

Reading/Discussion Questions for October 15
17.042 Citizenship and Pluralism

1. Green discusses what he calls the problem of “minorities within minorities.” What is this problem? How have defenders of rights for minority cultural groups responded to this problem? Do these responses adequately address the problem in Green’s view? In your view?
2. The central claim that Barry makes in *Culture and Equality* is that “multiculturalist policies are not in general well designed to advance the values of liberty and equality, and that the implementation of such policies tend to mark a retreat from both” (12). Why does he think this? Be sure to consider what he thinks “equal treatment” consists in.
3. Barry argues that exemptions to generally applicable laws can be made but only on pragmatic grounds—what he calls the “rule and exemption” approach. In what cases does he think exemptions are permissible and in what cases impermissible, and why or why not? Consider his discussion of cases involving exemptions to animal slaughter laws, helmet laws for motorcyclists, and helmet laws for construction workers.
4. Parekh argues that “there is no single principle in terms of which disputed practices can be evaluated” and maintains that we cannot but start with the “operative public values” of society in engaging in intercultural dialogue over disputed cultural practices (267). What would such intercultural dialogue look like, and how would it resolve cultural disputes?