged. For anyone writing on affirmative action in the United States, there is no alternative but to address the jurisprudence around the equal protection clause of the constitution and its implications for non-discrimination. In this context, multiculturalism enters into an already heavily judicialized field. For other issues, in other countries, decisions will instead be made by legislatures without any significant role for the courts. This again is simply a consequence of case selection, not of any deep philosophical disagreement. No matter what school you belong to, if you want to explore certain issues in certain countries, you will need to engage in 'rights-based' judicial reasoning, while for other issues in other countries, you need to engage with the prevailing public debate about desirable public policy.

In my view, 95% of the alleged differences between the 'schools' arise simply from the choice of cases. They start from the experience of different groups, and therefore focus on different types of claims, which in turn engage different liberal

concepts and different decision-making processes. At first glance, this may seem to generate different ‘schools’. But in fact, there is no general inconsistency between the schools, and no reason they cannot fit together. They illuminate different parts of the variable geometry of the multicultural project, but the illuminations are often mutually compatible. Taken together, they offer a more comprehensive picture of the ways that contemporary nation-states rely on double-standards and false universalisms in their interpretation of core liberal concepts. Taken together, they also offer a more comprehensive picture of what a truly multicultural liberal nation-state would look like.

I don’t mean of course that every claim of every author fits seamlessly together with every claim of every other author. There are real and important conceptual and normative disagreements amongst the authors. But these are as likely to be found within ‘schools’ as across them. For example, both Levey and U/M put Carens and me in the same mainstream school of liberal multiculturalism, but in fact we disagree both about concepts (such as ‘culture’) and about normative principles (such as mobility rights).<sup>5</sup> If it nonetheless makes sense to put Carens and me together in the same school of ‘liberal multiculturalism’ – as indeed I think it does – it’s because we share the seven core tenets I listed earlier. But then so too (I argue) would the authors identified as belonging to the Australian school or the Bristol school, all of whom also have their own internal disagreements about both concepts and normative principles. We are very far from having a consensus within or across schools on how to define key terms (identity, culture, freedom, nation) or how to articulate norms of fairness (even-handedness, equality, sufficiency, parity). But these ongoing disputes about terminology and normative principles should not blind us to the striking overlap in defences of the multicultural project, or to the generally complementary nature of the resulting analysis. A study of the inconsistencies in how Canadians apply the idea of civic nationalism to Quebec’s claims (and how to remedy them) will have a different focus than a study of the inconsistencies in how Britons apply the idea of secularism to Muslims’ claims (and how to remedy them). But there is no reason in general to assume that the resulting arguments will be in any way incompatible or contradictory. On the contrary, they are likely, in general, to reinforce each other, revealing similar mechanisms of majority bias and minority exclusion. Put another way, if we insist on dividing up the world into different schools, then we should view them as complementary, not competitors, illuminating different zones of the variable geometry of multiculturalism.

### **Misdiagnosing differences**

Both Levey and U/M argue that the differences between the schools are not just about the choice of cases to study, but rather reflect deep differences in both methodology and normative frameworks. They offer slightly different catalogues of these alleged differences, under a number of headings, and I can’t discuss all of them here. So let me focus on three alleged differences which both Levey and U/M

emphasize, and which I find puzzling: (a) methodology; (b) nationhood; (c) liberalism.

*Methodology:* According to both Levey and U/M, the most important distinguishing feature of the BSM is that it adopts a ‘bottom-up’ focus on actual multicultural claims-making by minority groups, rather than engaging in a top-down application of abstract liberal principles. I agree that this marks an important division amongst theorists, but it does not line up with the liberal versus BSM distinction. The reality is that many – if not most – liberal multiculturalists have expressed the same commitment to focusing on real-world claims-making. Joseph Carens made this the centre-point of his ‘contextual’ approach to multiculturalism, insisting on

‘the advantages of using a range of actual cases in doing political theory. This sort of approach clarifies what is at stake in alternative theoretical formulations, draws attention to the wisdom that may be embedded in existing practices, and encourages theorists to confront challenges they might otherwise overlook and to think through the implications of their accounts more fully.’ (Carens, 2004)

In summarizing my own work, I stated that my core message to fellow theorists was the need to ground our philosophical theories on the actual experience of real-world multiculturalism, rather than inventing hypothetical philosophical problems (Kymlicka, 2001a: 1–4). I noted, for example, that many philosophers tend to simply assume that multiculturalism must be rooted in cultural relativism, say, or cultural preservationism, and they then race off to philosophically deconstruct ideas of relativism or preservationism. But even a cursory glance at real-world multicultural claims-making would reveal a different story, including – centrally – claims about selectivity and bias in the application of core liberal norms.

To be sure, there are some liberal philosophers who fit the more top-down model. In Alan Patten’s recent book, for example, he deliberately sets aside questions about the nature and history of both states (e.g., whether they are nation-states, multination states, settler states) and minority groups (e.g., whether they are immigrants, or national minorities or indigenous peoples), and asks instead how a generic Rawlsian liberal-democratic state should deal with generic cultural differences when making decisions about what he calls the ‘cultural formatting’ of public institutions. His answer then invokes a principle of ‘pro-rated spending’ (Patten, 2014). In my view, this is a good example of why we need a bottoms-up claims-based approach. Patten’s idea of pro-rated spending has no connection to any actual real-world claims – he cites no examples of minorities that have demanded such a policy – in large part because there are no generic states and no generic minorities. What we have instead is a wide range of different state-minority relationships, each intimately tied to different histories of nation-building, colonization, immigration, and each generating different types of multiculturalist claims. And so, in my response to Patten, I restated the need for a claims-based approach to theorizing multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2018).<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps Levey and U/M would argue that, insofar as Carens and I follow this claims-based method, then we are de facto adherents of the Bristol school. I have no objections to being affiliated with the BSM, but if so, it would no longer make sense to distinguish it from the liberal school. As I said, many if not most theorists of liberal multiculturalism follow this method.

*Nationhood:* The second key difference that both Levey and U/M identity concerns the role of nationhood: both the Australian and Bristol schools are said to be distinguished by their focus on multiculturalism as an attribute of national identity, rather than as something external to nationhood. This is a very puzzling claim. The idea that multiculturalism is an attribute of nationhood is often said to be the distinguishing feature of the Canadian approach: indeed the term ‘multicultural nationalism’ is often associated with the study of Canadian multiculturalism (e.g., Kernerman, 2005).

In my own work, I’ve highlighted how multiculturalism emerges in response to state nation-building – what I call the dialectic of nation-building and minority rights (Kymlicka, 2001a) – and so the first and most fundamental task for any theory or practice of multiculturalism is to figure out its relationship with nationhood. In some cases – as with indigenous peoples or stateless nations – this may involve engaging in their own competing nation-building projects within a larger multination state. But in relation to immigrant groups, it typically involves fighting for a place within the narrative of nationhood, by articulating a more multicultural conception of national identity. So my account of immigrant-origin multiculturalism is intimately tied up with a story of national identity.

There are some cosmopolitan liberals who object to this embedding of multiculturalism within national frameworks. They hope and wish that multiculturalism will serve as the burning tip of the spear in the struggle for a post-national world.<sup>7</sup> But here again, many – if not most – liberal multiculturalists are multicultural nationalists, on par with the Australian and Bristol schools.

*Liberalism:* Finally, both Levey and U/M argue that the BSM is distinctive in the way it avoids tying multiculturalism to liberalism. I think there are some interesting and important differences here, but they need unpacking and reformulating.

I would begin by noting that I share Levey and U/M’s concern with a certain kind of liberal hegemony – that is, the risk that liberal concepts and liberal vocabulary will occupy all of our intellectual (and public) space, leaving no room for alternative philosophical and ideological perspectives. Indeed, I have argued, for many years, that the ‘greatest shortcoming in the debate’ on multiculturalism is precisely the absence of well-developed alternatives to liberal multiculturalism, and that ‘it is impossible to properly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of liberal multiculturalism until we have a clearer idea of what the alternatives are’ (Kymlicka, 1998: 151). So I have invited and welcomed the articulation of non-liberal approaches, including Marxist, republican, anarchist, green, Foucauldian, and so on. And I certainly welcome an ‘Oakeshottian’ perspective.

If and when we have these alternative approaches on board, we can then engage in the task of comparing and contrasting with liberal approaches, to see where they

agree or disagree, and where they can be integrated or reconciled, and where they instead unavoidably compete and clash. We might find, at this stage, that some of the insights of these alternative approaches are actually quite compatible with a liberal approach, and can indeed enrich and deepen the liberal agenda. After all, the history of the liberal tradition is full of this sort of incorporation, as liberals have successively learned from and integrated insights from democrats, feminists, socialists, republicans, nationalists, anti-colonial national liberationists, environmentalists, and others. (The idea, for example, that a strong liberal defence of individual civil rights can go hand-in-hand with a strong social democratic defence of the welfare state was something that needed to be learned, on both sides.) And so too we might expect that core insights from non-liberal approaches to multiculturalism can be integrated into a liberal approach.

Some commentators – such as Bruno Anili – argue that this process of incorporating ideas into liberalism is itself a form of ‘hegemony’. He argues that ‘liberalism does not simply defeat and oust rival positions from the political field; rather, it encapsulates some of their claims in order to make them compatible with its core beliefs’ (Anili, 2013). Indeed he uses some of my work to illustrate this process of ‘liberal hegemony’, showing how I incorporate what were initially non-liberal communitarian insights into a framework of liberal multiculturalism.

It’s an interesting question how we distinguish healthy processes of learning from unhealthy processes of ‘encapsulation’. I would argue that all traditions inherit a number of blindspots, and that any tradition that is unable to learn from other traditions is doomed to paralysis and death. If so, then the ability of liberalism to learn is evidence of its intellectual health. In any event, my own view is that a healthy liberalism is one that is always in dialogue with non-liberal perspectives, looking for insights that have been neglected within the liberal tradition. And so, again, I welcome the articulation of non-liberal perspectives on multiculturalism, and the resulting dialogue between liberal and non-liberal perspectives.

Of course, there will inevitably be times and places where the claims of a non-liberal perspective cannot be accommodated or reconciled with liberal perspectives, and where we instead face genuine principled disagreement where we must choose between conflicting claims. The question then is whether the BSM has identified any such points of principled disagreement, where the BSM vision of multiculturalism simply cannot be accommodated or reconciled within a liberal multiculturalism. Has the BSM revealed legitimate forms of multiculturalist claims-making that are wrongly excluded from liberal models of multiculturalism?

I do not think so. I can only repeat what I have argued in earlier responses to Modood and Parekh: I do not believe they have identified a single case of a multiculturalist claim that they would wish to defend which does not fit comfortably within the boundaries of a liberal multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2001b). Levey himself has made the same observation in his own earlier response to Modood (Levey, 2009), arguing that the purported contrast with liberal multiculturalism was overstated, and U/M acknowledge that the substantive policy claims being defended



within BSM are indeed those defended by liberal multiculturalism (Uberoi and Modood, 2019: 13).

Levey now says that his earlier critique that Modood overstated the contrast with liberalism ‘misses the mark’ (15). I guess that depends on what exactly the mark is. What is the goal of defining different schools based on their attitudes to liberalism? It seems to me that we face competing dangers here. One danger, which clearly motivates Levey and U/M, is the fear of liberal hegemony in the bad sense: the risk that liberal vocabulary will become ‘absolutizing’, taking up all the room, leaving no space for alternative ways of thinking and talking. Against this danger, it’s right and proper to insist on the legitimacy of non-liberal theorizing about multiculturalism.

On the other hand, this then creates the opposite danger of exaggerating the extent to which the real-world multiculturalist project is somehow at odds with the core values of existing liberal-democratic societies. And this is particularly a danger when, as with the BSM, the theory claims to be ‘bottom-up’, articulating the actual claims and aspirations of minority citizens. We are not here concerned with the intellectual legitimacy of philosophers elaborating non-liberal frameworks, we are concerned with the accurate representation of actual claims-making by citizens.

And here, it seems to me, we confront a real tension within the self-description of the BSM school. We live in societies that have been shaped by liberal values, in which liberal values have been deeply internalized by most citizens, across ethnic and racial lines, and where liberal values provide the default vocabulary for making political claims on each other. In my view, the vast majority of real-world multicultural claims-making operates within this liberal framework, and consists overwhelmingly in claims that these core liberal values have been applied in a selective and biased way. In some cases, the use of this liberal vocabulary might be for purely strategic reasons – members of minority groups might predict that they will lose if they invoke non-liberal frameworks, and so strategically avoid them. But in many cases, this choice reflects internalization and endorsement of liberal values. Indeed, we know from social science evidence that in many cases, members of minority groups are as strongly committed to liberal values as the majority group, if not more so. And what they object to is not the privileging of liberal norms, but rather the inconsistency, selectivity and double-standards in the way these liberal values are invoked and applied, privileging majority claims as always already ‘civic’ and ‘impartial’ and ‘secular’ while treating minority claims as always already ‘ethnic’, ‘partial’ and ‘sectarian’.

If so, then the BSM’s self-description runs the risk of misdiagnosing the problem, and indeed of potentially exacerbating the problem. As I said earlier, a striking feature of contemporary liberal-democratic nation-states is that members of the dominant group think that they are applying liberal principles in an impartial, even-handed, and unbiased way, and are therefore resistant to the idea that there is any need or call for multicultural rights, recognition or accommodation. To oversimplify, we can imagine two ways for defenders of multiculturalism

to respond to this challenge. The first response is to show that liberal principles are in fact being applied in a deeply biased way, and that a more even-handed application of liberal values would require multiculturalism. This is the liberal multiculturalist strategy. A second response would be say to the majority group, 'yes you are indeed applying liberal principles in an even-handed way, so we have no complaint about the way you interpret liberal values, but we deny that there is any reason to privilege liberalism, and we think other non-liberal values should push us towards multiculturalism'. In my view, this second strategy is inaccurate as a description of the vast majority of actual multiculturalist claims-making, and moreover is potentially politically counter-productive. It could operate to buttress the complacent self-understanding of liberal majorities, whose inability to recognize their own biases and double-standards is the greatest obstacle to multiculturalism.

Of course, Levey and U/M may disagree on the empirics here. Perhaps they think that most of the real-world claims-making is not about challenging the biased application of liberal values but is instead about appealing to non-liberal values. But if so, I don't see the evidence. Members of the BSM may have their own (legitimate) worries about liberal hegemony, but if our goal is to understand and evaluate the sorts of claims minority citizens make, it seems to me that the vast majority fit within a framework of a liberal multiculturalism.

In sum, the alleged differences that Levey and U/M draw between a liberal school and a Bristol school seem overdrawn to me, whether in terms of methodology, nationhood or liberalism. Indeed, I think we now have a nice test case that helps to prove this. In a recent edited volume, Levey, Modood and I were all asked to present our approach to the question of how multiculturalism applies to the case of temporary migration, an issue we had not addressed before (Kymlicka, 2017; Levey, 2017; Modood, 2017). This is a kind of natural experiment we can use to test whether there are indeed major differences between an Australian, Bristol and liberal schools, and I invite readers to judge the results for themselves. In my view, the results are clear: there are no significant differences. We endorse very similar conclusions, for similar reasons, all of which operate within a liberal multicultural nationalism. I suspect most readers of these three essays will think we are arguing within two decimal points of each other.

In this context, I wonder about the utility of trying to define separate 'schools', except as very loose affiliations based primarily on shared cases. We might instead contemplate deschooling, in Ivan Illich's sense. Individual initiative flourishes when it isn't bound by institutional rules or institutional loyalties, and good researchers can productively mix and match ideas from across the variable geometry of multicultural citizenship.

### **Declaration of conflicting interests**

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Notes

1. Joseph Carens and Alan Patten are other Canadians who are often cited as representative of this mainstream liberal position. For attempts to define a distinctly 'Canadian school', see e.g., Choudhry (2007); Robinson (2009).
2. Levey takes this term from Modood (2007: 83), but similar ideas motivate Taylor's account of 'deep diversity', or my account of 'group-differentiated citizenship'.
3. I would also argue, parenthetically, that one reason why multiculturalism persists as a political project (Banting and Kymlicka, 2013) – despite longstanding pronouncements of its imminent death – is that this set of claims in defence of multiculturalism is compelling and not easily disputed. Critics of multiculturalism have tried to resist the conclusion either by engaging in contorted conceptual gymnastics to dispute the obvious facts about the non-neutrality/selectivity of modern states, or they conjure up 'ticking culture bomb' scenarios about how rectifying this bias through multiculturalism would allegedly have destructive effects on peace, solidarity, democracy and so on. The conceptual gymnastics are not intellectually compelling, and the speculative fear-mongering is not rooted in good social science.
4. For example, secularism was not central to Taylor's (1992) 'Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition' essay, but in his more recent work, a revised understanding of secularism is said to be essential to a successful interculturalism. We can see similar shifts in Alan Patten's work, or my own work. For my account of how and when faith-based claims (and hence secularism) entered the Canadian debate on multiculturalism, see Kymlicka (2015).
5. Most of these debates centre on point #4 in my earlier list, and more specifically, about how exactly we should specify the harms at stake in the biased application of liberal norms. Are these harms to individual autonomy, to dignity, to social membership, to democratic participation, to identity, and how do we define each of these for the purposes of establishing the harms and their remedies? These are big questions, but they are contested within as well as across 'schools'.
6. To be fair, some of Patten's chapters follow a more claims-based approach. His book is a mix of these different methods.
7. For examples, and my response, see Kymlicka (2017).

## References

- Anili B (2013) Liberal incorporations: Kymlicka, Pettit and the grammar of hegemony. *Journal of Political Ideologies* 18(1): 11–33.
- Banting K and Kymlicka W (2013) Is there really a retreat from multiculturalism policies?. *Comparative European Politics* 11(5): 577–598.
- Carens J (2004) A contextual approach to political theory. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 7(2): 117–132.
- Choudhry S (2007) Does the world need more Canada? The politics of the Canadian model in constitutional politics and political theory. *International Journal of Constitutional Law* 5(4): 606–638.

- Kernerman G (2005) *Multicultural Nationalism: Civilizing Difference, Constituting Community*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Kymlicka W (1998) Introduction: An emerging consensus?. *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 1(2): 143–157.
- Kymlicka W (2001a) *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism and Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kymlicka W (2001b) Liberalism, dialogue and multiculturalism. *Ethnicities* 1(1): 128–137.
- Kymlicka W (2015) The three lives of multiculturalism. In: Guo S and Wong L (eds) *Revisiting Multiculturalism in Canada: Theories, Policies, and Debates*. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, pp.17–35.
- Kymlicka W (2017) Multiculturalism without citizenship? In: Triandafyllidou A (ed.) *Multicultural Governance in a Mobile World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp.139–161.
- Kymlicka W (2018) Liberal multiculturalism as a political theory of state-minority relations. *Political Theory* 46(1): 81–91.
- Levey GB (ed.) (2008) *Political Theory and Australian Multiculturalism*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.
- Levey GB (2009) Review Article: What is living and what is dead in multiculturalism. *Ethnicities* 9: 75–93. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1468796808099905>
- Levey GB (2017) Multiculturalism on the move: An Australian perspective. In: Triandafyllidou A (ed.) *Multicultural Governance in a Mobile World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp.162–182.
- Levey GB (2019) The Bristol school of multiculturalism. *Ethnicities* 19(1): 200–226.
- Modood T (2007) *Multiculturalism: A Civic Idea*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Modood T (2017) Multicultural citizenship and new migrations. In: Triandafyllidou A (ed.) *Multicultural Governance in a Mobile World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, pp.183–202.
- Patten A (2014) *Equal Recognition: The Moral Foundations of Minority Rights*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Robinson A (2009) Is Canadian multiculturalism parochial? Canadian contributions to theorizing justice and ethnocultural diversity. In: White L, Simeon R, Vipond R, et al. (eds) *The Comparative Turn in Canadian Political Science*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Taylor C (1992) *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Uberoi V and Modood T (2019) The emergence of the Bristol School of Multiculturalism. *Ethnicities*. Epub ahead of print 2019.