

Review of: "Resentment and Multiculturalism: Kymlicka's Canada, Bonilla Maldonado's Colombia and Modood's UK"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

This is a useful summary of the thinking of several theorists about group rights, and it's quite well written. I recommend two main changes:

First, make the overall argument clearer. What is the point of this essay? It might well be that Kymlicka is no longer the dominant theorist on this topic. He assumes too liberal a background political order. The other theorists are more realistic in framing group rights in ways that resist assimilation.

Second, the other theorists are presented as differing from Kymlicka because they imagine groups as collective-minded and thus resistant to a liberal society. The author presents this as due largely to Islam identity. He/she alludes only briefly to the resistance to assimilation that this produces. In fact, it's much worse than that. Groups that lack an individualist psychology have done badly in all Western countries because they lack the capacity to deal well with a free society. That's most visible in the trouble many immigrants from the non-West have in getting through school and avoiding social problems like crime and welfare. Also the collapse of the family in much of black America and among Native Americans.

So groups with different cultures present a problem not only among theorists but more importantly in antipoverty policy.

Also: Charles Taylor is mentioned briefly. His role in the argument is unclear.