

**Canadian Theories of Multiculturalism and Public Education:
Investigating the Disjuncture**

Jim Farney
University of Regina

CPSA 2012
Edmonton AB
DRAFT

Canadian Theories of Multiculturalism and Public Education: Investigating a Disjuncture

In the conventional story of Canadian politics, one of this country's successes has been its ability to accommodate multiple types of population diversity. Multiculturalism has accommodated immigrant ethnic communities, bilingualism and federalism responded to Quebec nationalism and regional identities, and self-government rights accommodate indigenous peoples into a broadly liberal polity (Kymlicka 2008, 104). While little about the treatment of Aboriginals by the Canadian state can or should be taken as a model, multiculturalism and federalism have been successful enough to produce Canadian model of diversity. Incorporating diversity into the polity has been generally accepted by the Canadian public, which has maintained high levels of social solidarity as it has become much more diverse. In comparative terms, this is a unique combination (Banting 2010).

Since the geographic and economic factors that have contributed to this happy situation are not readily changeable by policy-makers (Kymlicka 2008), it is the multifaceted model of accommodating diversity by the Canadian state, especially the federal and Quebec governments, which has attracted the attention of policy-makers and theorists (Robinson 2008). This paper begins by examining the different views of this model offered by its two pre-eminent exponents, Will Kymlicka and Charles Taylor. Each of these thinkers has developed theoretically rich accounts of how Canada accommodates diversity and has paid close attention to Canadian practice.

Their accounts of the Canadian model of accommodation pay only limited attention to arguably the most important lever by which diverse communities are integrated into the broader Canadian society over the longer term: our primary and secondary education systems.¹ Much of the discussion around the place of education in the literature on multiculturalism takes place in the context of stylized foreign cases: the Amish in the United States or Muslims in Europe being particularly common examples. To the limited extent Kymlicka and Taylor, my two exemplars, engage education, they see it as a clear site for a comprehensive liberalism structured around secular schools seeking to inculcate in students a moral vision of themselves as autonomous individuals (Kymlicka 2001, Maclure and Taylor 2011). They imply that this is not just a desirable goal but substantially Canadian practice.

¹ For examinations of the importance of education in multicultural societies see Banks (2004), Macedo (2000), and Callan (1997).

Not only does downplaying the role of education mis-represent one of the shared experiences shared by (almost all) Canadians, but its misrepresentation creates an important lacunae in our understanding of how Canada accommodates diversity. If we take seriously the idea that education regimes are central to the accommodation of diversity, then we do not have a ‘Canadian model’ of organized accommodation but, rather, four regionally distinct ways of organizing publically funded education (the Maritimes, Quebec and British Columbia, Ontario, and the Prairies) plus the federally funded and (usually) band administered First Nations education system.² Each of these regimes embodies different ways of accommodating organizing demands for communal schools. These differences are the result of federalism but they also suggest we should be careful about treating the multicultural leg of the Canadian tripod of diversity accommodation as a single model and, to the extent theorizing about Canada’s multiculturalism regime is grounded in Canadian practice, suggest our theories of multiculturalism have missed a key facet of its practice.

Kymlicka’s and Taylor’s Analysis of the Canadian Model

Will Kymlicka’s account of Canada’s accommodation of diversity begins with the argument that most cultural rights recognized under Canada’s diversity regime actually belong to individuals, not to groups as usually supposed and, as such, can be defended on the basis of a liberal commitment to the ‘freedom and equality of individual citizens’ (Kymlicka 1995, 34). A full defence of multiculturalism on these grounds requires two sets of distinctions.³

First, it is necessary to differentiate between the self-government rights accorded national minorities like the Quebecois or Aborigines, the polyethnic rights accorded immigrants, and the special representation rights which allocate representation on institutions like the Supreme Court or the Senate to minorities. Representation rights will not concern us further, but the distinction between self-government rights and polyethnic rights is central to Kymlicka’s argument and, as he presents it, core to the Canadian model. The difference, ultimately, has to do with the viability of the claim to set up viable separate institutions that embody the deep bonds of language and culture:

So while immigrant groups have increasingly asserted their right to express their ethnic particularity, they typically wish to do so within the public institutions of the English-speaking society. In rejecting assimilation, they are not wishing to set up a parallel society, as is typically demanded by national minorities (Kymlicka 1995, 15).

Recognizing and respecting such cultures is important because it allows individuals to ‘lead our lives from the inside, in accordance with our beliefs about what gives value to life’ (1995, 81). In a society like Quebec, a parallel society operating in its own language and with symbols embodying distinctive traditions and understandings is the best way to do this. For smaller,

² For the benchmark discussion of Canada’s education regime see Manzer (1994, 2003).

³ My account of Kymlicka here focuses on *Multicultural Citizenship*, as it is the most fulsome theoretical accounting of his position. *Finding Our Way* (1998) discusses the Canadian case at more length, but does not make a substantially different argument nor does it offer a different set of case studies.

(usually) immigrant groups such separate societies not viable or (usually) desired, but much can be done to accommodate minority beliefs and identities within the larger public square.

But, toleration and recognition must also be limited by the basic standards of justice liberalism requires differentiating between providing cultural groups external protection from discrimination and allowing those groups to suppress internal dissent. The former is a legitimate protection, the later is not. This is particularly relevant for polyethnic rights and the demands of immigrant groups, who need cultural and ethnic rights and recognition to ‘protect specific religious and cultural practices which might not be adequately supported through the market...or which are disadvantaged by existing legislation’ (38).⁴

It is on the question of internal restrictions that religious groups and education appear in Kymlicka’s account. Here, he offers Amish, Mennonites, and Doukhobour communities as examples. This is clearly understandable and defensible: these are very small, deeply counter-cultural minorities, who reject formal education after Grade 8 so as to defend their religious beliefs and agrarian lifestyle. While mentioning that Muslims have recently sought similar exemptions from common practice, Kymlicka argues that the accommodation of these demands through separate schools are best understood as the result of historical legacies, not present day multiculturalism, and, he believes, are unjustifiable today (1995, 37-38, 170). They can be tolerated if not manifestly unjust, but certainly cannot be seen as models for present-day policy making.

This position is bound up with the very definition of liberalism: is it about toleration of difference or individual autonomy? (1995, 154). Coming down on the side of autonomy and of a comprehensive vision of liberalism, Kymlicka argues that our historical practice of religious (and other) freedoms in the Western world are mostly matters of recognizing the freedom of individual conscience. Those aspects of our systems which are illiberal and it is religious and indigenous examples that Kymlicka offers, cannot fit into a progressive, liberal, society. Kymlicka softens this position by arguing that, as a matter of both prudence and of justice, there is little room for coercive interference in the internal workings of such communities but the state, and broader civil society, needs to encourage and facilitate dissident movements towards liberalism in those communities.

In an essay, ‘Education for Citizenship’, Kymlicka gives further thought to the implications of these arguments to citizenship education. Education for citizenship is a goal which ought to pervade the curriculum and should seek to inculcate four virtues:

1. public-spiritedness, including the ability to evaluate the performance of those in office, and the willingness to engage in public discourse;
2. a sense of justice, and the capacity to discern and respect the rights of others, and to moderate one’s own claims accordingly;
3. civility and tolerance;
4. a shared sense of solidarity or loyalty. (Kymlicka 2001, 296)

⁴ Societal cultures and aboriginal communities having received recognition by their respective sub-national governments.

Kymlicka defines public-spiritedness as the ability to offer public reasons ‘capable of persuading people of different faiths and nationalities....liberal citizens must justify their political demands in terms that fellow citizens can understand and accept as consistent with their status as free and equal citizens’ (Kymlicka 2001, 297). While being open to the argument that the best life is not necessarily one of political involvement, he argues that religious groups have a particularly tough time meeting this requirement. Justice, civility, and solidarity he uses more straightforwardly but, for each virtue, he emphasises the importance of encountering diverse views and of having a shared frame of reference; of being trained to speak the language of public reason.

Schools are critical sites for nurturing these virtues because no other institution or shared experience can be expected to supply them. The market, political participation, and civil society all, in one way or another, come up short in inculcating public virtues.⁵ By virtue of the centrality of education in creating these virtues, Kymlicka rejects the notion the separate religious schools create good citizens (2001, 304-305).⁶ Even as he acknowledges that common schools, in practice, are highly segregated by class, race, and academic talent and that particular values can only be built up in homogenous environments, Kymlicka argues that children of those groups who seek to participate in public life ‘having chosen to exercise their rights as full citizens, must accept the sort of education needed to promote responsible citizenship, including the obligation to attend common schools at some point in the educational process’ (2001, 307). Kymlicka’s commitment to comprehensive liberalism requires that school promote a strong understanding of individual autonomy, with the ‘capacity to rationally reflect on, and potentially revise, our conceptions of the good life’ (2001, 307). This requires that students be exposed to competing conceptions of the good and that children be pushed away from modes of thinking that depend on deference to tradition and authority (2001, 309).

Insofar as he develops his comprehensive autonomy seeking vision of liberalism in dialogue with Canadian practice, there is a marked disjuncture at this point in his argument. In avoiding sustained discussion of either education, and in treating religion only in passing, he avoids engaging with the most striking organizational accommodation of (sometimes illiberal and sometimes simply non-liberal) practices by the Canadian state. And it is for this reason that I want to suggest that Kymlicka’s conclusions about Canadian practice are, at best, incomplete and, probably, should be pulled in a more communitarian and consociational direction than he would feel comfortable moving in. I say this not out of disagreement with the normative part of his argument – it is a powerful one – but out of the sense that his description of societal practice is seriously incomplete and, if we examine the historical norm of the accommodation of diversity by the Canadian state, we see a much more limited liberalism, premised on toleration, than Kymlicka suggests exists.

The suggestion of a communitarian take on Canadian multiculturalism usually makes us turn towards the work of Charles Taylor. Taylor’s treatment of culture, religion, and education

⁵ Kymlicka’s treatment of civil society is interesting on two points. First, he lumps together organizations like environmental groups together with families—a rather broad brush stroke. Second, while acknowledging the popularity of Robert Putnam’s social capital thesis, which points to a different story of how people integrate into society, he brushes it aside.

⁶ Though he is willing to allow ‘isolationist multicultural’ groups like the Amish their own schools, given that they do not seek to engage with broader public life.

compose a political vision usually seen to be in creative tension with the sort of Anglo-American liberalism Kymlicka is grounded in. Two features of this vision are important for the purposes of this paper: his notion of the dialogical constitution of the self and his prioritizing of expressive freedom for individuals. He is at great pains to insure we do not try to separate our vision of the self from our vision of the good, for ‘selfhood and morality turn out to be inextricably linked themes’ (1989, 3). We need to be reminded of the linkage between the self and the good because the individual autonomy that is the mark of modernity too often ignores the reality that ‘living within ... strongly qualified horizons is constitutive of human agency, ... stepping outside these limits would be tantamount to stepping outside of human personhood’ (1989, 25). Within such limits, ‘our identity is that which allows us to define what is important to us and what is not’ (1989, 30).

Our horizons and identities, for Taylor, almost inescapably embody certain moral goods. To some extent, our identities are both constitute us and can be molded by us – we do have some individual choice in which parts of the complex identities we choose to emphasize at any given time. At the same time, ‘the full definition of someone’s identity involves not only his stand on moral and spiritual matters but also some reference to a defining community’ (1989, 36). Identity, defined communally, sets the framework for being a self at all and provides the source of meaning for individual lives. This requirement for meaning and expression poses one pole towards which moderns are pulled.

The other pole, understood in many different ways, is freedom or autonomy. Taylor follows Montesquieu and Tocqueville in seeking a ‘civic freedom’ (1990a) or positive freedom (1985) that is grounded in a society’s shared values. Freedom, like identity, is fundamentally expressive, for ‘the fact that we now place such importance on expressive power means our contemporary notions of what it is to respect people’s integrity includes that of protecting their freedom to express and develop their own opinions, to define their own life conceptions, to draw up their own life plans’ (1989, 25). An important part of insuring that people can be free is insuring that their defining identities are respected – a point that returns us to the dialogical constitution of the self.

Where Taylor breaks with some liberals is in his concern that, if freedom is understood too narrowly, liberal democracies cannot guarantee their own moral underpinnings (Taylor 2007). There needs to be a moral community with a sense of the common good that can bond people if democracy is to function properly. For the last two hundred years it has most often been nationalism that has provided this glue. Taylor argues that the recognition of ethnic groups that meet certain minimum requirements is a morally defensible solution to the problem of meaning. In pluralistic societies like Canada, the challenge is to find ways of promoting this collective identity that can underpin democracy while still including equally members of all of the groups that make up modern society.

Taylor’s argument for the recognition of cultural rights as group rights builds on both of these commitments. From the standpoint of promoting democracy, the community of meaning that a healthy linkage between nation and state provides has been a critical foundation underpinning democracy for the last two centuries. For minority groups within a particular state, the recognition that their cultural community has value is often critical to insuring a peaceful polity.

Balancing a unified cultural community as unifying force with the recognition of diversity is a difficult project, but it is certainly possible, as Taylor hopes the Quebec experience has shown.

From the standpoint of the individual, Taylor sees those aspects of culture that can be understood as individual rights as unproblematic. He has put the weight of his argument, instead, behind the notion that the survival of cultural groups as groups is critical to human flourishing. As we have seen above, the dialogical constitution of the self requires that one have a community within which one can develop. For moderns, such an identity must be self-articulated to be experienced as valid (Taylor 1994). Recognition means more than simply agreeing that group Y does, in fact, exist. Recognition means that the other culture is respected, an equal partner in dialogue, and is allowed the ability to act to insure its own survival as a collectivity. At the personal level this is an application of the idea that human beings are possessed of equal dignity and that individuals have equal rights to respect themselves. At the political or societal level, the demand for recognition leads to a politics of difference, within which cultures demand that they be allowed to articulate their particular vision of the good (Taylor 1994, 39-42).

Taylor does not want such recognition to be without limits and posits that it must meet two types of standard if a group is to be recognized. First, it must be evaluated to see if it is worth granting recognition to. Even once a culture has been judged worthy of respect, the specific claims it advances must be evaluated to see if they infringe upon individual rights (Taylor 1994, 58). Taylor's treatment of these limits is rather unclear, but he does argue that:

one has to distinguish the fundamental liberties, those that should never be infringed and therefore ought to be unassailably entrenched, on one hand, from privileges and immunities that are important, but that can be revoked or restricted for reasons of public policy – although one would need a strong reason to do this – on the other. (Taylor 1994, 59).⁷

Given the importance of recognition to human flourishing one might expect that Taylor would treat other forms of identity just as he treats cultural identity. While he is willing to recognize gender as a category deserving of recognition (Taylor 1994), the archetype of communal recognition that he has in mind in all of his discussions of group recognition is clearly nationalism or ethnicity. In the last fifteen years, Taylor's work has moved beyond a concern with culture or ethnicity to considerations of the place of religion's influence on the development of modernity and the place of religious claims in modern politics and social life.

Taylor argues quite strongly for the necessity of religious frames of meaning for human flourishing. Belief in or about the divine gives a 'perspective of a transformation of human beings which takes them beyond or outside of whatever is normally understood as human flourishing' (Taylor 2007, 430). In Part V of *A Secular Age* Taylor details at some considerable depth how religious belief – and, specifically, Christian belief – can contribute to human flourishing in the face of perennial problems like violence and death. Taylor is also quick to point out that such benefits are usually closely tied to communal membership, not simply to individual belief or freedom of conscience (Taylor 2002, 22-29).

⁷ This discussion takes place in the context of Taylor defending Quebec's right to enforce French-language sign laws, so he is willing to allow fairly substantial infringements on, at least, freedom of expression.

Despite finding that religious communities provide grounds for human flourishing – grounds which seem strikingly similar to those he provides for culture – and that these benefits are tied to communal membership, Taylor opposes granting religious claims for political recognition. Indeed, he is a strong supporter of a secular state. Taylor holds that liberal democracies require a commitment to a secular public square. This is so because ‘the only thing we can hope to share is a purely political ethic, not its embedding in some religious view’ (Taylor 1998, 33). Political secularism neither accepts nor rejects religious foundations for its political ethics, it only seeks that people – for whatever reason – subscribe to its political ethics (Taylor 1998).

Believers must realize that the gains of modern society are, to some extent, predicated on ‘some breach with established religion’ (Taylor 1999, 29). Taylor argues for a faith that speaks

‘from within the achievements of modernity, [that] measure[s] the humbling degree to which some of the most impressive extensions of a gospel ethic depended on a breakaway from Christendom, and from within these gains try to make clearer to ourselves and others the tremendous dangers that arise in them...the gospel message to this time and place has to respond both to what in it already reflects the life of God and to the doors that have closed against this life’ (Taylor 1999, 37).

Such belief must realize that the attempt to mold a society to a set of religious beliefs is ultimately ‘dangerous to faith’ (Taylor 1999, 17) and that societal pluralism is crucial to a flourishing public space. Central to such an effort is the realization that, in the culture of authenticity, people experience faith very much as an individual calling and that the most religious groups should do is to, for example, ‘accompany young people as they navigate the shoals in these uncertain waters, listening to them and speaking to their concerns’ (Taylor 2006, 8) recognizing that each should be free to find God on their own (Taylor 1999). Taylor identifies sexuality as an area of central importance where most religious groups – though perhaps especially his own Catholic Church – have real challenges to overcome before they can fully walk with people such a way (Taylor 2007a, 485-504; 2007b).

So far, Taylor sounds as if he might be tilting towards a more limited or political understanding of liberalism; one that emphasizes toleration between groups with the state protecting a core set of individual rights. Taylor’s involvement in Quebec’s Bouchard-Taylor Report (2008) and a recent co-authored book (Maclure and Taylor 2011) practically address a number of issues, including education, which suggest this is not the case. In addressing education directly, Taylor comes to conclusions very much like those of Kymlicka, despite his different starting point and more substantial attention to the intellectual importance of religion. In the context of discussing secularism, Maclure and Taylor argue that the

‘state will favour the development of student’s critical autonomy. In exposing students to a plurality of worldviews and modes of life, the democratic and liberal state makes the task more difficult for parents seeking to transmit a particular order of beliefs to their children and even more difficult for groups wishing to shield themselves from the influence of the larger society in order to perpetuate a style of life based more on respect for tradition than on individual autonomy and the exercise of critical judgement (2011, 16).

Religious parents may not request their children be exempted from courses in ‘sex education, ethics, religious culture, or civic education’ because such exemptions ‘may compromise the realization of one of the important aims of primary and secondary education, namely, to teach tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and other civic skills within societies within diverse beliefs and values’ (2011, 102). Taylor offers Quebec, and the introduction of religious studies into the core curriculum there, as an example of how such educational practice can still give some place to religious sentiment.

At least on education, then, what Taylor offers is a much more comprehensive vision of education than he offers elsewhere. Thus, despite the very different starting points from which Kymlicka and Taylor address the question of education, they come to substantially similar conclusions about what it ought to look like and, in particular, how religion ought to be treated by it. That, on education, they both come across as comprehensive, rather than political, liberals is important in and of itself. But, that insight becomes more salient if we set it into the practice of Canadian multiculturalism that they have developed their theories in dialogue with.

The Institutionalization of Diversity in Canadian Education

The starting point for contrasting the ‘Canadian model of multiculturalism’ with the practice of education must be with the simple fact that primary and secondary education is primarily a provincial matter. Making education a provincial mandate was part of the original Confederation bargain meant to protect the religious and cultural diversity of the day. While each province (as well as the territories) has its own education system, for our purposes five ways of organizing publically funded education can be seen in Canada.⁸ All five organizational forms today give the Francophone’s and English-speakers the chance to be educated in their own language, though there are important differences in who gains access to those systems and to the availability of education in other languages. This similarity of language aside, the provinces differ significantly with regards to their organizational accommodation of diversity and to the extent to which public funds go to publically controlled schools.

The Maritime model is one where there is a single publically funded system with French and English language school boards and no support for private or independent schools. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island had, in the 19th century, reached informal compromises where certain public schools would be reserved for Catholic students but these compromises broke down in the 1960s as school amalgamation made such reservation impossible (Manzer 2003, 42, 212). Newfoundland maintained an elaborate system of publically funded religious education, constitutionally entrenched on its entrance into confederation, much longer. Facing significant financial pressure in the 1990s, the provincial government (through five years of controversy that saw a Royal Commission, two referendums, and a constitutional amendment) moved from a system where there were 27 school boards operated by four different denominations to a 10 boards divided by language, with no role for religious bodies (Manzer 2003, 209; Galway and Dibbon 2012). This model comes closest to the comprehensive liberalism Taylor and Kymlicka argue for in educational matters. At the same time, this is Canada’s least diverse region, with relatively low levels of immigration reducing the demand for

⁸ This typology is based on that developed by Manzer (1994, 2003), updated to include the changes of the 1990s in Newfoundland and Quebec and to include Aboriginal schools.

the accommodation of new identities, and one in which the economic situation puts a premium on efficiency

Quebec's educational system was formed with the need to accommodate cross-cutting religious and linguistic diversity. From 1876 onwards, public education in Quebec was provided by two publically funded school systems, one Roman Catholic and one Protestant, each of which offered instruction in both French and English where numbers warranted. The Parent Commission recommended, in 1964, the end of denominational education and the introduction of dual, linguistically divided systems. The recommendations faced opposition from both sovereignists – who opposed the entrenchment of English education – and entrenched religious educators. Though the reforms of the 1960s removed substantive control out of the hands of the Catholic Church, two substantial barriers remained to the creation of an entirely public system. First, a series of court cases and political controversy around Bill 101, which restricted English-language education only to the children of Canadian citizens one of whom had received education in English, marked the political difficulty of structuring education linguistically, especially as immigrants increasingly called for access to English-language instruction for their children. Second, the entrenchment of the denominational schools of Quebec City and Montreal in the 1867 BNA Act required an amendment to the constitution to change and became caught up in the constitutional struggles of the 1970s and 1980s. Removing these barriers took until the late 1990s, making the 1998-9 school year the first in which Quebec's schools were grouped by language alone (Manzer 2003, 46-7, 204-9).

The system, however, still gives much more of a place to religious identity than does the Maritime style of organization, where confessional schools are entirely private. It does so in two ways. First, some space has been retained for religious education in the publically funded system, initially through a range of religion and ethics courses and then, since 2008, the controversial Ethics and Religious Culture (ECR) program, which is mandatory for students in all public and private schools.⁹ This course is intended to be taught in a way which is a neutral overview of a diverse range of faiths and ethical positions intended to familiarize students with the variety of values held by their fellow citizens. Second, Quebec has a sizable private school sector which receives provincial support through per student grants at a rate of roughly 70% that given to public schools.¹⁰ This results in what might be called a linguistically differentiated public system combined with public support for private confessional alternatives.

While it has not seen the political controversy over language, religion, and culture in its educational system, British Columbia's school organization is quite similar to Quebec's. It extends full public funding only to public schools that operate in both English or French. Since 1977, partial funding (between 35 and 50% of the per student transfer of the public system) and significant oversight have been applied to independent schools. Some of these schools are religious, but more than in other provinces are distinctive because of their pedagogy (ie Montessori or Waldorf).

⁹ In *Loyola High School v. Courchesne* Loyola High School, a private Catholic school in Montreal, received permission to teach the content of the ECR course from a distinctly Catholic perspective, rather than the neutral perspective outlined in the curriculum. In the *Drummondville* case, which is currently before the Supreme Court, a group of parents have sued to have their children exempted from attending the classes on religious grounds.

¹⁰ See Tremblay (2012), Ouellet (2000), and McAndrew, Milot, Imbeault, and Eid (2008). For a comparative study of publically funded private schools in Canada see Teyssier (2011).

In contrast to the other provinces, Ontario's educational system has shown remarkable stability. Like Quebec, (and briefly Manitoba), the 1867 BNA Act entrenched a division between separate (Catholic) and public (Protestant) school systems, with separate classes or schools for Francophone students being established in 1967. Since then, instruction in a wide variety of other heritage languages has been established. Until the late 1980s, the public system maintained significant space for non-sectarian Protestant religious instruction – saying the Lord's Prayer at the beginning of the day, for example. In a deeply controversial move in 1984, extended full funding to separate (Catholic) schools. Ontario governments have consistently refused to directly support the schools of other faiths, although it does provide an income tax credit for tuition to such schools (White 2003).

This configuration is facing increasing challenges. The major challenge has been a series of legal challenges to the public funding of Catholic schools from other faith groups who also desire their own schools or those who desire Ontario's schools to simply be secular and, increasingly, conflict between the Charter protected rights of gay and lesbian students and Catholic teaching on sexuality. In a more minor way, the willingness of school boards to experiment with Afro-centric, arts, sports, First Nations, single-sex, and LGBTQ schools suggests an informal commitment on the part of educators to accommodating diverse identities through diverse curriculum sometimes administered through distinctive schools (Thompson and Wallner 2011). Nevertheless, Ontario can best be described as possessing a confessionally and linguistically differentiated public system which does not offer public support to private schools.

The prairie provinces represents the fourth model of educational organization in Canada, one which has been called a public pluriformity model (Hiemstra and Brink 2006). While there is significant variation between the provinces, the core of the model is support for secular systems operating in both French and English, significant (though not always equal) support for a separate Catholic system, and substantial support for private schools which are often (but not always) organized to further particular faith, pedagogical, or cultural goals.

Although Manitoba's schools originally followed Ontario's dual confessional model, since 1890 the core of the system has been non-religious. Initially, the highly contentious 1890 act mandated English as the predominant language but changes in 1970 established a dual-language system similar to that on Ontario (Manzer 2003, 306). Since 1981, Manitoba has also offered public funding (at about 65% of the public rates) to independent schools which agree to teach the provincial curriculum and hire provincially accredited teachers. Most of these schools are religious and the Roman Catholic schools in the province are organized into boards.

Saskatchewan has historically funded both Catholic and public schools that operate in both English and French. Since 1966, a number of other schools (associate schools) have received full funding from the local public board on one off agreements while independent schools, which are subject to less oversight and most of which are religious, receive partial funding (recently raised to 50%) on a per student basis.

Alberta's system of educational administration is the most complicated of any of the provinces. It comprises publically funded Catholic (Francophone and English) and non-sectarian public (both Francophone and English) systems which enrol the majority of the students. However, mechanisms exist for 'alternative' programs in the non-sectarian public systems that accommodate religious groups, most notably Hutterites. A second category of independent

schools (often religious) have received partial state funding on a per student basis since 1967. Finally, there are a number of charter schools which are officially secular and which receive funding equal to that of the public system but which accommodate distinctive cultural (eg Aboriginal) or pedagogical (English as a Second Language) niches. As of 2002, there were additionally 250 private schools in the province (Hiemstra and Brink 2006, 1175) as well as a significant home schooling community. Described as a ‘pragmatic pluriform public model’ (Hiemstra and Brink 2006), Alberta’s diverse mechanisms of educational administration have come about through a remarkably conflict-free evolution.

Finally, there is the archipelago of approximately 500 federally funded schools that serve 60% of on-reserve First Nations children. The other 40% of on-reserve first nations children attend provincially run schools under agreements where the federal government pays tuition for them (Mendelson 2009, 3; Carr-Stewart and Steeves, 2009).¹¹ The James Bay Cree, Mi’kmaq in Nova Scotia, and small groups of bands in northern Manitoba and British Columbia have organized bodies akin to school boards to help oversee their schools and these organizations are seen to be important experiments in improving on reserve education (Mendelson 2009). Other on-reserve schools are governed by the local band and suffer from the lack of curricular support and political independence that higher-level educational bodies can provide. The vast majority of first nations schools face a situation where they are underfunding and struggle with the legacy of residential schools, yet are seen as the providing access to ‘the new buffalo’ and offer the hope of revitalizing aboriginal culture and language. The distinctiveness of these schools is addressed under the frameworks of Kymlicka and Taylor as appropriate, given the status of first nation’s bands as geographically distinct nations but it is worth highlighting that they are the only system that comes under direct federal jurisdiction and can be seen to represent a fused cultural, linguistic, and spiritual national identity.

Conclusions

A full contrast of the dominant models of Canadian diversity with the actual structure of its accommodation in Canadian educational systems is considerably more complicated than the typology presented here. It would have to examine classroom practice in the different systems, establish whether the different structures create differences in how parents and students are integrated into the broader society, and account for broader issues of political economy (Manzer 1994, 2003). It would have to do so, moreover, in the light of Wallner’s (2009) observation that education is a policy area in which there is considerable policy learning between actors who appear to be in completely separate organizations.

While acknowledging these limits, the contrast between how Taylor and Kymlicka theorize about diversity in Canada and, in the field of education, how we actually enact does point two conclusions.

¹¹ Schools in Nunavut and the Northwest territories substantially reflect the very substantial First Nations makeup of the territorial populations, but operate as single systems. In the Yukon, education is delivered through public and Catholic schools in French, English, and Aboriginal languages. Most provinces have also been experimenting with how best to deliver culturally sensitive education to First Nations students who live off reserve in both urban and rural areas. The resulting governance and consultative structures vary widely.

First, spotlighting education highlights the comprehensiveness of the liberalism that both thinkers espouse. In Kymlicka's case, this is not surprising; but it is a surprising development in Taylor's thought. Given the depth of the theoretical debate between comprehensive and political readings of liberalism, that the contrast between theory and practice helps make such an identification is an important contribution.

Second, it is a contrast that suggests an empirical research program. Canada's multitude of school systems would allow us to explore a number of related questions. First, there is the comparative question as to why different provinces have been moving in different directions with regards the structure of their educational systems, particularly the funding of private religious schools. Some of this difference can be explained by the different constitutional status of Roman Catholic schools in the different provinces, but some of the difference must be attributed to different political opportunity structures. Understanding these differences will give us a fuller understanding of the Canadian model. Second, it may be possible to examine whether or not these organizational differences influence minority integration and the attitude of majority groups towards minority ones. Does the common sense of Taylor and Kymlicka that common schools foster integration true or is it a distinction that does not make that much difference? Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the contrast between Taylor, Kymlicka, and the Canadian practice of education forces us acknowledge the complexity of diversity and the significant degree of variation in how Canadians encounter and accommodate it.

Works Cited

- Banks, James A. (ed). 2004. *Diversity and Citizenship Education: Global Perspectives*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Banting, Keith G. 2010. Is there a Progressive's Dilemma in Canada? Immigration, Multiculturalism, and the Welfare State. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 43:4 (December): 797-820.
- Callan, Eamonn. 1997. *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Carr-Stewart, Sheila and Larry Steeves. 2009. First Nations Educational Governance: A Fractured Mirror. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 97, 1-17.
- Galway, Gerald and David Dibbon (eds). 2012. *Education Reform: From Rhetoric to Reality*. London: Althouse Press.
- Hiemstra, John L. and Robert A. Brink. 2006. The Advent of a Public Pluriformity Model: Faith-Based School Choice in Alberta. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29:4, 1157-1190.
- Kymlicka, Will. 2008. Marketing Canadian Pluralism in the International Arena. In Linda A. White, Richard Simeon, Robert Vipond, and Jennifer Wallner (eds) *The Comparative Turn in Canadian Political Science*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 99-123.
- _____. 2001. Education for Citizenship. in Will Kymlicka (ed) *Politics in the Vernacular: Nationalism, Multiculturalism, and Citizenship*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 291-317.
- _____. 1998. *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 1995. *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Macedo, Stephen. 2000. *Diversity and Distrust: Civic Education in a Multicultural Democracy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Maclure, Jocelyn and Charles Taylor. 2011. *Secularism and Freedom of Conscience*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Manzer, Ronald. 2003. *Educational Regimes and Anglo-American Democracy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
(1994,

- McAndrew, Marie, Micheline Milot, Jean-Sebastien Imbeault, and Paul Eid. 2008. *L'Accommodement raisonnable et la diversité religieuse à l'école publique*. Montreal: Fides.
- Mendelson, Michael. 2009. *Why We Need a First Nations Education Act*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy.
- Ouellet, Fernand. 2000. *L'Enseignement Culturel des Religions*. Sherbrooke: CRP.
- Robinson, Andrew. 2008. Is Canadian Multiculturalism Parochial? In Linda A. White, Richard Simeon, Robert Vipond, and Jennifer Wallner (eds) *The Comparative Turn in Canadian Political Science*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 41-59.
- Taylor, Charles. 1979. *Hegel and Modern Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1985. *Philosophical Papers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- _____. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 1990. Religion in a Free Society. in *Articles of Faith, Articles of Peace: The Religious Liberty Clause and the American Public Philosophy* ed. James Davison Hunter and Os Guinness, 93-113.
- _____. 1994. The Politics of Recognition. in *Multiculturalism* ed. Amy Gutman. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 25-75.
- _____. 1999. *A Catholic Modernity?* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- _____. 2002. *Varieties of Religion Today: William James Revisited*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- _____. 2006. Benedict XVI. *Public Culture* 18:1, 7-10.
- _____. 2007. *A Secular Age*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Teyssier, Ronan. 2011. The Organizational and Electoral Determinants of the Provincial Funding of Private Education in Canada: A Quantile Regression Analysis. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 44:4 (December): 829-859.
- Thompson, Debra and Jennifer Wallner. 2011. A Focusing Tragedy: Public Policy and the Establishment of Afrocentric Education in Toronto. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 44:4 (December): 807-829.
- Tremblay, Stephanie. 2012. *École et Religions*. Montreal: Fides.

Wallner, Jennifer. 2009. *Defying the Odds: Similarity and Difference in Canadian Primary and Secondary Education*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: University of Toronto.

White, Linda A. 2003. Liberalism, Group Rights, and the Boundaries of Toleration: The Case of Minority Religious Schools in Ontario. *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 36: 5, 975-1003.