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## Review of *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Kymlicka, Will, and Norman, Wayne, eds. *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. xii+444. \$65.00 (cloth); \$24.95 (paper).

This thoughtfully designed volume has not only a theme but a point of view and an argument. The theme is the intersection of contemporary citizenship theory and the theory of minority rights, each suggesting challenges and possibilities for the other. While it is philosophically respectable to treat these issues on a purely conceptual level, editors Will Kymlicka and Wayne Norman adopt a different stance. They suggest that questions about potential conflicts between virtues and practices of democratic citizenship and diversity “cannot be evaluated in the abstract, as if all forms of minority rights have the same impact on citizenship. . . . These potential conflicts must be addressed through careful examination of specific contexts” (p. 17). Accordingly, they invited the contributors to take up specific policy debates in examining citizenship in diverse societies, and most of them do so. The editors begin with a substantial analytical introduction that draws on the essays instead of summarizing them and helpfully provides typologies of diverse kinds of ethnocultural groups (pp. 18–24), of different paths to resolving conflict (pp. 12–18), and of multiple legal, social, and political strategies for acknowledging and respecting cultural or religious distinctiveness (pp. 25–30). The editors arrive at a conclusion of some importance: “It is impossible . . . to make any sweeping generalizations for or against the impact of minority rights on citizenship” (p. 40). The questions, they urge, “must be examined empirically, in specific contexts, rather than prejudged on the basis of a priori speculation and anecdotal evidence” (p. 40).

The volume itself, however, is the fuller argument for a robust contextualism in normative political theory and political ethics. This contextualism might be unsatisfying, if not unsettling, to some philosophers. The contributors are not philosophers for the most part; law and political theory are well represented, alongside education and social theory. The contextualism in many of these essays goes beyond paying attention to matters of fact in particular cases when applying general principles. Instead, this contextualism repeatedly puts strong generalizations, especially normative principles, in question. Often these essays treat normative principles as points of departure for an open-ended look at alternative policies that represent different trade-offs among competing considerations—evaluative, political, and practical.

Eamonn Callan and Jeff Spinner-Halev lead off in this vein with essays on public funding for religious schools. Callan argues from respect for individuals, rather than group identity, for a mixed policy emphasizing public support for religious education in early years, shifting to common schools in later ones. Spinner-Halev opposes public funding but supports varied strategies of inclusion and accommodation that “entice” parents of moderate religious views to make some use of public schools (p. 70). Jane Mansbridge argues for “descriptive”

representation of historically subordinate groups (representation of groups by those similar to the population represented in socially salient respects) in order to strengthen substantive representation in situations involving “communicative distrust and uncrystallized issues” (p. 101). Melissa Williams claims that “ideal” deliberative democracy theory fails to reckon with the weight of social privilege and unequal power in determining judgments about the “reasonableness” of some people’s arguments (p. 137). Illinois Senator Carol Moseley-Braun’s galvanizing speech on the U.S. Senate floor against renewal of a design patent for a private organization’s emblem displaying the Confederate flag appears as an example in Mansbridge’s discussion of “uncrystallized” or emergent issues where descriptive representation can make a difference (pp. 117–19). Williams attaches a summary of the same Senate debate as an appendix to her paper, using the example to illustrate struggles over the “social meaning of existing practices” that she argues must become issues for deliberative theories of democracy (pp. 137–41). While Mansbridge and Williams explore negotiations of social meaning and identity, Jeremy Waldron deplores treating identity claims as “essentially non-negotiable” (p. 158), conflating respect for individuals of a cultural group with acceptance of group members’ culturally inflected opinions. Waldron’s essay does not refer to an actual instance or policy, but the following essay by Tariq Modood indicates how diverse identities and claims for them can be.

Modood mines a 1994 British survey of ethnic minorities that highlights diverse constructions of minority and immigrant identities but also the important and theoretically neglected role of religion in many of them. He supports public recognition and even corporate representation of religious constituencies in the political sphere. Ayelet Shachar focuses specifically on consequences for women of preserving nonliberal minority ethnic and religious cultures; she provides a “joint governance model” in areas of family law that divides control between state and religious authorities over different aspects of the same disputes (p. 217). Sawitri Saharso’s essay sits uneasily among these analyses, most of them detailed and situated, as she appeals to psychoanalytic ideas to affirm sweeping generalizations about structures of “Western” and “Asian” personalities in order to distinguish an “intrapsychic” from an “interpersonal” rendition of autonomy (pp. 235–36).

Denise Réaume and Pierre Coulombe each examine implications of different rationales for language rights in the context of official Canadian bilingualism. Réaume sharply criticizes instrumental and political interpretations of language rights, claiming they are inadequate to the intrinsic value of mother tongues to their speakers, while Coulombe contrasts liberal universalist, historical, and deliberative justifications for language rights, finding the last one “more congenial” to an ideal of democratic citizenship (p. 290). Jacob Levy’s superbly nuanced exploration of three ways of incorporating indigenous law within or alongside the civil and criminal codes of liberal society is set in striking juxtaposition (but not opposition) to John Borrows’s visionary and controversial argument for an inclusive and non-descent-based picture of aboriginal citizenship in the Canadian context based on “rigorous citizenship requirements” (p. 332). Two concluding essays, by Graham Smith on post-Soviet Russian politics and Rainer Bauböck on justifying secession, ponder possibilities for forming federations and rationales for sustaining them.

These essays form provocative colloquies of contrasting or complementary views on questions of citizenship and diversity across a wide range of issues: education, representation, law, land, language policy, women, religious and ethnic minorities and majorities, indigenous peoples, federalism, and nationalism. I found the editors' strong contextualist message illustrated forcefully by most of these essays, while the individual arguments vary in persuasiveness. The very topicality required of these essays often results in a somewhat summary presentation or simple invocation of normative frameworks, rather than in a dialectical development of the normative ideas. In this regard, Callan, Spinner-Halev, Mansbridge, Williams, Levy, and Borrows are stronger than some others; they seriously entertain alternative normative viewpoints as a technique for unfolding their own. Yet the overall dialogical format makes this book stimulating to study as well as to read, and it could serve well in advanced courses in democracy, citizenship, multiculturalism, or minority rights. The editors helpfully append a topically arranged bibliography of additional readings that have appeared since 1994.

A revealing and potentially productive tension runs through most of these essays as they grapple with the shifting interplay of principled considerations and the realities of history, power, and political possibility. Melissa Williams comes closest to articulating this tension explicitly, as she challenges the adequacy of "ideal" theories that assume "a sharp disjuncture between a politics of interest and a politics of deliberation" instead of a "continuum between perfect solidarity and the unbridled battle of interests" (p. 144). Or, as one might also put it, it may not be possible to maintain a sharp disjuncture between the conditions and determinants of moral relations and the realities of political and social ones.

For example, the distinction between a policy or form of society embodying a "mere" *modus vivendi*, on the one hand, and a "moral" commitment, on the other, is invoked at several points by editors and contributors (see Kymlicka and Norman [p. 35], Callan [p. 46], and Coulombe [pp. 289–90] for explicit references, but also see Réaume [p. 259] and Bauböck [p. 394] invoking the same distinction in other words). Yet these essays repeatedly make the point that no principled moral commitment can order social and political relations except through varied adjustments, exceptions, accommodations, compromises, and flat trade-offs. Conversely, when the editors speak of politics being "reduced to a mere *modus vivendi* amongst groups that barely tolerate, let alone cooperate, with each other" rather than "the sort of mutual understanding, deliberation, trust, and solidarity required by a flourishing democracy" (p. 35), they fail to mark the degree to which some fairly hardy forms of mutual understanding, deliberation, and trust, at least, are also necessities for even a fragile or touchy *modus vivendi* worthy of the name. Is there a threshold at which certain types or fields of trust, shared terms, and understanding emerge as qualitatively different in kind from mere modes of living? Or are there instead, wherever people are not dealing with each other routinely through violence, more or less fully realized, or simply differently realized, forms of moral relations that require

detailed and comparative justification and criticism? I believe the latter, but the essays in this collection are rich in materials for testing alternative answers.

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