

Phil 232

Bhikhu Parekh, "Equality in a Multicultural Society" from Rethinking Multiculturalism [2000]

These are the examples Parekh discusses in relation to his idea of "culturally-sensitive equality:"

241: (UK) Asian candidates for jobs do not look at interviewer in the eye, for cultural reasons related to respect, and are judged negatively by interviewers

242: law banning drugs has unequal impact on religions that use drugs (Native American/peyote; Rastafarians/marijuana)

243-44: (UK) law requiring male Sikh motorcyclists to wear crash helmet rather than Sikh turban (which is religious requirement)

244-45: (Canada) should Sikh members of Royal Canadian Mounted Police be allowed to wear turban rather than traditional headgear (Stetson)

245-46 (U.S.) U.S. Air Force not allowing Orthodox Jew to wear yarmulke (skullcap), a religious requirement

246-47 (UK) Sikh women do not want to wear traditional nurses uniform

248 (UK) British Asian girl wants marriage annulled on grounds of "duress" because of threat of ostracism by family, while white girl would not be able to get annulment for similar family pressure

248-49 Sikhs being allowed to carry kirpan (small dagger), a religious requirement, when others would not be allowed to carry similar weapon

249-54: (France) Muslim headscarf controversy

Is the headscarf a religious symbol equivalent to a Christian cross? 251: 3 arguments that they are different. 252-54: Parekh's discussion of these 3 arguments

254-56: (UK) Funding of religious schools

(256: After discussing various arguments pro and con, Parekh rejects the *general* view that if something is provided for Jews and Christians, it must be provided for Muslims)

257-61: (UK) Parekh steers a middle course between privileged status of Christianity in UK, and principle of equality of religions [which goes beyond equal right of individuals to practice any religion {258}]

261-63: Summary: sometimes need for differential treatment, and even additional rights, in order to achieve an equality of situation; but also to serve other goals: social integration, promotion of diversity, promotion of social harmony. Limits of equality as achievable [need for national language; Sunday as day of rest].