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Ethnicity, Disunity, and Equality

Lawrence Blum

Is ethnic identity a threat to national unity? In the US, this question was given a resounding "Yes," to great fanfare, by the 1992 publication of Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s *The Disuniting of America*.[1] In contrast to earlier eras when groups viewed their "American" identity as primary and were willing to abandon, or at least confine to a private realm, competing ethnic identities, Schlesinger saw blacks, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, women, and various other sorts of groups privileging these group identities over an overarching national identity. "The ethnic upsurge . . . became a cult, and today it threatens to become a counter-revolution against the original theory of America as 'one people,' a common culture, a single nation" (1998: 17).

Schlesinger tapped into a wellspring of concern that found both scholarly and popular expression. Jean Bethke Elshtain's *Democracy on Trial* (1995) provided a more nuanced and scholarly version of concern about the loss of commonality and a shared conception of citizenship: "Marks of difference, once they gain public recognition in this form, translate all too easily into group triumphalism as the story grows that the public world is a world of many I's who form a we only with others exactly like themselves. No recognition of commonality is forthcoming" (p. 66). I will call Schlesinger and Elshtain's frame for thinking about group identity and society "the divisiveness paradigm." This paradigm does not abandon other possible critiques of group identities – that they can lead to group tyranny over the individual, or that they become beholden to false and destructive myths (as Elshtain suggests in her reference to "group triumphalism"). But it accorded primary importance to (allegedly) weakened civic ties and national solidarity, suggested that the most important issue with respect to these groups and their identities is whether they contribute to social division, and implied that the most important source of division is group-based identities (rather than, for example, divergence in life circumstances that inhibits civic sympathy).[2]

Where does the issue of ethnicity and society stand today? Since the 1990s, a burgeoning literature has addressed issues of cultural pluralism, minority rights, group rights and claims, multiculturalism in society and education, national identity, "identity politics," and related matters. Strikingly, much of this literature substantially abandons the concerns expressed by Elshtain and Schlesinger. Where Schlesinger implied that the divisiveness paradigm was the most appropriate lens from which to approach issues of group identity and society, more recent scholarly discussion implies that other value perspectives related to group identities and the larger society – justice, equality, and recognition – are equally or not more important. A synoptic look at these various strands in the "group difference" literature since the 1980s can help put the divisiveness paradigm in proper perspective.

These questions must be engaged along with those embedded in the divisiveness paradigm: Is national identity a good thing? Are some forms better than others? Is an emphasis on ethnic identity, or even the existence of differing ethnicities, inimical to valuable forms of national identity? To not-so-valuable forms? Finally, we must recognize that these questions are to be answered differently across different types of group, or different dimensions of group identities – racial, ethnic, panethnic, religious, sexual, linguistic, and so on.

1 Privileging Group Identities: Iris M. Young

Let us look first at the situation to which concerns with national unity, human commonality, and shared citizenship in the US were responding. In brief, groups – women, racial minorities, gays and lesbians – that had been and often continued to be treated as less than equal beneficiaries of the opportunities of American life were articulating their claims both to be treated as equals and yet to be recognized in their distinctness (from men, whites, heterosexuals). They avowed distinctive experiences and perspectives that should play a role both in education and public discourse. Iris Young (1990) gave the most sophisticated theoretical expression to this political tendency, conferring on these groups and their associated identities fundamental standing in her social ontology.

Young was responding to Rawls's 1971 updating of a social provision conception of equality that constituted a traditional approach to equality in the Western political tradition.[3] That tradition itself remains a source of active scholarly controversy. What is the "distributive" egalitarian in favor of distributing equally – resources, outcomes, welfare, preference-satisfaction, satisfaction of basic needs, human capacities, or something else? Are some traditional egalitarian concerns – a basic social minimum for all persons, for example – not genuinely egalitarian in character because their satisfaction is consistent with wide inequalities (above the minimum)? Indeed, Rawls's own view could be seen as not entirely egalitarian, since, although providing for a robust equality of opportunity ("fair equality of opportunity") as well as a robust social minimum, it places no absolute constraint on the range of monetary rewards to occupations and ownership of capital, requiring only that inequalities work to the benefit of the least advantaged.

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For the purposes of this chapter, such disputes need not be resolved. We can define the social provision conception of equality as consisting of three principles: (1) a robust equality of opportunity (which requires a substantial degree of class mobility from one generation to the next); (2) equality in access to the satisfaction of basic needs (e.g., healthcare, housing, education); and (3) belief that the current levels of inequality in resources within Western capitalist societies, and indeed virtually any extant society, are too great and are morally unjustified. The inequalities in (3) might be unjustified because they violate (1) and (2), or undermine or render ineffective other important forms of equality, such as civic or political equality, or for some other reason. Whatever their disagreements about the ideal type and level of equality, social provision egalitarians agree on these three principles.

Focusing on the United States, Young presupposed these principles of social provision egalitarianism but criticized Rawls on the grounds, in part, that his views failed to account for the injustice involved in race and gender subordination, as distinct modes of inequality intertwined with but partially independent of class-based inequalities.[4] Young emphasized the importance of racial and gender *identities* for the conceptualization of these forms of inequality. Classes are entirely products of unjust inequalities, and the egalitarian impulse is thus not to preserve, say, working-class identity, but to abolish the conditions that give rise to that identity in the first place.[5] By contrast, Young argued, groups on the disadvantaged end of race and gender inequalities – women and blacks – seldom wish the abolition of those identities but experience them as vital sources of personal and political meaning. Blacks, for example, are to be recognized, to be represented in political domains, to participate in public venues *as blacks*, thus going beyond an ideal that sought merely to insure that these identities were not sources of unjust disadvantage or stigma. Young endorsed the "politics of difference" (1990: 157) and, while not entirely rejecting the "ideal of universal humanity" (ibid.: 159), saw the validation of group difference as a vital corrective to it. It is this sort of privileging of group difference over commonality that troubled Elshtain and Schlesinger.

2 Class-based vs. Identity-based Inequalities

Whether Young was correct to confer this privileged status on group difference, the view that gender- and race-based unjust inequalities must be conceptualized differently from class-based inequality is much more widely shared and is surely correct. The justice or injustice of a particular degree or type of class inequality is independent of the racial or gender identities of those who occupy positions in the structure of that inequality. For example, suppose the structure of healthcare in a given society is such that those with incomes above $100,000 have access to healthcare that is roughly twice as good as those with $50,000 or less (perhaps because of unequal access to health insurance, inadequate coverage provided by that health insurance, or other inequities), and that this sort of class difference permeates the healthcare system. What makes this unjust is not that women or members of a particular minority group are concentrated in the $50,000-and-under group at a higher rate than the

general population, but that it is unjust that income should have this sort of impact on access to a basic social good such as healthcare.

It is a further and different sort of inequality that those of one race or gender receive unequal healthcare because of their distribution in the income scale. The latter injustice would be rectified if members of all races and genders were equally distributed along the income, hence healthcare, scales, even if the overall relation between income and healthcare remained constant. In that case, the class-based injustice would survive rectification of the race- and gender-based injustices. When the racial and gender groups are also disproportionately on a lower income, then (assuming that the income spread is unjust) the members of the disfavored identity groups suffer from two distinct forms of injustice.[6]

The moral basis of the injustice also differs in the class-based as contrasted with the identity-based cases. In the latter, what renders a distribution of access to important social goods (such as health, housing, education) morally wrong is that the distribution is either a result of identity-based discrimination, or a current product of a prior identity-based discrimination or other injustice, or a combination of the two. In cases where an identity-based group is not currently discriminated against nor is its current position in relation to the good in question a contemporary legacy of past discrimination, it is not clear that current group disparities are unjust. For example, attendance at elite colleges is an important social good, and in the United States whites partake of that good in a lesser proportion than Americans of Asian ancestry (Hacker 2003: 161–7); but there is no injustice in this because it is not a product of a current or prior discrimination against whites or in favor of Asian Americans. By contrast, black Americans' college attendance rate is less than that of whites, and a case can be made that this constitutes an injustice, or at least a morally troubling disparity, because the disparity clearly has its origins in prior relegation of blacks to lower social positions, including inferior education. If no one in the past or present discriminated against blacks, disparities in blacks' access to social goods would be themselves morally irrelevant.

The moral basis of class-based injustices does not depend on current discrimination or on the historical treatment of a particular group. If financial status turns out to have a large impact on access to healthcare, this is itself an injustice, independent of whether health professionals discriminate directly against people of lesser means.

In some respects, class-based injustices are more fundamental than race-based ones (and perhaps other identity-based ones as well). Many identity-based injustices can be at least partially, though substantially, corrected for by means of the implementation of class-based principles of justice; but not the reverse. For example, if blacks are disproportionately concentrated in the lower economic rungs of a given society, but the three principles of social provision egalitarianism were instituted that guaranteed persons of all economic groups access to basic social goods such as healthcare and education, this would substantially neutralize the race-based disadvantage without explicitly addressing it as such. But correcting for race-based injustice alone would not correct for the class-based injustice. Rendering blacks equal to whites in their access to a social good does not require ensuring that the *overall* structure of access to the good is just; it would just guarantee that the injustice within the black group was equivalent to that within the white group. This difference

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suggests a second, that class-based injustices are, or can be, more deeply embedded in the basic structure of the distribution system for certain social goods than race-based injustices.

A third difference between race- and class-based inequalities is that race is not a necessary category of social differentiation, but occupational and other income-related differentiations are unavoidable in any advanced industrial society. In this sense, issues of class-related access and justice are unavoidable, while in racially homogeneous societies, issues of race-related justice do not arise. And the same is true for other group identities, such as religion, language, and ethnicity; societies may contain only one of such groups, so the comparative context required for identity-based injustice would not obtain.

Finally, to the extent that some race-related issues of justice concern the appropriate response to previous race-related injustice – for example, compensation, reparations, affirmative action (on some understandings) – these issues are derivative from a particular history in a way that principles governing the appropriate relation between income and access to social goods such as healthcare are not.[7]

However, in societies that are racially differentiated, it might be misleading to confer an overall status of "more fundamental" to class-related as contrasted with race-related injustices. This is so, in part, because not all forms of race-related injustice can be corrected through class-related remedies. Even in nations in which income poses no bar to healthcare, healthcare professionals might carry ethnic- or race-based biases, discomforts, and stereotypes that result in unequal care to members of particular racial or ethnic groups.[8] Racial discrimination is a distinct wrong, not reducible to class-based injustice, or even, arguably, arbitrary discrimination in general. Discriminating against an individual member of a disadvantaged racial group is not morally equivalent to discrimination against someone because of his attire, or to discrimination out of racial animus against a member of a racially advantaged group (Blum 2002: ch. 4). Furthermore, race-related injustices transcend inequity in allocation of social provision. As the US Supreme Court recognized in its opinion in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the wrong of segregation lay not only in depriving black children of access to the same schools as whites, but in constituting a system of racial caste and stigma that declared blacks unfit to inhabit the same institutions as whites.

Thus Young is correct to distinguish identity-based from non-identity-based forms of injustice. She seeks both a robust non-identity-based form of equality (like social provision egalitarianism) and a robust identity-based egalitarianism. The distinction is pertinent to the divisiveness paradigm, because if those injustices are to be acknowledged and corrected for, identity-based forms of injustice require a recognition of the relevant identities. This is not simply a criticism of color-blindness in the service of an argument for affirmative action. It applies as well to any attempts to enforce an anti-discrimination regime in a society – to attempt to mitigate and to correct for identity-based discrimination. One must attend to racial or ethnic identities, for example, in order to know that racial or ethnic group X is being discriminated against, and thus in order to know where to put one's efforts to address this. Even if the end-state sought by the enforcement of anti-discrimination norms and policies were itself identity-neutral, it would be impossible, given the "non-ideal" world we live in, to

achieve that end-state without taking account of identities. Suppose, for example, our laws against racial discrimination in employment are meant to insure that race plays no part in employers' hiring decisions. Still, in order to insure that these laws are being complied with, we will have to determine whether employers are in fact taking race into account, even if they are doing so unwittingly (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004).

This will mean that racial identities can be utilized in society to achieve racial justice. Amy Gutmann (2003) argues, for example, that organizations formed around certain identities are often instrumental in a society's search for corresponding forms of justice (she mentions the NAACP and the National Organization of Women). Let us grant, for the sake of argument, that some of the public parlaying of these identities has some of the divisive consequences that Schlesinger and Elshtain fear. Even so, an assessment of the public value of these identities would have to take account both of these consequences and also of their justice-promoting value.[9] Hence their value or disvalue is not exhausted by their contribution to social division.

In this regard, it is striking that the divisiveness literature's references to race do not manage to recognize that racial inequality poses a continuing problem of injustice, the addressing of which might require attention to racial identities. Schlesinger is quite aware of the condition of African Americans in the US. But his noting of this tends to be in service of an argument against highlighting African American identity, or highlighting it in a certain way. For example, he says that although blacks have the "strongest reasons for cynicism and despair," they are still very patriotic, want the same things as white Americans, and reject Afrocentrism (1998: 138). Later he refers to the "racism that has disfigured the national past," but only to emphasize how much progress has been made in this area, along with a vague reference to the American Creed as the source of this progress (ibid.: 143–5). Schlesinger does not acknowledge that it is black Americans calling attention to this injustice and its racial character that has been the source of most of this progress, and that their continuing to do so might still be required to address the inequality that he, though not forthrightly, acknowledges.[10]

The divisiveness paradigm tended to shortchange issues of class inequality as well. One could perhaps chalk this up to nothing more than a choice of focus – that the authors were interested in questions of division, not those of inequality. (In the case of race and gender, the more substantive claim that it is more important to talk about division than inequality is implied.) However, it also had the effect of masking sources of social division that have their origins in class-based, rather than identity-based, inequalities. As the gap between the wealthiest and most powerful top 1 percent of the population and the middle of the income spectrum grew in the 1990s, several commentators suggested that the modes of life of these groups had become so divergent that it was difficult to sustain a sense of mutual identification and civic solidarity. Some scholarly literature in the 1990s and 2000s concerning the bases and normative status of national unity and civic solidarity argued both that national unity was important as a foundation for social justice, and also that class-based divisions were among the forces undermining that national unity.[11] The divisiveness paradigm thus takes up only a portion of the sources of national disunity.

3 Liberal Culturalism: Kymlicka and Taylor

A different strand in the literature on group difference is represented by two Canadian theorists, Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor. Kymlicka (1995) proposes *recognition* of groups and group identities, and attendant group rights, especially of ethnocultural or national character minorities, as an important political value.[12] He is particularly concerned to show that liberals should support recognition and civic standing for certain minority groups, and that such support could be encompassed within a liberal notion of justice.[13] For example, Kymlicka argues in favor of what he calls "external protections," that "insure that the resources and institutions on which the minority depends are not vulnerable to majority decisions" (ibid.: 7). Examples of such external protections are greater costs imposed on non-members of the group in question who move to the lands belonging to the group, such as fewer government services in their own language, and priority given to members of the minority group in certain land use and resources (e.g., hunting and fishing) (ibid.: 45, 109). Kymlicka applies his argument to national minorities, territorially based groups with a distinct culture, situated within a larger state, such as the Inuit in Canada.

Taylor's paradigm case of recognition is policy aimed at protecting and perpetuating the use of French in Quebec, in a context in which, unhindered, English would be likely eventually to overtake French as the language of choice among Quebecois. Taylor envisions policies such as requiring business signage in French and requiring immigrants and Francophones to send their children to French-speaking schools. Kymlicka also advocates rights to immigrant minority groups, such as state funds for educational and cultural support and expression, though these rights are somewhat less robust than rights accorded to national minorities (such as the Inuit or Quebecois), and the logic of Taylor's position would lead in the same direction, although he does not consider such cases explicitly.

Kymlicka frames these issues of recognition and minority group rights as issues of justice. But his notion of justice differed in two crucial ways from that articulated in Rawls's early work, and in Young's as well. First, what is "due" to individuals in this conception of justice is a coherent ethnocultural setting within which to live one's life. This is a type of human good not envisioned in Rawls or Young. (Kymlicka [1995: 86–7] cites Rawls's later *Political Liberalism* as containing an implied recognition of the importance of sociocultural membership to individuals. Rawls applies his argument to the case of *political* membership, but Kymlicka claims it can be applied to cultural groups below the level of the national political community.) Second, Kymlicka's notion of justice does not include the commitments of social provision egalitarianism – a robust notion of equality of opportunity, of access to basic social goods, and the fairly substantial constraints on inequality of resources implied by these forms of equality. Kymlicka's remark quoted above that minority resources should not be vulnerable to majority decisions strikingly fails to insure or call for any sort of equalizing of resources between the majority and minority groups, nor does he address issues of equal access to a wide range of social goods that members of minority groups might share with other such groups and with some members of the majority cultural groups.

Kymlicka not implausibly claims that the view he usefully calls "liberal culturalism" – a recognition of culture-based group rights and claims within a liberal framework – has come to be the dominant position within political theory (1998: 147; quoted in Barry 2000: 6). So one can say that liberal culturalism as a whole fails to incorporate social provision egalitarianism.[14] Whether Kymlicka rejects traditional egalitarianism, thinks that issues of cultural recognition are more important than social provision equality, regards cultural justice as a complement to egalitarian justice, or is just more interested in cultural than traditional egalitarian issues is not clear.

This is not to say that Kymlicka's positive view of culture-based rights is actually inconsistent with traditional egalitarianism. But it is striking that Kymlicka fails even to gesture at a broader conception of egalitarian justice within which his own view of cultural rights as justice could be situated.[15] This is true of Taylor as well. Taylor does suggest a more comprehensive political framework that includes equality as a core value (he makes less use than Kymlicka of the notion of "justice"). He says early on in "The Politics of Recognition" (1994) that equality as a form of recognition should be accorded equal place with recognition of difference, by which he largely means recognition of the kinds of cultural differences with which Kymlicka is concerned. But Taylor does not spell out any institutional forms that such equality recognition would take, bar a brief reference to affirmative action policies. It is only cultural recognition whose institutional forms Taylor explores. By the end of his essay, the impression is left that "recognition" is to be understood as recognition of (cultural) difference. Equally significant, Taylor does not pursue the issue of equality in general (Blum 1998).

In providing a central place for identity-based groups as subjects of justice, Young might seem closer to Taylor and Kymlicka than to Rawls. But this would be in some ways misleading. The liberal culturalists are concerned with minority/cultural groups. Young is not interested in either minority or cultural groups per se. Although the majority/minority dynamic is crucial to the character of the rights or form of justice with which Kymlicka is concerned, for Young, justice is not for minority groups as such but dominated, oppressed, or inferiorized groups (groups confined to unjust inequality). Often these will in fact be minority groups, but as in the case of gender, or blacks under South African apartheid, they are not always so. And it is the status of these groups as inferiorized, rather than their character as cultural, that interests Young.[16] Young supports a robust social provision equality in both identity and non-identity forms that is absent in Kymlicka and Taylor.[17] And their concern with securing rights for ethnocultural minorities as such – itself a type of equality concern – is entirely absent in Young.

4 Liberal Pluralism: Rawls

A third strand in the scholarly literature related to group difference picked up on a more traditional concern with pluralism within democratic societies. In *Political Liberalism* (1993) Rawls was, like Kymlicka, concerned with the accommodating of differences. However, the differences in question did not in any fundamental way concern groups, as they did for Kymlicka, but resided in individual conceptions of

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"the good" and comprehensive religious or philosophical doctrines related thereto. But Rawls's argument does apply to groups and very much hovering in the background of his discussion is a liberal society consisting of diverse religious groups. It is primarily this image that constitutes what Rawls calls "the fact of pluralism."

Rawls and the theorists working within this liberal pluralist tradition frame the fundamental issue as how much and what types of diversity are consistent with liberal principles (Galston 2002; Levinson 1999; Macedo 1999; Reich 2002; Tomasi 2000).[18] Disagreements within this literature revolve primarily around whether the "liberal" or the "pluralist" commitment is emphasized (as well as the related issue of the character of liberalism itself). William Galston, for example, comes down most strongly on the pluralist side, saying that liberal pluralism should countenance a broader range of religious and cultural differences, while others argue that liberal commitments may forbid or place strong constraints on the operation of some of these groups.

Liberal culturalism and liberal pluralism overlap in some respects, but they are distinct positions, and liberalism plays a distinct role in each. Liberal pluralism focuses most centrally on values and beliefs. The question asked by liberal pluralists is whether and in what respect beliefs and values held by groups are consistent with liberal beliefs and values, and, if not, in what ways they should be countenanced and accommodated. The liberal culturalist is concerned with minority cultural groups, their practices and forms of life, and whether and how those groups should be recognized within a liberal society. These practices do not always involve values or beliefs that raise an issue of consistency with liberal values, but they always involve issues of recognition. The most obvious illustration of this is the role of language in defining cultural groups, an issue central to both Kymlicka and Taylor. Both recognize, for example, that Quebec constitutes a distinct cultural community within Canada, and that the French language is central to this communal identity. At the same time, both remark on the absence of a significantly different set of *values* between the Quebecois and Anglophone Canadians. The issue posed for liberalism by culturalism may not so much be whether a particular cultural group's values are sufficiently liberal, as whether liberalism can provide a normative basis for according recognition to group cultural distinctness. The values of the culture in question present only one desideratum in addressing this concern and may be absent in some cases. Moreover, the group aspect is vital in liberal culturalism, but accidental in liberal pluralism.

5 The Abandonment of Social Provision Equality in Liberal Culturalism and Pluralism

This Rawlsian liberal pluralist body of work follows Kymlicka's and Taylor's liberal culturalism in abandoning social provision egalitarianism of both non-identity-based and identity-based forms as an important concern. There is some irony in this, since Rawls's *Theory of Justice* (1971) had so strongly foregrounded such issues.[19] At the same time, the newer Rawlsian liberal pluralism shares with Rawls's earlier work a failure to provide an explicit framework for thinking systematically about identity-based equality – the ways that gender, race, and sexual orientation involve systemic inequality of valuing, civic standing, opportunity, and/or resources.[20]

Later work on group differences tended to retain the liberal culturalist/liberal pluralist focus on cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic groups, and on the appropriate forms of recognition and accommodation of them within larger polities. Bhikhu Parekh's *Rethinking Multiculturalism* (2000) is perhaps the most systematic and comprehensive work in this tradition. Like Kymlicka, Parekh uses justice and equality as organizing principles within which issues of the normative standing of cultural difference broadly construed is encompassed; and his conception of equality is, like Kymlicka's, only weakly informed by a concern for a robust guarantee of equality of life chances and basic social goods (apart from cultural autonomy) within democratic, advanced industrial societies. Parekh, for example, argues that Sikh men should be able to wear turbans as Royal Mounted Canadian Police, and that Muslim girls in France should be permitted to wear a *hijab* to school. He does not consider whether the communities of Sikhs in Canada or Muslims in France have adequate access to healthcare, education, social provision more generally, or occupations (though his discussion does bear partly on the latter concern). Again, the main concern is with the freedom and autonomy of the groups in question (the securing of which may require protections not granted to the majority), and also with their recognition – both issues which involve the validation of the groups in relation to their difference from other groups and especially the majority or dominant groups, in society.[21] Concerns with social provision that might be shared with members of majority groups and which bear only a peripheral relation to culture are absent in Parekh.

6 The Egalitarian Rejoinder: Barry and Fraser

On the equality issue, multiculturalism has drawn a scathing attack from Brian Barry (2000).[22] Although focused primarily on the alleged illegitimacy of special recognition and special treatment due to ethnocultural groups – and thus a questioning of whether there can really be a *liberal* culturalism – Barry also argues that inequalities of life circumstances, including income, education, and health, based on class and race, are a much more important form of injustice than alleged culture-based recognitional forms of injustice (ibid.: 63f, 321–4).[23] Barry reports data showing that as the economic gap between the wealthy and the middle class and poor increases dramatically in many Western countries, access to quality healthcare and education has also diminished, and those services deteriorated, for a large slice of the public (ibid.: 63–4). Without particularly noting a difference in character between them, Barry points to both class- *and* race-based inequalities.

Nancy Fraser, sharing with Barry a commitment to both traditional egalitarianism and identity-based egalitarianism, agrees with him that the liberal culturalist turn in political theory has given short shrift to these issues of inequality. But she also shares the liberal culturalist view that issues of recognition are important as well: "Justice today demands both redistribution and recognition" (2003: 9).

Fraser sees both "redistribution" and "recognition" as issues of justice, linked in an overarching system. She thus appears to agree with Kymlicka in granting recognition status as a justice issue. However, a closer look reveals quite different

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understandings of both recognition and justice in Kymlicka and Fraser. For Fraser, "recognition" is primarily a matter of correcting for an unwarranted (and unjust) social devaluing of the groups in question; women, blacks, gays/lesbians are (often) seen as inferior, deficient, or otherwise having lesser value than their counterpart groups (men, whites, heterosexuals). Recognition is a process by which that evaluative inferiorizing is corrected for; groups that should be regarded as equals come to be so regarded. This conception of recognition is what provides for the commonality that Fraser sees between what she calls redistribution and recognition; both involve righting the wrong of unjust inferiorizing of a social group – in the material domain in the case of redistribution, in the "symbolic" or cultural domain (the domain of social value) in the case of recognition.

As noted above, Kymlicka's, Taylor's, and Parekh's understanding of "recognition" is much less concerned with *inequality* of valuing, just as it is also much less concerned with a robust equality of opportunity, life chances, or condition for the groups with which they are concerned. These liberal culturalists are concerned with the ability of ethnocultural minority groups to sustain their distinctive identity and way of life into the future, in the context of a wider society that differs culturally from the group in question, and with a recognition of the existence and legitimacy of this ethnocultural difference on the part of the wider society. The liberal culturalist does not require that all the cultures be seen as equal in value to each other or to a majority culture. The liberal culturalist implies, I believe correctly, that recognition of ethnocultural particularity lies outside the sort of equality of value framework that Fraser proposes. The appropriate recognition of groups in their ethnocultural particularity does not require that these groups and their cultures be valued equally with other groups. Indeed, "equal valuing" may not make sense in relation to ethnocultures. Recognition does perhaps require an appreciation of ethnoculture that involves some form of valuing. The recognition that, say, Arab groups in some Western countries seek requires an appreciation of Arab culture as being valuable to members of the group and a legitimate and worthy element of the national society. But it does not require an overall comparative judgment that Arab culture is equal to other cultures; it does not require an overall assessment of the worth of a culture, an assessment of dubious meaningfulness. This is not a concession to the superiority of the majority culture. The same point applies to them as well. They are neither superior nor inferior to minority cultures.

Taylor's discussion of recognition is quite confused on this point. He says that recognition implies "equal respect to all cultures" (1994: 66) which he glosses as "recognition of equal worth" (ibid.: 72). In fact, Taylor does not follow through on this dubious idea that recognition requires an affirmation of equal worth of the culture in question, but rather that all cultures of sufficient longevity contain something worthy of admiration and respect by someone outside the culture (ibid.).[24] Kymlicka is closer to the mark in removing issues of recognition of cultural particularity from an equality-of-worth framework entirely.

This is not to deny that cultural recognition is in some sense an equality concern, and Kymlicka provides what he calls an "equality argument" in support of it and of the group-specific rights to which it leads (1995: 108–15).[25] But the argument neither speaks to nor requires equal valuing or equality of life chances in any

overall or robust way. Kymlicka's main concern is with the preservation of the groups into the future, and the recognition of their distinct identity in the polity in question.[26]

Fraser is correct to see issues of recognition in the context of racial, gender, and sexual minority groups as ones that do involve equal valuing. This points up an important difference in the sort of groups with which Fraser and Kymlicka are concerned to accord recognition, and a difference in the way the group figures into the revaluing being called for. For Kymlicka, what is recognized is a group in regard to its ethnoculture, or the ethnoculture itself. For Fraser, it is individual members of the group in question as *persons, human beings,* and *citizens.* Historically, women, sexual minorities, and members of non-white racial groups have been treated as humanly or civically inferior, or both; the group membership has been a source of unjustified disvalue, and the group-based revaluing that Fraser calls for is to remove this disvalue. The group dimension is present in a different way in ethnocultural recognition. The fundamental unit of valuing-as-equals is the individual; but the valuing can be accomplished only by revaluing/recognizing the group. In Kymlicka's case the unit is a *culture* that belongs to a group, and a culture is not the sort of entity that "equal value" applies to as it does to individuals with regard to their civic status and their humanity.[27]

The distinction between cultures-of-ethnocultural-groups and persons-in-devalued-groups does not always differentiate types of groups. Non-white minority groups in most Western societies – Maghrebins in France, South-Asian Muslims or Afro-Caribbeans in Britain, Turks in Germany, Latinos and African Americans in the US, various immigrant groups in Canada and Australia, for example – often instantiate both. That is, these groups have distinct cultures and regard themselves as ethnocultural groups; but they are also the targets of racist devaluing in their host societies. David Hollinger's designation "ethnoracial group" (1995) helps to capture this duality. It might be confusing, then, if one asks the question: "Do British Muslims desire recognition for their ethnocultural distinctness, *or* do they desire recognition and treatment as equals as citizens?" They might most likely seek both.

This duality adds an important complexity to Fraser's way of framing issues of recognition as they apply to "race," or racial groups. One might say that just as Kymlicka misses the racial/equality dimension of ethnoracial groups, so Fraser misses the cultural difference/recognitional dimension. She misses, for example, that African Americans (her paradigm case of a racial group) might desire not only equal civic inclusion and recognition, but *also* an acknowledgment of their ethnocultural distinctness. Such acknowledgment might be accomplished, for example, by supporting African American student groups, official sanction and financial support for African American cultural events, inclusion of African American history in school curriculums and assessment measures, and so on. Fraser appears to accept the idea of distinctiveness recognition, but then says it should be accorded only when essential to the achievement of equal civic standing. For example, she says: "Recognition is a remedy for social injustice, not the satisfaction of a generic human need" (2003: 45). She does not acknowledge the need for ethnocultural recognition.

Kymlicka does recognize that the group-based minority rights he advocates must exist alongside universally shared individual rights, such as human rights and specific

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civic rights. Indeed, part of his liberal framework is to secure rights of individuals against the group, or, to put it another way, to try to insure that protected groups are internally liberal. In this sense, Kymlicka recognizes an arena of politically relevant value distinct from recognition of ethnocultural difference.[28] As just mentioned, Fraser, by contrast, does not clearly recognize that her notion of "recognition" actually omits Kymlicka's sorts of concerns; she wrongly believes that her framework accords it its appropriate place, because she construes it as a kind of correcting for unjust devaluing.

7 Conclusion

Issues of group identity can be approached from several distinct perspectives bearing on normative issues in political thought. The divisiveness paradigm, represented here by Schlesinger and Elshtain, accords central place to the effect on a sense of civic and human commonality and shared fate of asserting and valorizing group identities. If people think of themselves too centrally as women, blacks, Muslims, Hispanics, or Christians, will they lose a sense of shared nationality and civic identification with non-members of those groups? In this chapter, I have not directly engaged with whether the divisiveness paradigm points to a genuine concern, and, if so, how it might best be addressed. Nor have I explored whether, even if divisiveness is a legitimate concern, social differences not related to identities might equally engender it.

What I have done is to look at some of the diverse literature written since the 1980s that has approached issues of group identity and minority rights, or that bears on it in some way; these works reveal a range of normative concerns absent in the divisiveness paradigm. Young, the early Rawls, Fraser, and Barry all raise issues of social provision equality, and we saw that this form of equality can take both identity-based and non-identity-based forms. Young and Fraser recognize the importance of this distinction, and attempt to provide a framework for both, while Rawls addresses only non-identity-based forms. (Barry recognizes both types, but not the importance of the distinction.) Of these egalitarians, only Fraser clearly articulates "recognition" as a political value bearing on group identities that is distinct from social provision, although something like her notion of recognition is present in Young as well.

Liberal culturalism, represented here primarily by Kymlicka, approaches issues of group identity from a perspective of recognition and of group-based rights necessary to secure the ongoing life of ethnocultural groups – both important normative issues not articulated within the divisiveness paradigm. At the same time, liberal culturalism abandons concerns with social provision equality, both of class-based and identity-group-based forms. In part, this is because liberal culturalism shifts ground from groups whose identity is strongly bound up with being treated as unequals – racial minorities, sexual minorities, women – to groups with culturally distinct ways of life (ethnocultural groups, both territorially and non-territorially based).

A related but distinct view, liberal pluralism, is less focused on group recognition as a distinct value, and more on the degree to which liberal values countenance and require accommodation with non-liberal ones (whether in group or individual form).

An outgrowth of Rawls's *Political Liberalism*, liberal pluralism has abandoned the egalitarian commitments of his *Theory of Justice*; but it also shares with liberal culturalism and the early Rawls a failure to articulate identity-based (race, gender, sexual orientation) equality as a distinct value bearing on group identities.

Although both Fraser and Kymlicka employ the language of "recognition," they mean different things by it, and this masks the ways these two theorists are talking past each other. Fraser subsumes her notion of recognition under her rich conception of equality, while Kymlicka recognizes the non-equality dimension of ethnocultural recognition but also does not take up issues of group inequality, of both recognitional and social provision form, that apply to the racial and gender groups with which Fraser is concerned.

I have used these writers to articulate several distinct political values bearing on group identity that are absent, or at best very much in the background, in the divisiveness paradigm. Four involve equality, the intersection of two important cross-cutting distinctions – identity (e.g., gender, ethnoracial) vs. non-identity (e.g. class), and social provision vs. recognition. Liberal culturalism, partially aided by liberal pluralism, articulates two more values – recognition of group particularity, and group-based rights related to cultural perpetuation – also largely ignored (at least as positive values) in the divisiveness paradigm. I have not actually defended any of these six values; but I hope that articulating them will allow a more adequate approach to the issues raised in the divisiveness paradigm.[29]

Notes

1 The book was slightly updated and expanded in a 1998 edition, the major addition being a critique of what Schlesinger saw as a developing monoculturalism on the Right. The main target of the critique remained the multicultural Left.
2 I will focus on the United States and Canada, though much of the discussion will pertain to Western Europe as well. Interest in issues of ethnicity and minority group rights was driven by other political developments also – increasing immigration of culturally distinct groups to various European nations, the fall of communism and the attendant rise of ethnonationalisms in former Soviet Bloc nations, and continuing ethnic conflict in Africa, especially the Rwandan genocide of 1994.
3 Rawls's work was, of course, an updating of several other, related political traditions – liberalism and contractarianism – but it is the social provision conception of social justice that I am interested in here.
4 Young frames her critique of Rawls as a critique of distributive conceptions of justice, in favor of domination and oppression as the central model for injustice. This model provides a more conceptually adequate way to think about identity-based injustice. However, Young does not reject what I have called social provision egalitarianism as a necessary feature of a just society, only a certain way of conceptualizing that feature. In a 1980 essay, "Socialist Feminism and the Limits of Dual Systems Theory," reprinted in her 1990 collection, Young makes clear her commitment to a socialist conception, which would include (though go beyond) social provision egalitarianism.

5   Notice that the distinction between class- and identity-based inequality is not the difference between economic, or material, and non-economic forms of inequality. The class-based inequality concerns more than economic or material goods – healthcare, education, and housing, for example. And identity-based inequality itself has an economic dimension – racial injustices related to income, for example.

Perhaps this is a distinctively Marxist way of formulating the issue of class inequality. Alternatively, one could define "working class" as, for example, blue-collar workers, or, more broadly, as those without a professional or managerial job and lacking a four-year college degree, as suggested in Teixeira and Rogers (2000). One could then argue that those with such characteristics should not be disadvantaged in the pursuit of education, healthcare, access to political influence, other public goods, and the like. This approach to class would permit the retention of a basis for a working-class identity that would survive the provision of various forms of equal access and treatment. It would therefore permit Nancy Fraser's argument that working-class struggles have historically in fact contained demands for recognition of a pre-existing identity, not only for material and social equality that would lead to the abolition of classes. Citing E. P. Thompson's classic study, *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), Fraser says, "working people fought not only to mitigate or abolish exploitation, but also to defend their class cultures and to establish the dignity of labor" (2003: 98). At least in the United States, working-class identity has never been, and certainly is not currently, as salient as racial or gender identity; but Fraser's perspective would make the distinction more one of degree than of kind.

6   My argument here is purely conceptual. The actual empirical links between existing class and race relations are complex. If racial groups are disproportionately represented in lower income groups, then processes that generate class-based inequities (such as unequal access to health insurance) will exacerbate race-based inequities. At the same time, it is processes of racial subordination that led to the disproportionate representation in the first place. Moreover, racial antipathy and disregard can also serve to weaken the sense that the class-based inequities are unjust (since the racial dimension of these inequities can "color" the way the class-based disparities are viewed in relation to justice).

7   This discussion of ways in which class-based injustice can be seen as more fundamental than identity-based injustice has been prompted by recent discussions of Rawls's having privileged class-based over race-based inequalities in his theory of justice as applying to the "basic structure" of society, and as being an "ideal theory" – the principles of a just society – as contrasted with "partial compliance" theory that addresses how one responds to existing injustice. See articles on "Equal Citizenship: Race and Ethnicity" in a special issue on "Rawls and the Law" in *Fordham Law Review* 72 (April 2004), especially the article by Tommie Shelby, "Race and Social Justice: Rawlsian Considerations." I do not mean my discussion here to be a direct gloss of Rawls's views.

8   Recent research in the United States has begun to suggest that well-meaning healthcare professionals are subject to such unrecognized and unwanted racial biases. See Institute of Medicine (2002).

9   In addition, it can be argued that the achievement of identity-based justice itself has an integrative, counter-divisiveness effect.

10 A particularly striking example of the masking of racial inequality by the divisiveness paradigm is in Glazer (1997). Glazer argued that the US failure to "integrate" African Americans had resulted in the multiculturalist emphasis on ethnoparticularistic "recognition." The focus on "integration" tended to conflate issues of racial inequality with

those of retention of cultural/racial identity among blacks (and, thereby, on Glazer's argument), and the former gets a bit lost in the latter.

11 E.g. Miller (1995); Rorty (1998); Mason (2000).

12 In theory, the individual remains the fundamental normative unit for Kymlicka. It is the individual's need for a stable cultural context that provides the grounding for group rights.

13 Kymlicka is also concerned to reproach liberalism for failing to take up issues of minority rights, and he offers an historical explanation for why liberalism has failed to do so.

14 See Anne Phillips in commenting on the turn to group difference in thinking about equality and justice: "My working assumption is still that most struggles for equality will depend on some modification in economic conditions: to put this starkly, that Aboriginals in Australia need hospitals as well as recognition, that Muslim minorities in Europe need better schools as well as Islamic ones" (1999: 129).

15 Another illustration of the shift in the meaning of "justice" from the Rawlsian to a difference/cultural context is found in Carens (2000). A prominent liberal culturalist (not necessarily self-designated), Carens defends a conception of justice as "even-handedness," by which he means a way of dealing with cultural and identity groups that is different from the view that the state should be as neutral as possible between such groups (2000: 1). The book indeed illustrates this culturalist focus, and, although Rawls's *Theory of Justice* is mentioned, the idea of robust social provision equality is entirely absent from the book.

16 Young does speak of "culture," but employs this term in reference to a much wider range of social groups than ethnocultural groups. She means by culture less a comprehensive system of meaning than "the symbols, images, meanings, habitual comportments, stories and so on through which people express their experience and communicate with one another" (1990: 23). But it is the inferior status of groups like women and racial and sexual minorities rather than their possession of culture in this sense that is central for Young.

17 The absence of a robust commitment to social provision egalitarianism in identity-based cases is illustrated in Kymlicka's discussion of African Americans, a group he attends to in several contexts. Kymlicka's main concern is to argue that the color-blind standard developed in American jurisprudence to deal with race-based injustice does not apply to national minorities (see, e.g., 1995: 58–60). He argues, more generally, that American blacks are neither an immigrant minority nor a national minority and thus do not provide a model for the groups with which Kymlicka is primarily concerned (ibid.: 24f). Again, to note Kymlicka's failure to theorize the specifically racial dimension of equality, in favor of an interest in the status of cultural minorities, is not by itself a criticism of Kymlicka, who may simply not be interested in the former issue; but it is to note the absence of a social provision egalitarian concern with respect to a group that surely desires that form of equality.

18 This liberal pluralist literature often engages with educational issues, since the realm of education is one in which the accommodating of these differences is particularly engaged. Should schools teach that cultures or religions are beyond criticism, that they are equally valid or worthy of belief, etc.? Should student groups representing all particular groups be permitted? If not, what would be the basis for selection? Should civic education in schools involve teaching students that liberal values are superior to non-liberal ones?

19 Rawls (2001) attempts to show that his *Political Liberalism* is consistent with the egalitarianism of *A Theory of Justice*, and makes clear that he still adheres to the latter. But this does not render *Political Liberalism* itself (traditionalist) egalitarian.

20 This is not to say that *A Theory of Justice* cannot be mined for insights that would help to conceptualize racial injustice, only that the work provides no attempt to do so, possibly, as suggested earlier, because Rawls's focus on "ideal theory" precludes viewing gender, race, and other identity-based categories as fundamental to justice. In *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, Rawls says, "The serious problems arising from existing discrimination and distinctions based on gender and race are not on its [i.e. *A Theory of Justice*'s] agenda, which is to present certain principles of justice and then to check them against only a few of the classical problems of political justice as these would be settled within ideal theory" (2001: 66). Shelby (2004) both defends Rawls's omission of these issues in *A Theory of Justice* as consistent with his overall project, and argues that *A Theory of Justice* nevertheless provides important resources for an account of racial discrimination.

21 Parekh does not regard himself as a liberal, which he understands in a way that does not permit robust recognition of cultures and of the cultural dimension of human life (2000: 339). Nevertheless, his substantive views fit what Kymlicka would regard as a liberal culturalist.

22 Gitlin (1995) is a more popular version of a similar position. The tone of Barry's argument is reflected in the following: "Within the universities, the academic multiculturalists exhaust their energies in arguing about the content of reading lists, but nobody seems to care much about the increasing inequality of opportunity to go to a university, especially the sort that offers the best prospects of entry into elite occupations" (2000: 64). The *New York Times* reported a remarkable illustration of Barry's view with regard to the United States, in a study finding that from 1999 until 2004, the percentage of first-year students at the 42 most selective state universities from families making over $100,000 per year has risen from 32 percent to 40 percent. And in 2000, 55 percent of first-years at the 250 most selective colleges were from the highest earning quartile of households, up from 46 percent in 1985. (The proportion coming from the middle 50 percent of the income scale, rather than the bottom quartile, fell proportionately.) See Leonhardt (2004). Rorty (1998) argues for a position similar to Barry's.

23 "[Multiculturalism] actually directs attention away from more important problems" (Barry 2000: 321).

24 For a detailed criticism of Taylor on this point, see Blum 1998.

25 It is telling, however, that, in introducing "The Equality Argument," Kymlicka endorses the statement from the Canadian Supreme Court, "the accommodation of differences is the essence of true equality" (1995: 108). The absence of any robust sense of equality of opportunity, social provision, or other traditionalist egalitarian principles and values is apparent here.

26 Fraser, by contrast, is not looking to preserve the identity of the groups with which she is concerned into the future; it would be consistent with her view that, for example, racial equality would weaken racial distinctions and racial identities altogether. If differences in the occupational, residential, and social circumstances of different racial groups diminished, this would reduce the differences associated with racial groups, thus weakening their social significance; her argument implies that she would welcome this result. (This is arguably true of gender identity as well.)

27 Fraser is explicitly critical of both Kymlicka and Taylor in one note. She says that both presuppose that the cultural groups with which they are concerned are more internally homogeneous, less interactive with, and more socially distinct from other groups within their societies than they actually are (2003: 104). I think this criticism is correct; but it misses how Kymlicka and Taylor are concerned both with different sorts of groups than Fraser is, and are also much less concerned with issues of social revaluing than she is. In

a sense, Fraser's focus in this note is somewhat surprising, as it is attached to a paragraph that begins by saying: "The moral is that a critical theory of contemporary society cannot neglect status subordination" (ibid.: 59). One might have thought that she would be critical of Kymlicka and Taylor for this very neglect; they are not really concerned with inferiorized and devalued groups. But she is not.

28 Since Kymlicka appreciates the value of individual rights as a value distinct from and constraining ethnocultural rights, it is particularly striking that he misses the domain of social provision and its attendant forms of equality as another domain of political and moral value.

29 Finally, I have not discussed a striking feature of much of the different literature discussed herein – that they largely steer clear of the divisiveness concerns with which we began. This is especially true of the egalitarian literatures. National unity or civic attachment is not articulated as a distinct value, either supportive or detractive to equality in its several forms. Rawls is a partial exception here; he is concerned with the social unity of a just society. Liberal culturalism tends to be concerned with recognition and group rights, but does not explore what holds these multiethnic societies together. Kymlicka recognizes that this is a problem for his view and makes some attempt to address it; for example, he rejects self-government rights for national minorities because of their divisive consequences. But he also acknowledges that his discussion is not adequate to the subject at hand. Liberal pluralism does give attention to shared values, which must play a part in civic attachment and national unity, but they are at best necessary but not sufficient conditions for the latter, as Kymlicka himself argues.

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