

WALDRON, "Multiculturalism and Melange"

Waldron's critique of multiculturalism is somewhat indirect. He begins by distinguishing two models of the relation between *individual identity* and *culture*. These are not models of what *should be*, but of what *is*.

1. *One Person: One Culture*

Each person has only one primary culture, which provides both a community for that person, and a meaning system in which the person fashions her life.

2. *One Person: Many Fragments*

Each person in a culturally pluralistic society (i.e. almost every society in today's world) constructs her individual identity through picking and choosing from the plurality of cultural materials ("fragments") that are available to her in that society. People do not need, nor typically have, a unified, single culture (or community) on which to base their identity. (104: "People need culture, but they don't need cultural integrity.")

Waldron implies that the Many Fragments model better represents the identities of most people in culturally pluralistic societies (i.e. virtually everyone) than the One Culture model does. He seems to provide 2 somewhat different arguments for this:

A. people are affected by many cultures, not just one, in the constitution of their identity.

B. cultures themselves are hybrids. There are almost no pure cultures in culturally pluralistic societies, and so hardly any cultures to play the role attributed to them in the One Culture model. (In class, you raised a question whether hyphenated cultures such as "Haitian-American" are unified enough to fit the "one culture" model, or whether they were already a "fragmented" culture.)

The two models have distinct normative implications for interpersonal and social relationships in multicultural societies. The One Culture model implies that in order to respect someone, you have to respect her primary culture; and that the wider society should ensure the protection and continuance of the community that bears the culture, and the culture itself. (This argument is attributed to Kymlicka in the article, but it is essentially the same argument made by Taylor. Although Taylor and Kymlicka differ in certain respects—Taylor criticizes Kymlicka in his essay—they agree on the One Culture model.) With respect to multicultural education, the One Culture model implies that the appropriate objects of respectful study are whole cultures in their distinctness and difference from other cultures. But Waldron points out that *both* models would lead to a rejection of monocultural or Eurocentric curricula.

The Many Fragments model implies that the focus of respect is not culture but what each individual person has constructed for herself from her own cultural fragments, and perhaps the capacity for identity-construction itself.