Understanding Multiculturalism through
Principles of Social Justice

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Abstract

Whether and how multiculturalism relates to social justice has been a subject of contention. In this paper I examine understandings of multiculturalism in the context of a set of principles concerning social justice. The principles are equality, need, and desert (or merit or equity), the principles developed by David Miller in *Principles of Social Justice*.   Data about understandings of multiculturalism come from federal government statements and from surveys addressing issues of multiculturalism. In particular, I examine the text of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* and other statements from Canadian Heritage. The survey data come from several surveys conducted across Canada and from those I conducted in Regina, Saskatchewan.

When considering multiculturalism, individuals and organizations often understand and accept some, but not all, aspects of social justice. Some consider multiculturalism to be a dynamic process, whereby people from different backgrounds work together to build an inclusive society.   But there is often hesitation about, or opposition to, multiculturalism because of concerns about limited numbers of jobs or unwillingness to deal with barriers to participation and integration. The paper urges researchers to place greater emphasis on empirical findings about connections between multiculturalism and social justice. I also recommend that principles common to social justice and multiculturalism be applied to address employment, participation, and integration.

A. Introduction

1. Overview

In this paper I address two themes: (1) the relation between multiculturalism and social justice and (2) how Canadians view the dual issues of multiculturalism and social justice.

With respect to the first theme of the paper, there is contention about the connection between multiculturalism and social justice; the nature of this relationship will continue to be a subject of debate in Canada and internationally. In this paper I examine principles of and statements about multiculturalism in the context of David Miller's theory of social justice. In *Principles of Social Justice* (Miller, 1999), Miller develops and analyzes the principles of equality, need, and desert (merit or equity) as a way of considering social justice. There are many other approaches to social justice – I selected Miller's approach since it has a clearly delineated set of standards for social justice and since he has applied this approach to questions of diversity and multiculturalism (Miller, 2004).

The second aim of the paper is to examine views of Canadians concerning issues of multiculturalism and social justice. These views and opinions are diverse and there are only limited data available about how Canadians understand these connections. However, there have been several surveys containing questions about multicultural issues. I will review some of the responses in these surveys in the light of principles of social justice. The responses provide insight into how Canadians view multiculturalism and how they consider it to address one or more aspects of social justice.

2. Multiculturalism

There are multiple meanings of and approaches to multiculturalism (Li, 1999; Fleras and Elliott, 2002). I begin by adopting Bhiku Parekh's distinction between multicultural society as a "fact of cultural diversity" and multiculturalism as "a normative response to that fact" (Parekh, 2000, p. 6). A set of normative responses, one that few would associate with multiculturalism, is limited acceptance of, disrespect for, and intolerance of those of a culture or background different than ones's own, possibly leading to exclusion and conflict. In contrast, multiculturalism is a social response to diversity that includes, at a minimum, norms of acceptance of, respect for, and tolerance of others. Multiculturalism presumably means that interpersonal and intergroup relations, social institutions, and perhaps even social structures, have some consistency with these norms. In addition, a society that practices multiculturalism must find a way for individuals of all backgrounds to participate in social relationships so that there is not systematic exclusion or overt and extended conflict.

Three additional issues that are often included in discussions of multiculturalism are group identity, the social setting, and separation or distinctiveness.

- Many authors, including Miller, consider group identity to be an essential aspect of multiculturalism, so that normative responses involve not just diverse individuals, but also the cultural, ethnic, national, religious, or racial groups with which individuals identify (Miller, 2004, 13; Kymlicka, 1995). Thus the principles of individual rights within a democratic society do not suffice to produce multiculturalism.

- The social norms, institutions, and relationships associated with multiculturalism operate predominantly within a particular society, usually a nation-state. Forces of globalization may alter this setting in the future. In this paper, I restrict my discussion to a particular society, in this case Canada.

- Some authors argue that multiculturalism is associated with or leads to increased separation and distinctiveness, dividing those of different backgrounds from each other (Bibby, 1994). By definition, a multicultural society has cultural diversity with differences among individuals and groups. Different groups have distinctive characteristics, such as culture, language, or race, although these may be as diverse within groups as among groups. However, I do not regard multiculturalism as necessarily leading to increased separation or encouragement of distinctiveness. While multiculturalism does not mean assimilation, it is associated with social interaction among individuals and groups. The ultimate outcome of such interaction is difficult to predict and could well mean new social and cultural groups emerge as a society is transformed by multiculturalism.

While there are many ways to define and measure multiculturalism, here I refer to principles derived from the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1985) and statements from the Department of Canadian Heritage. Using these sources, I developed the summary chart of Table 1. These principles are neither complete descriptions of the meaning of multiculturalism nor the best possible statements about it. But I selected these since they are clearly stated, have some force in the legal and social structure of Canada, and parallel some of the principles of social justice.

In previous papers I organized statements from the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* according to the themes of diversity, equality, harmony, overcoming barriers, and resource (Gingrich and Fries, 1995; Gingrich, 2003).   Another set of principles, from the *Renewed Multiculturalism Program* of 1998 (Canadian Heritage, 2001), comprises identity, civic participation, and social justice. In stating these principles, the concepts of recognition, respect, and diversity are associated with identity and "fair and equitable treatment" that "accommodates people of all origins," so that "people of all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging and attachment to Canada." (Canadian Heritage, 2001). The *Renewed Program* statement emphasizes participation in a way that the *Act* did not, making it a central component of multiculturalism. The Multiculturalism web site of Canadian Heritage highlights the three principles of respect, diversity, and equality in a statement entitled *Inclusive Citizenship*. A fuller description on the web site states that "Mutual respect helps develop common attitudes" and multiculturalism "recognizes the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into their society" (Canadian Heritage, 2004). Diversity is referred to as "a national asset" and the theme of equality

refers to equality before the law and equality of opportunity (Canadian Heritage, 2004). Finally, in *A Canada for All*, a document released in 2005, the themes of eliminating discrimination, racism, and racial intolerance become a focus of multiculturalism. While earlier documents contained some reference to these issues, anti-racism and non-discrimination themes are much more explicitly stated in this document and the subtitle is *Canada's Action Plan Against Racism* (Canadian Heritage, 2005a).

While the variety of statements and words of Table 1 may make the meaning of multiculturalism confusing (Li, 1999), they represent a set of principles that can be judged by principles of social justice. In this paper, the principles of Table 1 are considered the defining ones for multiculturalism.

Table 1. Principles of Canadian multiculturalism

Principle	Meaning and example statements	Source and date. (Reference)
Diversity	cultural and racial diversity; preserve, enhance, share heritage; respect, value diversity; interaction	*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1985. (*CMA*)
Equality	equal treatment and protection under law; full and equitable participation; equal opportunity in federal institutions	
Harmony	respect, recognition, appreciation, understanding, exchanges, cooperation, sharing	
Overcoming barriers	eliminate barriers to participation, overcome discriminatory barriers; encourage institutions to be inclusive	
Resource	fundamental to Canadian heritage and identity; creativity; historic contribution; evolution and shaping of Canadian society; value diversity	
Identity	recognition, respect, diversity, belonging, attachment	*The Multiculturalism Program: The Context of Renewal*, 1998. (*Renewed Program*)
Civic participation	opportunity and capacity to participate in shaping communities and country	
Social justice	fair and equitable treatment, respect dignity, accommodates all	
Respect	acceptance, common attitudes; security; self-confidence; harmony, understanding	*Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship*. 2002(?). (*Inclusive Citizenship*)
Equality	equality before law; equality of opportunity; basic freedoms, citizens, participate, responsibilities	
Diversity	national asset; keep identities; pride in ancestry; sense of belonging	
Anti-racism and no discrimination	free from racism, eliminate racism, action plan, full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, break down barriers to opportunity and participation	*A Canada for All: Canada's Action Plan Against Racism – An Overview*, 2005. (*A Canada for All*)
Real equality	equality of opportunity and (socio-economic) outcome, strengthen social cohesion, human rights	
A Canada for all	participation, inclusion, taking action together, partnerships between government and civil society, every Canadian	

3. Social justice

There is a long history of discussion and analysis of social justice in political and social theory and practice, with disagreement concerning the exact meaning and implications of the concept. In addition, each of us is likely to have a somewhat view of what constitutes social justice. These personal concepts likely include some notion of the meaning of fairness and equity in distributing resources and opportunities and an interpretation of natural justice with respect to social practice and interaction. Given this diversity of possible meanings of the concept and practice of social justice, the approach I adopt in this paper is to employ a specific theory of social justice – that developed by David Miller. I do not venture further than Miller's approach into the discussion of differing theories of social justice.

In spite of the extensive analysis of and use of the term "social justice," some social science disciplines contain limited explicit discussion of the concept. In reviewing the literature on social justice and ethnic minorities, Pierre Joseph Ulysse notes a "virtual absence of the concept of social justice in the field of social science research on ethnic minorities" (Ulysse, 1999, 63). At the same time he argues that the community sector "makes it the driving force behind actions in the field and daily struggles on behalf of the excluded categories" (Ulysse, 1999, 63). This absence of explicit discussion and diverse interpretations may be reasons for the strong disagreement among authors about the link between social justice and multiculturalism. Social justice is identified as a key characteristic of multiculturalism by Canadian Heritage (see, for example, *Renewed Program* section of Table 1). But others argue that there is little connection between social justice and multiculturalism. For example, Himani Bannerji argues that a multicultural approach "is a vehicle for racialization" and does not speak to social justice (Bannerji, 2000, 78-79). Carl James argues that multiculturalism "does nothing to challenge the structural barriers such as racism, sexism, classism (James, 1999, 215).

These differences of views are unlikely to be readily resolved. However, it is my hope that by focussing attention on the relationship between multiculturalism and social justice, there will be further discussion and analysis of how social justice can be promoted through multiculturalism.

4. A note on method

The source documents I use to outline the principles of multiculturalism are those listed in the right column of Table 1 – the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (*CMA*) and other major statements about multiculturalism from the Department of Canadian Heritage. While these do not represent all aspects of multiculturalism, and do not describe or explain actual practice and experience, they provide one set of statements of common interpretations of multiculturalism. In the paper, I match these with the principles of social justice as developed by Miller.

While there are a number of surveys of Canadians that provide views of respondents about multiculturalism and about social justice, I was able to find only

limited data available on views that address both issues simultaneously. I draw on two surveys I conducted in Regina, Saskatchewan – one a small survey of fifty-five newcomers to Regina who arrived as refugees, the other a survey of seven hundred plus undergraduates at the University of Regina. The other data sources I use are national surveys – the *Canadian Election Study 2004*, the CRIC-Globe and Mail Survey on *The New Canada*, the *Equality, Security, and Community* survey, and the 1991 *Multiculturalism and Canadians* survey conducted by the Angus Reid Group. A summary list of these is provided in Table 4 and in the "Survey references and notes" at the end of the paper.

For all these surveys, I was able to obtain a data set and have used these to provide the summary data in this paper. Given that there are different respondents in each of these surveys, it is not possible to analyze relationships among variables across these data sets. As a result, the analysis in this paper is descriptive, primarily involving frequency distributions and a few cross-classifications.

B. Social justice – analysis of Miller's principles

1. Miller's principles of social justice

David Miller, in *Principles of Social Justice* (Miller, 1999) and in "Social Justice in Multicultural Societies" (Miller, 2004) identifies three principles of social justice – equality, need, and desert (alternatively termed merit or equity). Miller argues that each of these corresponds to a principle of social justice primarily applicable to a particular "mode of human relationships" (Miller, 1999, 25) or, what could be termed a sphere of activity. A short description of each principle follows, along with a summary in Table 2.

- *Equality* refers to equal treatment and quantity of resources and primarily applies to the sphere of citizenship. In this mode of human relationship "anyone who is a full member of such a society is understood to be the bearer of a set of rights and obligations that together define the status of citizen" where "the primary distributive principle of citizenship is equality" (Miller, 1999, 30).

- *Need*. Different individual needs may mean that equal treatment, by itself, does not ensure a just or fair outcome. A second principle of social justice is thus need, meaning that there should be departures from equality when the needs of some differ from than those of others. This principle is to be operative in the sphere of solidaristic community, although it is not necessarily restricted to this sphere. Solidaristic community is composed of individuals in face-to-face relationships and of groups bound together by "mutual understanding and mutual trust" (Miller, 1999, 26). These include the family and kinship groups and could include other groups such as work teams or small collections of individuals organized around religious beliefs.

- *Desert/merit/equity*. Miller identifies a third principle, that of desert, merit, or equity, primarily applicable within the sphere of instrumental association. This sphere

includes modes of activity such as the economy and formal organizations. The key characteristic of the desert principle is that there be some form of equity in rewards, whereby justice means that participants who contribute more may expect to receive more. In Miller's word, in this sphere of activity "justice is done when he receives back by reward an equivalent to the contribution he makes" (Miller, 1999, 28).

Table 2. Summary of Miller's principles of social justice

Principle	Meaning	Sphere of activity or mode of human relationship
Equality	Equal treatment or equal quantity of resources; equal status	Citizenship – political and legal spheres
Need	Provide more to those with greater needs	Solidaristic community, family, kinship, group with common understandings
Desert (merit /equity)	Greater reward to those who contribute more	Instrumental association, economic sphere

Source: Miller, 1999, 25-32; Miller, 2004, 19

For Miller, each of the three principles operates within a particular setting, that of a bounded society or social union, where there is reasonable agreement among members concerning the meaning and application of the principles. While the primary application of each principle is in a particular sphere of activity, the principle should not be regarded as being restricted to that sphere. For example, many contemporary societies have recognized needs of the disabled in the sphere of instrumental association, well beyond the sphere of solidaristic community. The principles may also apply more fully in social institutions and modes of human relationship and interaction that are long lasting than they do in fleeting forms of social interaction. The operation of the principles provide a basis for security and trust among those sharing ends and having reasons to accept the principles and their application. That is, they are socially just where there members live together "according to principles that each has good reason to accept" (Miller, 2004, 14). Miller summarizes the principles as follows (Miller, 2004, 19):

> The first is equality – everyone in the relevant universe of distribution should be treated in the same way, or receive the same quantity of resources. The second is need – it is fair to depart from equality by giving more to those with greater needs. The third is merit, understood for the moment in a very broad sense – those who have contributed more, or whose input into a collective project is greater, should receive more back by way of reward (social psychologists, whose work I shall be using here, usually refer to this as the equity principle).

In any society, the principles of social justice concern distribution, that is, the way that advantages and disadvantages are distributed and how this distribution in socially regulated. Distribution refers to the allocation both goods and services (resources, jobs, income), and the less tangible advantages and disadvantages such as rights, obligations, status, and recognition. Members of the group or society have a reasonable level of

agreement concerning the system of valuation of these advantages and disadvantages. That is, the positive or negative values associated with advantages and disadvantages are "standardized across the relevant group of potential participants, not to values for particular persons" (Miller, 1999, 8).

A number of factors are relevant to the manner in which these principles are developed and apply. One is time, that is, "expectations about how long the group will remain in existence" (Miller, 1999, 65). Another is the scope of the principles, "to whom is justice owed" (Miller, 2004, 17) and the distributional context or circumstances. Further, the manner in which the principle is applied or the specific way that justice is administered is also relevant. Given that there may be considerable conflict between the principles in different situations, especially between the equality and desert principles, each of the levels, specific applications, and institutional form need to be considered.

At the societal level, Miller adopts a view that may seem contrary to multiculturalism, in that he argues there needs to be a common national identity or loyalty (Miller, 1999, 263). Some might argue that since multiculturalism is associated with diversity, not only in terms of ethnic structure, but in goals, understandings, morality, culture, and ends, the common understandings that are necessary for the principles of social justice to operate are not present. While Miller may overstate the degree of national identity and unity that are required for the principles of social justice to operate, he identifies "a strong and inclusive form of citizenship" (Miller, 1999, 263), social interaction, and trust as key features that can create a collective identity. For Miller, trust in interpersonal relationships, both within and among groups, trust in the state, and generalized trust are important background conditions for social justice to operate (Miller, 2004, 29). Since there are often tradeoffs that must be made among the principles, a fuller form of collective identity and trust should assist in resolving disputes about the application of seemingly conflicting applications of the principles. It may be that multiculturalism can lead to a form of collective identity and trust even in diverse, multicultural societies.

A final aspect of Miller's work that I highlight is his emphasis on empirical findings about understandings of social justice. For Miller, principles of social justice can be applied over a wide range of societies and times, but these principles and their application are not uniform or changeless. Rather, Miller argues that understandings of the meaning of social justice differ across time and place, and in "the way in which different norms of social justice are applied in different social contexts" (Miller, 1999, 42). For Miller "empirical evidence should play a significant role in justifying a normative theory of justice, or … that such a theory is to be tested, in part, by its correspondence with our evidence concerning everyday beliefs about social justice" (Miller, 1999, 51). Responses from the survey data examined in this paper were not sought or formulated in the light of principles of social justice, so do not meet the standards Miller has devised. But it is my hope that the statements and views provide some evidence about how policymakers and ordinary Canadians interpret aspects of multiculturalism as being socially just or unjust.

2. Principles of social justice and official statements about multiculturalism

In this section of the paper, I examine the connection between multiculturalism, as outlined in official statements about multiculturalism in Canada, and Miller's three principles of social justice. In doing this, I also focus on which aspects of social relations or sphere of activity are addressed. Official policies and programs have evolved since multiculturalism was introduced in Canada in 1971. At the same time, there are continuities in official statements about the meaning and importance of multiculturalism in Canada.

The four official statements I use are as follows – the short form on the left is used as the reference in the following sections.

CMA   *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1985.
Renewed Program   *Renewed Multiculturalism Program*, 1998.
Inclusive Citizenship   *Canadian multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship*, 2002.
A Canada for All   *A Canada for All: Action Plan Against Racism*, 2005.

I selected these four documents since each provides a federal government statement about multiculturalism and since they are spaced across the time from the establishment of the *CMA* in 1985. Each statement represents a shift in the emphasis of multiculturalism policy or program but there is also continuity in the stated meaning of multiculturalism. I draw on the classification developed in Table 1 as a means of organizing the statements; Table 3 contains a summary of how phrases from the statements can be reorganized to match Miller's three principles. It must, of course, be remembered that these are only statements in documents, not practices or achievements of institutions and members of society.

a. Equality

For the most part, when "equality" is used explicitly or implied in the statements, the reference is to the sphere of citizenship and law. In the *CMA*, there is to be "equal treatment and equal protection under the law for all individuals" (3:1 e). The first part of the *CMA* refers to the Constitution of Canada and to other Acts that form part of the background for multiculturalism. These Acts contains references to equality in terms of "benefit of the law," "guarantees those rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons," "equal status," "entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities," and "equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada" (all from the "Preamble" to the *CMA*). In *Inclusive Citizenship*, there is reference to "freedom of conscience, of thought, belief, opinion, expression, association and peaceful assembly," and it is noted that all these rights, freedoms, and dignity are guaranteed through the Constitution and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In *A Canada for All* there is reference to equality in human rights, fundamental freedoms, and law.

The above references to equality primarily address citizenship and related issues, so that the relevant sphere of activity is citizenship, consistent with Miller's claim (see Table 2). While the statements appear to give wide scope for guarantees of equal citizenship status, rights, obligations, and freedoms, there are two concerns that Miller raises about the scope of this principle. First is that citizenship may be difficult to define very precisely given that it is "a remote and poorly understood mode of association" (Miller, 1999, 40). Second, these types of equality are formal and legalistic and Miller notes that some "argue that citizens cannot understand themselves as political equals unless the also enjoy a substantial measure of social equality" (Miller, 1999, 31). Given these considerations and the fact that the statements refer only to goals and not to institutions and practices, it is not clear how widely the principle of equality actually operates.

The *CMA* refers to "equal opportunity for employment and advancement" (3:2 a), but only in federal institutions. The preamble to the *CMA*, in reference to the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, states that "every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make the life that the individual is able and wishes to have, consistent with the duties and obligations of that individual as a member of society." There is also reference to the redress of "any proscribed discrimination" as a means of achieving this. While this is part of achieving equality of opportunity, there are impediments to achieving equality apart from differences of race, ethnicity, or culture. The statement about developing "both the opportunity and the capacity to participate in shaping the future of their communities and their country" (*Renewed Program*) expands the concept of equality of opportunity over that in the *CMA*. *A Canada for All* contains a stronger statement about equality when "equality of outcome" is mentioned in a section entitled "Real equality" (p. 5).   But it is not clear how this is to be achieved or which forms of equality are encouraged, given that this document primarily concerns ending racism and discrimination.

From the above I conclude that the documents contain some recognition of the desirability of social equality. And while there is some indication of how such equality might be achieved, this is limited, primarily pointing toward removal of some types of barriers, but not addressing aspects of social inequality such as education, jobs, incomes, and wealth or inequalities by sex or gender.

Participation is mentioned in the *CMA* and made more explicit in the *Renewed Program*, where civic participation is made a central theme. This might constitute a form of equal participation in the sphere of citizenship and politics, although the reference may be more general. However, both the *CMA* and the *Renewed Program* refer to equitable, rather than equal, participation. The exact meaning of this is unclear.

The documents also contain statements about encouraging understanding, exchange, and cooperation. A form of equality appears implicit in these concepts, since each points toward individuals or groups relating to each other in a way that does not involve subordination or dominance. Of course, exchange can be unequal, but in the context of multiculturalism, there is an implication that there is a rough equality of

contribution and understanding among the partners in a cultural exchange. The *CMA* states that multiculturalism policy is to "encourage and promote exchanges and cooperation among the diverse communities of Canada" (5. 1. c.)

In summary, the documents examined here are generally silent on the issue of how social inequalities such as sex and class may affect equalities of opportunities, participation, or citizenship. As a result, in its current formulation Canadian multiculturalism does not specifically address these inequalities, except in pointing to the need to reduce barriers and end discrimination. For those who envision a socially just society as one that has no social inequalities, there is reason to argue that multiculturalism does not address social justice.

At the same time, equality principles are central to statements about Canadian multiculturalism, with the primary focus being on issues of citizenship and law. More recent documents recognize that guarantees of equal rights and freedoms may not be sufficient to achieve equality, nor may equality of opportunity be the only goal. *A Canada for All* refers to real equality and equality of outcome, although it does not make clear how this is to be achieved nor what such a goal might mean.

b. Need

If everyone had identical needs, multiculturalism would not be necessary, in that equal rights and democratic practices would provide for equal treatment and opportunities, and perhaps even equal outcomes, for all members of a society. But addressing different needs is an essential aspect of multiculturalism, in that societal structures, institutions, and some social relationships make it difficult for all individuals and groups to participate on an equal footing. Differences in language constitute an obvious impediment to equality and lead to different needs; and many other social and cultural characteristics have similar effects.

While essential to the idea and practice of multiculturalism, the principle of need does not appear to have received the same explicit recognition as that of equality. This may be because it is straightforward to state that everyone should be equal, while it is more difficult to identify the different and separate needs of individuals and groups. Even more problematic is contemplating how these different needs might be addressed, especially where they require departures from the principle of equality. Further, since Miller argues that dealing fairly with different needs tends to be associated with solidaristic community rather than societal membership, it may be difficult to apply the principle of need at the societal level. In this section I identify some of the ways that official statements identify and address the principle of need and where there appear to be shortcomings in how it is addressed.

At a general level, statements that identify the multicultural reality of diversity as an essential aspect of Canadian society provide an implicit recognition of different needs. For the most part though, these statements argue that diversity is an asset or resource, in the past and present, and for the future of Canada. For example, *Inclusive Citizenship*

states "Our diversity is a national asset." While diversity as asset or resource is an important aspect of multiculturalism, this connection does not help identify different needs of individuals and groups and is not part of social justice.

Where diversity is identified in the documents, it is most commonly connected with culture, cultural heritage, ancestry, ethnicity, and race, although religion and national origin are also mentioned. By stating that multiculturalism attempts to "preserve, enhance and share" (*CMA*, 3.1. a) cultural heritage, there is an implication that needs of individuals and groups differ. In such statements, language appears as the aspect of culture that requires special attention, in that without policies and practices devoted to preserving language, a group's cultural heritage may disappear. The *CMA* identifies language in this way, stating that it is federal government policy to "preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada" (3.1.i). An even stronger statement is contained later in the *CMA* where policy is directed to "facilitate the acquisition, retention and use of all languages that contribute to the multicultural heritage of Canada" (5.1.f). Similar statements are made about other aspects of culture, although it is not clear which aspects these are. For example, the *CMA* states that it is federal government policy to "encourage the preservation, enhancement, sharing and evolving expression of the multicultural heritage of Canada" (5.1.e).

The statements identify several ways of encouraging or accomplishing these goals, by assisting individuals and communities. An example is the civic participation theme of the *Renewed Program*, where there is reference to "developing, among Canada's diverse people, active citizens with both the opportunity and the capacity to participate in shaping the future of the communities and their country." While this is also a reference to participation, by using the term "capacity," there is an implication that some individuals, groups, and communities have special needs that require attention to development of capacity. The most specific reference to need that I could find is that it is a priority to "develop partnerships between federal departments and ethno-cultural community groups to ensure that policies and programs reflect the *needs* of an increasingly multicultural population" (*A Canada for All*, p. 6, emphasis added). Among the specific needs this document identifies are project funding to combat racism, improving "the sense of identity and belonging in Aboriginal communities," "promoting languages and culture," expanding settlement services, and even assisting victims (*A Canada for All*, pp. 5-6). The same document also commits Canada to working with employers, associations, and the police in an effort to help achieve these goals.

Another theme related to need that runs through the statements is eliminating barriers and ending discrimination and racism. While this is also connected more to the third principle of social justice, that of desert or merit, it is an identification of social practices that create different needs. By recognizing that such barriers exist and that there is discrimination in Canadian society, these statements mean that some individuals and groups have greater needs than others, that is, some have disadvantages that do not allow full participation in Canadian society. These statements only weakly identify different needs, and generally ignore whether the source of different needs comes from within the

groups themselves or from the structural conditions the groups face. However, there is an implicit admission that different needs exist and, in *A Canada for All*, there is some recognition that these relate to employment and relations with the criminal justice system. For example, the *CMA* states that policy is to "assist ethno-cultural minority communities to conduct activities with a view to overcoming any discriminatory barrier" (5.1.g). While this statement tends to place the onus for solving discrimination on those discriminated against, other statements identify discrimination as a problem that all Canadians need to address.

In summary, statements about Canadian multiculturalism implicitly recognize the need principle of social justice, although there are few statements about the specific nature of these needs, the sources of the need, or a socially just approach could help meet these needs. The most specific need identified is that of language. The later documents, especially *A Canada for All*, emphasize the importance of overcoming barriers that are constructed by Canadian society and produce different needs. These later documents also provide some direction about how these needs might be met.

c. Desert, merit, or equity

Miller argues that the principle of desert or merit is a key aspect of social justice, especially in instrumental activities where it is expected that rewards will be roughly proportional to contribution. That is, individuals enter instrumental activities "with a set of skills and talents" and "justice is done" only when individuals receive rewards equivalent to contribution (Miller, 1999, p. 28). The desert principle operates most clearly in instrumental forms of association, especially when considering pay differentials associated with jobs and distribution of income and resources. It is less clear whether and how the principle operates when considering less tangible distributive issues such as acceptance, respect, or status. Miller argues that to be fair, there must be differences in rewards, but that these differences should not be related to factors such as sex or age, or even ability.   It is the differences in performance that justify different rewards and it is this connection that is associated with equity in distribution. Further, in a review of empirical studies Miller shows how these demonstrate that people consider it only fair that some rewards be in proportion to effort and performance.

Given that multiculturalism primarily addresses cultural matters, it initially appears that the principle of desert or merit is not part of multiculturalism. A closer examination suggests two ways that merit might be addressed, one directly and the other indirectly.   In direct terms, multiculturalism necessarily involves recognition and respect, ways of conducting social relationships that reflect the distribution of status in society. Indirectly, merit may be addressed by reference to removing barriers that do not allow the principle of desert to operate. The implication is that the elimination of economic and social barriers will allow the principle of merit to apply in instrumental spheres such as the economy or politics.

With two exceptions, the words connected to this principle, that is, desert, merit, or equity, are not used in the statements examined here. In the *Renewed Program*, social

justice is identified as a central theme of multiculturalism and this means "building a society that ensures fair and equitable treatment … of … people of all origins." As noted earlier, there is also reference in the same document to "equitable participation," a term also used in the *CMA* (3.1 c). *A Canada for All* states "Building racial equality and social equity is not an undertaking with well-defined start and finish points" (p. 7). While these references directly state a goal of building an equitable society, the statements do not clarify what this means. In the following paragraphs, I address each of the direct and indirect references to merit.

Much of the discussion of multiculturalism revolves around recognition. The documents repeatedly use words that are central to multiculturalism, words like respect, value, recognition, understanding, acceptance, reflects, and accommodates. For individuals and groups whose culture and way of life has been threatened or devalued, providing recognition and respect are essential to revaluation. While this process is not equivalent to merit in modes of relationship that are strictly instrumental, it is connected in two possible ways.

First, some writers argue that recognition of those from a background different from one's own or of those who do not come from a dominant social group is a prior condition for distributional equity. In this approach, maldistribution on grounds of merit, or for other reasons, is at root a result of misrecognition. Axel Honneth, in his debates with Nancy Fraser, makes a strong case for this approach (Fraser and Honneth, 2003). From this point of view, recognition of other individuals and groups is a prior condition for helping to create the possibility of equitable distribution.

Second, even where recognition is not considered to be the essence of equity, it is the subject of social valuations that sociologists refer to as status or prestige. These have been a central feature in analyses of social stratification, to the extent that socioeconomic status is often considered the central feature of stratification. By placing valuations on the diverse contributions of individuals, a system of nonmonetary (and monetary) rewards is established in society. Recognition of and respect for the worth of all individuals, or the lack of such recognition and respect, is key to how people find their way into social positions and how these positions are valued by society. Tables 1 and 3 contains ample references to these concepts, to the extent that the recognition aspect of the desert or merit principle of social justice is a central, if not the defining, aspect of multiculturalism.

The emphasis on removing barriers, eliminating obstacles, ensuring that no one is left behind, encouraging conditions for full participation, and developing an inclusive society are all considerations that, if effective, would allow the merit principle to operate more fully. Further, ending discrimination and eliminating racism are necessary to permit and encourage this. Clearly, these are necessary conditions for the merit principle to operate, but they may not be sufficient conditions. While the documents do not address this sufficiency issue, the statements contain an assumption that once barriers are removed, the normal operation of the economic, political, and social structures and institutions and of social relations will lead to social equity.

While I do not review government programs in this paper, one notable initiative relating to equity is that concerning recognition of credentials and experience obtained outside Canada. The lack of initial recognition of credentials and labour market experience of new immigrants to Canada has often hampered their ability to enter the Canadian labour market. In her review of this issue, Marilyn Smith notes that "immigrants with professional training and credentials earned in other countries frequently encounter obstacles to having their qualifications recognized in order to work in their professions in Canada" (Smith, p. 4). The lack of recognition of these prior credentials and experiences is a barrier that prevents recent immigrants from being treated equitably in the instrumental sphere of the labour market, and perhaps in other spheres. While this problem has certainly not been eliminated, as Smith's review demonstrates, Canadian Heritage has provided funds for researchers to investigate this issue. And a recent statement from Canadian Heritage indicates that "the federal government will continue to work interdepartmentally to develop and integrated and coordinated approach to integrating immigrants into the labour market" (2005b, p. 24). The limited recognition of credentials and experience violates all three principles of social justice, that is, it leads to unequal treatment, it creates different needs, and means that some are not able to contribute in the way they should be able to, so they do not obtain what they deserve.

In summary, the documents address the desert or merit principle of social justice in terms of recognition and respect, a central part of multiculturalism. The desert principle is also addressed in the negative, with increasing attention being devoted to removing barriers, especially those in the form of discrimination, racism, and inadequate recognition of credentials and experience. Where multiculturalism has a shortcoming is in not addressing the sufficiency of these in allowing the desert principle to operate. If multiculturalism is to be judged by these documents, it appears that improving recognition and removing of barriers will not by itself create an equitable society, especially in the face of differing needs.

d. Other aspects

Many parts of the statements about multiculturalism are not directly concerned with social justice, but with concepts such as integration, social solidarity, identity, and diversity constituting a resource.   Of course, there is an indirect connection in that some of these aspects are essential to creating and maintaining a social setting where the principles of social justice can operate. However, statements such as "fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity," "resource in shaping of Canada's future" (*CMA*, 3.1.b) and "Canadians who speak many languages and understand many cultures make it easier for Canada to participate globally in areas of education, trade and diplmacy" (*Inclusive Citizenship*), are primarily aimed at addressing goals other than social justice.

One problem with the official statements in the documents reviewed, at least as I interpret them, is that they do little to consider the possible tradeoffs between the

different principles of social justice. For example, equality is mentioned many times in the statements, with the strongest statements in the most recent document, *A Canada for All*, where the terms "real equality" and "equality of outcome" are used. Yet the very essence of diversity is that that there are different needs for those of different background or culture, and exact equality means not all these different needs are met. Further, the principle of merit can conflict with the principles of equality and need, especially in the labour market and economy. Other legislation and programs, for example, the *Employment Equity Act* and its associated programs, may address some of the latter difficulties. However, it appears that many of the directives and commitments in the statements about multiculturalism are made in isolation, without considering how they relate to other aspects of multiculturalism or to the operation of all aspects of social institutions and social relationships.

A summary of the statements in the four official documents, along with the way they match the three principles of social justice is provided in Table 3.

e. Conclusion

The above analysis demonstrates that there is considerable overlap of the statements about multiculturalism in the four federal documents and Miller's three principles of social justice. At the same time, there are some notable gaps and lack of specificity concerning aspects of social justice, especially when dealing with the need principle. For the most part, the statements examine multiculturalism in the same spheres of activity that Miller associates with each of the principles of social justice. That is, mentions of equality in the documents primarily involve the sphere of citizenship and law; mentions of desert refer to instrumental activities although they also concern the distribution of status and respect. Given that Miller identifies the principles of need with small groups and solidaristic community, it is no surprise that the documents contain little mention of need.

While equality is one of the most strongly stated aspects of multiculturalism, it is disappointing that there are few statements about social inequalities, especially of the class and gender inequalities that are so prominent in society. After all, discussion of social justice often revolves around reducing inequalities of income and wealth and ending patriarchal relationships, ideas that are not present in the documents. While Miller identifies need with solidaristic community, writers such as Will Kymlicka have argued that needs extend to cultural protection and ensuring the existence of various types of group rights. While these issues are widely discussed in Canada, apart from language the documents do not provide much specific discussion, but leave statements at a general level. As for desert, there is indication that this has been taken more seriously in recent than in earlier documents. The *CMA* provides strong statements about respect and recognition being deserved by all, but gives little direction about desert or equity in the instrumental sphere, other than a general statement about eliminating barriers. In most recent documents, there is greater recognition of problems of discrimination and racism, and of other barriers, and these later documents point toward reducing such barriers. At

the same time, in these documents there appears to be an assumption that equity will result if these barriers are removed.

The above discussion concerns only four documents. It would be interesting to review federal and provincial government programs from the perspective of the three principles of social justice. Some of the programs, such as those dealing with human rights and employment equity, undoubtedly attempt to address some of the gaps in the statements about multiculturalism programs. At the same time, the documents are only statements, and where the documents provide strong statements in support of social justice, there is no assurance that these always translate into practices of social justice.

Table 3. Examples of connections of principles of Canadian multiculturalism and social justice

Principle of Canadian multiculturalism (from Table 1)	Principle of social justice (from Table 2)		
	Equality	**Need**	**Desert**
Diversity		culture, language; acquire, preserve, enhance; support	respect, value, inclusive institutions
Equality	law, opportunity, status, rights/obligations, life		full and equitable participation
Harmony	understanding, exchange, cooperation	sharing	respect, recognition
Overcoming barriers	overcome discrimination	eliminate barriers and discrimination; inclusive	no discrimination; make life; employment
Resource			value diversity; creativity
Identity			recognition, respect
Civic particpation	opportunity	capacity	capacity
Social justice			fair, equitable, respect dignity, accommodate all
Respect	common attitude		recognize potential
Equality	before law, opportunity, rights, responsibilities, freedoms, participate, citizens		
Diversity		keep identity	
Anti-racism and no discrimination	human rights, fundamental freedoms, law	protect from discrimination	
Real equality	equality of opportunity and outcome, racial equality		social equity
A Canada for All		assist victims, support ethno-racial/cultural communities, settlement services	inclusive society, no one left behind, foreign credentials recognition

3. Views of Canadians about multiculturalism and social justice

Official documents and statements from the federal government provide an important setting for multiculturalism in Canada, but the principles stated in these do not necessarily translate directly into views and practices of Canadians. While I do not examine practices of Canadians concerning multiculturalism in this paper, in the following sections I provide examples of views and opinions of Canadians about how they understand aspects of multiculturalism as they relate to principles of social justice.

As a quick overview of the results, I find that there is generally strong support for many, although not all, of the principles and practices of multiculturalism. As for social justice, parts of the equality and equity principles appear to receive strong support, although exactly how the trade-off between these principles might be addressed in practice is unclear. However, the need principle appears to receive less support when applied to views about multiculturalism, although the extent of support may depend on the information that is available to respondents.

Table 4. Survey data references

Short title in paper	Survey description			
	Survey name	Scope	Sample size	Date
MAS91	Multiculturalism and Canadians: Attitude Study 1991	Canadian adults	n = 3,325	1991
RRRP	Regina Refugee Research Project	Regina newcomers	n = 55	1993
SSAE98	Survey of Student Attitudes and Experiences	University of Regina undergraduates	n = 714	1998
ESC	Equality, Security and Community	Canadian adults	n = 4,101	2001
NC	New Canada: CRIC- Globe and Mail on "The New Canada"	Canadian adults	n = 2,000	2003
CES04	The 2004 Canadian Election Study	Canadian adults	n = 4,268	2004

Source: See survey references and notes at the end of the paper.

Views and opinions are drawn from the six survey sources listed in Table 4. These surveys had diverse aims and researchers did not construct the survey questions with the aim of measuring views about the dual principles of multiculturalism and social justice. But responses to some survey questions can be used to draw inferences about views of Canadians on these issues. While each survey refers to a slightly different population base and has its own sampling and nonsampling errors, I generally ignore these in what follows, except where I draw attention to them. In the interests of

analyzing views on multiculturalism and social justice, I treat the survey results as reasonable representations of the views and opinions of all Canadian adults. When reporting the survey results, I give the short title along with the question number or name (eg. MAS91, Q7 for question 7 of the Multiculturalism and Canadians survey).

a. Views about each of multiculturalism and social justice

i. Multiculturalism

When asked about multiculturalism, Canadians generally express support for it as a policy and a practice. For example, in the New Canada study, when asked about eighteen things that might make the respondent proud to be a Canadian (NC, Q13), the mean responses concerning multiculturalism, the Charter, and people from different cultural groups getting along and living in peace were, respectively, 7.3, 8.0, and 7.6. Each response was measured on a 0-10 scale, with 0 meaning not at all proud to 10 meaning very proud. The item scoring highest among the list of eighteen things was the vastness and beauty of the land (9.0) and the lowest was the Queen (4.9). Responses about multiculturalism were similar to those about Canadian Olympic hockey team victories (7.6). For respondents age thirty or under, the response to the three multiculturalism issues was approximately one-half a point higher than for those over age thirty. The 1991 Angus Reid survey found that seventy-two per cent of respondents supported the federal government's multiculturalism policy, with only twenty-eight per cent opposed (MAS91, Q7).

In the Regina surveys, among newcomers to Canada and among undergraduate students, there was generally strong support for specific aspects of multiculturalism. For example, I asked undergraduate students to state their level of support for four of the first five principles of multiculturalism listed in Table 1 (SSAE98 survey). Measured on a five-point scale from 1 meaning strongly disagree to 5 meaning strongly agree, the mean responses were as follows. (Where questions are similar, responses from MAS91 are in brackets, adjusted to make the scale comparable).

- Diversity – fundamental characteristic of Canada – 4.1 (4.1 for Q6A in MAS91).

- Equality – Institutions should provide equal access regardless of background – 4.5 (4.6 for Q6C in MAS91).

- Overcoming barriers – institutions should eliminate barriers – 4.1

- Resource – Canadian society enriched by having people from many cultural backgrounds – 4.3 (4.4 for Q6L in MAS91).

By contrast, for the question asking whether government should fund festivals and special events celebrating different cultures, students were equally split between agree and disagree, with the mean response being exactly 3.0 (3.4 for Q6J in MAS91).

ii. Social justice

The surveys also provide evidence about the extent of support for some aspects of social justice. Concerning the issue of equality, the most recent Canadian Election Study, conducted in 2004, reports that eighty per cent of respondents said more should be done to reduce the gap between the rich and poor in Canada, with only five per cent stating that less should be done (CES04, CPS_F6). Another national study, the Equality, Security and Community survey, reports that seventy-nine per cent of respondents agreed that the government must do more to reduce the income gap between rich and poor Canadians while only twenty-one per cent disagreed (ESC, SOCPOL6). On the related issue of whether we have gone too far in pushing equal rights in Canada, sixty per cent disagreed while forty per cent agreed (CES04, MBS_A1).   From these responses to questions about this traditional issue of social justice, Canadians generally support the principle of equality.

In terms of need, seventy-three per cent of respondents agreed that "the government should see to it that everyone has a decent standard of living" while only twenty-seven per cent agreed that "the government should leave people to get ahead on their own" (CES04, MBS_B1). In the New Canada survey, there was exactly the same percentage of support for and opposition to the statement "the government should provide decent housing for all who cannot afford it" (NC, Q1_5). In another study, eighty per cent of respondents agreed that if it was not for the minimum wage, workers would not earn enough (ESC, SOCPOL1). Other examples provide similar results – Canadian respondents generally recognize the principle of need and agree that government should help address these needs. As will be seen later, identification of who is needy and how this need is to be addressed is more problematic.

For the third of Miller's principles, that of desert, I found few examples of survey questions that directly addressed this issue. This is the equity or merit principle, that is, how effort and contribution are to be fairly rewarded. Since this principle is expected to operate in the sphere of instrumental association, there are a few examples of views about equity job-related issues. Hopefully, these give some idea of how respondents understand this principle.

Eighty-one per cent of respondents agreed that "if people really want to work, they can find a job" (CES04, MBS_A11) and sixty-seven per cent agreed that people should move if they cannot find a job (CES04, CPS_P13). These results imply that respondents consider some aspects of the labour market to operate reasonably equitably. Respondents were almost equally split on the statement that "the more money that is spent helping out poorer people, the less they will want to help themselves" (MAS91, Q1J). In SSAE98 though, undergraduate students were more likely to agree (38%) with this same statement than disagree (32%). These responses give some idea of the ambivalent views about individual effort and rewards.

In terms of barriers that may interfere with the operation of equity, fifty-two per cent of respondents agreed that "discrimination makes it extremely difficult for women to

get jobs equal to their abilities" (CES04, MBS_A5). While fifty-nine per cent of female respondents agreed with this statement, forty-three per cent of male respondents also agreed.   The New Canada study found that sixty-one per cent of respondents thought poverty was beyond the control of the individual (NC, Q2) and sixty-two per cent agreed that who you know counts more than how hard working you are (NC, Q3). These findings demonstrate that respondents do not consider all aspects of the economy to operate equitably. From these results, I conclude that there is considerable support for the idea that individual effort should be rewarded but that current institutions and practices may not provide adequately for this.

In the surveys I examined, there were few questions addressing the balance among the three principles of social justice, although two questions about health care provide some idea of the balance. Over seventy per cent of respondents stated that there should be equal access to health care and a similar percentage agreed that the Canadian health care system is equal and fair (ESC, HCARE_2 and HCARE_3). The latter question mixes equality and fairness but the responses demonstrate that there is general agreement with the current balance between fairness and equality, at least in health care.

iii. Summary

Responses to survey questions demonstrate that there is relatively strong support for multiculturalism as policy and practice and for several of the specific principles of multiculturalism. Similarly, respondents generally support the equality and need principles of social justice. Evidence on the desert principle is limited, as is evidence on the possible balance respondents might place on the relative importance of the three principles of social justice. The limited data available on this demonstrates support for the desert principle but uncertainty on the extent to which this principle operates.

b. Views on multiculturalism and three principles of social justice

In this section, I turn to evidence from survey questions and responses that simultaneously address multiculturalism and social justice. Given that the survey questions and possible responses were not designed with this purpose, most of the questions and responses mix aspects of the different principles. As much as possible though, I attempt to focus on how the responses to the questions I selected address multiculturalism and social justice. As in the section on official statements, I organize the analysis around Miller's three principles of social justice.

i. Equality

Summary data from the surveys provide considerable evidence of how respondents view equality and what the effect of multiculturalism policy has been or might be in furthering equality. First, in terms of support for equality, the 1991 Angus Reid survey finds that ninety per cent of respondents agree with "ensuring equal access to jobs regardless of ethnic or racial background" (MAS91, 6C). In the undergraduate survey, ninety per cent of undergraduates agreed that "Canadian institutions should

provide equal access, regardless of ethnic, racial, or cultural background" (SSAE98, M2). As reported earlier, in the New Canada study respondents are generally proud of the Charter, a document that focusses on equality among Canadians.

Respondents express strong support for eliminating discrimination and racism but there are mixed levels of support for equality when dealing with more specific issues. There is very strong support for eliminating racism "in areas such as health care, the justice system and education," with eighty-seven per cent agreeing (MAS91, 6B). But only forty-eight per cent agreed and twenty-nine per cent disagreed that "no Canadian should be forced to work on his or her Holy Day, regardless of the day of the week on which it falls" (NC, Q16_5). More positively, only sixteen per cent of respondents agreed that "non-whites living here should not push themselves where they are not wanted" (NC, Q16_3). For each of these two questions, approximately twenty-two per cent gave a neutral response, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. When asked whether "recent immigrants have as much to say about the future of Canada as people who were born or raised here," one-half of respondents agreed and one-third disagreed (MAS91, 12P). This fifty to thirty-three split is consistent with the sixty per cent who disagreed with the statement that "we should look after Canadians born in this country first and others second," a statement that had the support of forty per cent (CES04, MBA_A12). These results tend to show that when respondents support equality when asked about specific policies and equal participation, but less so than when faced with more general statements about equality.

Another issue concerning equality is whether Canadians understand multiculturalism to be connected to equality. When asked directly about this, eighty-three per cent of respondents indicated that it is believable that "multiculturalism policy is about equality for Canadians of all origins" (MAS91, 8A). However, respondents in the two Regina surveys did not identify equality as a major aspect of multiculturalism. In the small survey of newcomers to Regina, of the twenty-four respondents who provided a statement of what multiculturalism meant to them, seven, or twenty-nine per cent, identified equality in their statements (RRRP). But in the undergraduate survey, in a set of open-ended responses about what multiculturalism means, only four per cent of undergraduates used the word equality in defining multiculturalism (SSAE98). It may be that newcomers are more likely to identify equality as a central theme of multiculturalism than are those who have been in Canada for a long period or who were born here. In contrast to the limited recognition of equality, in each of the two Regina surveys, more respondents (approximately forty per cent) identified some aspect of harmony – getting along, cooperation, respect, appreciation – as a part of multiculturalism (RRRP and SSAE98). Since these themes imply some degree of equality, it may be that respondents implicitly accept the principle of equality but do not explicitly connect it to multiculturalism.

Another way that multiculturalism relates to equality is in terms of policy outcome, that is, Canadians may consider greater equality to be an outcome of multiculturalism. Seventy-three per cent of respondents agreed that multiculturalism could "provide greater equality of opportunity for all groups in Canada" (MAS91, 9C).

But there is less agreement that policy and practice in Canada have created equality. The survey of Regina undergraduates found that only thirty per cent agreed that multicultural policy addresses problems of racism and discrimination (SSAE98, PM2). Seventy-five per cent of respondents across Canada agreed that "there is still a lot of racism left in Canada" while twenty-five per cent disagreed (NC, Q19). At the same time, fifty-five per cent of respondents agreed and forty-five per cent disagreed that "these days police in most cities treating blacks as fairly as they treat whites" (NC, Q1_9).

From these results, I conclude that Canadians generally support equality for individuals and groups in areas such as citizenship and access to jobs and services.   They also recognize equality as an important aspect of multiculturalism, but may not view it as being so central to multiculturalism as are diversity and harmony. In terms of the effects of multiculturalism policy, and policy and practice more generally, there are mixed views. Respondents appear to recognize that there is still a lot of racism in Canada but, when asked about specific areas such as treatment by police, there appears to be less recognition that some individuals and groups may be subject to unequal treatment. In addition, there appears to be a minority that does not support equality in participation for all groups.

ii. Need

In the survey findings, there appears to be limited recognition that different individuals and groups may have different needs. While there were few survey questions explicitly asking about needs, there were questions about rights, culture, and employment, issues that shed some light on views about differing needs, and possible responses to these needs.

At the most general level, there appears to be support for doing more for some groups. When asked how much respondents thought should be done for racial minorities, fifty-five per cent said more and only eleven per cent said less, with thirty-four per cent saying about the same as now (CES04, CPS_F8). This implies a fairly strong recognition of different needs, along with some support for policy to meet these needs.

But when asked whether "minority groups need special rights," only seventeen per cent of respondents in the Canadian Election Study expressed agreement while the other eighty-three per cent disagreed (CES04, MBS_A14). Further, the same study finds that in a democratic society "letting the majority decide" is twice as common a view as that of "protecting the needs and rights of minorities" (CES, MBS_B3). In another study, when respondents were asked about Native peoples' claims to land and resources and whether "we should be generous in settling these claims" only thirty-nine per cent agreed; sixty-one per cent expressed agreement with the alternative provided: "no group should have rights that other groups do not" (ESC, SOCPOL4).

The preceding results appear to differ from those reported in the New Canada study, where a majority expressed support for retention of aboriginal culture. In the latter study, sixty per cent of respondents said that Aboriginal peoples should try to maintain

their own culture, while forty per cent stated that "they should try to integrate fully into mainstream society" (NC, Q6). While this may be a false dichotomy, responses could reflect support for retaining culture but not for granting any special rights to minorities, or at least not to Aboriginal peoples. The difficulty with this difference is that the Charter enunciates both equality and special rights – the survey results provide strong support for equality, but not for special rights. Additionally, the argument made by Kymlicka and others concerning needs for special rights for some groups, in order to ensure equal participation, does not appear to be popular or widely accepted, nor well understood.

Another area where individuals and groups have different needs is that of jobs and employment. While the cross-Canada surveys do not have data on this issue, two questions from the Regina undergraduate survey provide some information about this. Student generally disagreed with the statement "Employment and educational opportunities for non-whites are often restricted." Forty-four per cent of respondents disagreed and only twenty-four per cent agreed with this statement, while around one-third gave a neutral response (SSAE98, EMP2). In spite of their strong support for principles of multiculturalism, these respondents apparently do not consider non-whites to face special difficulties. While student support for equity programs is limited (see next section), these students expressed some support for government assistance to immigrants to develop the skills and knowledge they require to fill jobs – thirty-seven per cent agreed with this approach, only twenty-six per cent disagreed, and thirty-seven per cent gave a neutral response (SSAE98, EMP4). While it is not clear whether these results can be generalized to Canadian adults as a whole, these responses show support for assistance to those who need help in the job market, perhaps providing an expression of support for equality of opportunity. Among Canadians overall, there is strong support for helping "immigrants to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to integrate into Canadian society" (MAS91, 6D), with eighty-five per cent of respondents agreeing with this.

There was limited support for the statement "It is more difficult for non-whites to be successful in Canadian society that it is for whites." Only forty-two per cent of respondents agreed with this, while fifty-eight per cent disagreed, including fourteen per cent who strongly disagreed (CES04, MBS_A10). Perhaps it is not surprising then that respondents are almost exactly equally split between those who agree that "Political parties spend too much time catering to minorities" and those who disagree with this statement (CES04, MBS_E6).

In summary, there appears to be limited recognition of the need principle of social justice when dealing with minorities, immigrants, or non-whites. There is support for maintenance of minority cultures but not a general recognition that there may be individual or group needs that must be addressed to help ensure either maintenance of the culture or participation in the mainstream. There is also limited recognition of special needs related to participation in society and in the labour market.   At the same time there is support for attempting to provide those with special needs the means to participate.

iii. Desert

The principle of desert or merit is connected with equity and fairness in distribution, so that those who make a greater contribution are properly rewarded for their effort and contribution. The earlier examination of the desert principle, in the federal documents, showed that the statements about multiculturalism concentrate on the distribution of status. That is, the statements call for according proper recognition and respect to all individuals and groups. While the documents call for the end of racism and discrimination, there were only a limited number of statements that could be interpreted as applying to the desert principle. In the surveys, more attention is devoted to this latter principle, especially in connection with jobs and employment. As a result, after looking at views on respect and status, I will concentrate on views about issues related to employment and success.

Respect and status

As a first consideration, the general support of Canadians for multiculturalism translates into support for recognition and respect. For example, eighty per cent of respondents agree that multiculturalism policy should ensure "that organizations and institutions reflect and respect the cultural and racial diversity of Canada" (MAS91, 6E).

A less direct indication that Canadians accept and respect those of different backgrounds comes from questions concerning marriage, language, and the importance of cultural diversity.

Table 5. Factors that are considered important when choosing a spouse

Factor relevant to choosing a spouse	Per cent considering factor	
	Important	Not important
Similar attitudes to family/children	98	2
Similar moral values	97	3
Similar attitudes to work and leisure	87	13
Similar sense of humour	81	19
Similar educational background	46	44
Similar religion	44	56
Similar class, that is, economic background	36	64
Similar political views	29	71
Similar ethnic background	28	72

Source: NC, Q15_1 through Q15_9.

First, disrespect of those from other backgrounds could create negative views toward marriage across cultural, ethnic, or racial lines. In 1991, only sixteen per cent of respondents agreed that "it is a bad idea for people of different races to marry each other"

while seventy-two per cent disagreed with this statement (MAS91, 12F). The New Canada study, conducted thirteen years later, gave almost exactly the same result (seventeen per cent agree and sixty-nine per cent disagree, NC, Q16_2). The latter study also showed, that ethnicity was the least important of nine factors that may be important in choosing a spouse (Table 5). While other factors that may be important in choosing a spouse are likely to be intertwined with ethnicity, race, and culture, it appears that for a large majority of those surveyed, ethnicity alone is not an important factor when choosing a spouse. The same study contains information about comfort having a family member marry an individual from a different ethnicity. From the latter, there is less respect for some groups than for other, for example there appears to be less respect for Muslims, although given the sampling procedure, it is not clear exactly how these data are to be interpreted.

In response to "when you hear languages other than English and French being spoken on the streets in Canada," eighty-three per cent indicated that they were comfortable while only seventeen per cent indicated a lack of comfort (NC, Q20). Similarly, in the 1991 Angus Reid survey, sixty-two per cent disagreed with the statement "I am uncomfortable in a room full of people from different cultures, acting in a different way, speaking with strong accents" (MAS91, 1B). Only twenty-four per cent agreed with this and thirteen per cent gave a neutral response.   Two other questions from the New Canada study concerning life in Canada today appear to demonstrate strong respect for diversity. Sixty-five per cent of respondents agreed that "a society that has a variety of ethnic and cultural groups is more able to tackle new problems as they occur" while thirteen per cent disagreed (NC, Q16_1). And only twenty-one per cent of respondents agreed that "Canadian children growing up surrounded by people of different ethnic and cultural groups will be left without a solid cultural basis." Fifty-eight per cent disagreed with this statement (NC, Q16_4).

Also relevant to the issue of status and recognition are processes of socialization and learning. In response to the statement "Canadians should do more to learn about the customs and heritage of different ethnic and cultural groups in this country," sixty-nine per cent agreed and only sixteen per cent disagreed (MAS91, 12W). The Regina undergraduate survey demonstrates that a large majority of respondents consider themselves to have been raised to accept and respect others (Table 6, UM2). The university setting also appears to have contributed to increased respect (Table 6, UM1 and UM3), although respondents said that the university could do more to promote respect for different cultures.

From these limited results, it appears that there is a considerable recognition of and respect for those of a culture different from one's own. Respondents also appear open to learning more and perhaps working more with those of other cultures and backgrounds. At the same time, there are limits to this and the distribution of respect and status is not equal across all groups.

Table 6. View concerning acceptance and respect, Regina undergraduates

View about acceptance and respect	Per cent who			Mean on 5-point s scale
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
UM1: Attending university has made me more accepting and respectful of various ethnic and cultural practices	18	35	47	3.4
UM2: I was raised to accept and respect those of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds	9	14	77	4.2
UM3: The University of Regina promotes understanding of different cultures	13	37	50	3.6

Source: SSAE98, question 29

Instrumental sphere – contribution, barriers, equity programs

The desert principle is expected to operate most fully in the instrumental sphere, so that equity in the economic sphere, and especially to the labour market, are primary to a discussion of this principle. At the same time, there are other aspects of contribution, and reward for contribution, relevant to a discussion of desert. This section examines views about three relevant areas – contribution to Canada, barriers that may prevent desert from operating, and equity programs.

Contribution to Canada. There is strong agreement with the statement that immigrants and those from cultures different from one's own make a contribution to Canada. Eighty-three per cent of respondents agreed that "immigrants make an important contribution to this country" while seventeen per cent disagreed (CES04, MBS_E10). In the Regina undergraduate survey, eighty-four per cent of respondents agreed that "Canadian society is enriched by having people from many cultural backgrounds" while three per cent disagreed (SSAE98, M6).

These results demonstrate broad support for cultural diversity and immigration, along with a view that many groups make a contribution to Canadian society. However, they do not address the question of whether this contribution is fairly rewarded. It is to this latter issue I now turn.

Barriers. Views about possible barriers faced by individuals and groups provide an indication of where there the desert principle does not operate. If there are serious barriers to participation and rewards in the labour market, and in participation more generally, then this indicates that there are impediments to the operation of the desert principle of social justice. Many of the responses that follow were reviewed in the above section on the principle of need. As demonstrated in that section, there is some recognition of possible barriers but the understanding of these appears to be limited.

At the most general level, as noted in the equality section, a large majority of seventy-five per cent agree that "there is still a lot of racism left in Canada" (NC, Q19) But this does not translate into a strong a level of recognition of how this can construct barriers for non-whites. Fifty-seven per cent of respondents agreed with the statement "it is more difficult for non-whites to be successful in Canadian society than it is for whites" while twenty-seven per cent disagreed (MAS91, 12I). As noted in the need section, when asked how much respondents thought should be done for racial minorities, fifty-five per cent said more, only eleven per cent said less, and thirty-four per cent said about the same as now (CES04, CPS_F8). While these results come from two different surveys conducted thirteen years apart, the results are very similar, leading to the conclusion that there may be little change in views since the early 1990s.

Statements about aboriginal people overcoming poverty and whether non-whites have more difficulty than whites in becoming successful in Canadian society have similar responses. Only forty-four per cent agree that "social and economic conditions make it almost impossible for most Aboriginal people to overcome poverty" (CES04, MBS_B4) and forty-two per cent agreed that "it is more difficult for non-whites to be successful in Canadian society that it is for whites" (CES04, MBS_A10). And from the New Canada study, one-third say people are judged on basis of "their ethnic background, with some having a harder time due to prejudice" while two-thirds say that "just about everyone succeeds or fails on the basis of how well they do their work." (NC, Q21).

The New Canada study contains two questions about possible barriers to equitable treatment of visible minorities and women. Respondents were asked "If two equally qualified people [applied for a job], one white and one a visible minority, who do you think would get it?" and then asked "if two equally qualified people [are being considered for a promotion at their workplace], one white and one a visible minority, who do you think would be more likely to get it?"   These were followed with parallel questions about whether the job or promotion would be obtained by the man or woman. Responses to these two questions are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Distributions of responses to questions about which of two equally qualified people would likely get the job or promotion

Who gets job or promotion (Q22)	Gets job	Gets promotion	Who gets job or promotion	Gets job	Gets promotion
White person	34%	31%	Man	38%	38%
Visible minority	17%	14%	Woman	5%	7%
Equal chance	39%	55%	Equal chance	56%	55%
Total	100%	100%	Total	100%	100%

Source: NC, Q22A through Q23B.

From Table 7, approximately one-third of respondents say that non-white people or women have problems in obtaining jobs or promotions. While it is not clear why a sizeable minority of around fifteen per cent look on visible minorities as favoured, this may relate to views about the undesirability of equity programs.

The results from the different surveys appear relatively consistent on the issue of whether some minorities are able to participate equitably. There is a sizeable percentage of respondents who consider there to be problems for members of some groups, such as aboriginal people, visible minorities, and women.   But a larger percentage are uncertain about this or do not consider there to be many barriers.

Equity programs.   The mixed results of the previous paragraphs extend to views about equity programs. As noted in the discussion of views about needs, just over one-third of students expressed support for government assistance to immigrants to develop the skills and knowledge they require to fill jobs – thirty-seven per cent agreed with this approach, thirty-seven per cent gave a neutral response, and twenty-six per cent disagreed (SSAE98, EMP4). This demonstrates some, although limited, support for such programs. That is, approximately one-third express support for attempting to have all participate on a level playing field, a similar percentage to that in the first row of Table 7 who consider there may be problems for visible minorities and women in obtaining a job or promotion. While not too much should be made of the similarity, it does point to there being around one-third who consider this a problem and support some action to deal with the problem.

Table 8. View about equity program, MAS91 and NC (2003)

View about equity programs	Per cent who			Mean on 7-point scale
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
12J: If employers want to hire certain groups of people, that's their business	47	14	29	3.3
12K: Employers should set aside a certain number of places to hire qualified blacks and other minorities	50	16	34	3.5
12L: Governments should refuse to give contracts to comparies that do not have a fair proportion of ethnic and racial minorities	45	21	34	3.6
Q16_6: Governments should refuse to give contracts to comparies that do not have a fair proportion of ethnic and racial minorities	38	27	35	3.9
12N: The government should set an example and hire more people from ethnic and cultural minorities	28	20	52	4.5

Source: MAS91, Q12J-Q12M and NC, Q16_6

The detailed results in Table 8, mostly from the 1991 Angus Reid study, and Table 9, from the student survey, demonstrate considerable opposition to programs that create specific requirements to hire visible minorities. Setting aside jobs for minorities was opposed by fifty per cent of respondents (MAS91, 12K) in the 1991 study and by an even larger percentage in the student survey (SSAE91, EMP1). At the same time, just under one-half of respondents indicated that what employers do is not entirely their own business (MAS91, 12J). This translates into approximately one-third of respondents who support government providing contracts only to those who exercise some responsibility for ensuring a fair proportion of minorities are hired (MAS91, 12L and NC, Q16_6). The New Canada study, conducted thirteen years after the Angus Reid study, and using exactly the same question, shows that there is a little less opposition to such a policy than there was earlier. Since the word "fair" was used in these questions, this seems to be directly concerned with questions of equity. The final set of responses in Table 8 also demonstrate support for the principle of employing more minorities (12N) and, coupled with the first question of Table 8, indicates that around one-half of respondents view government as playing an important role in helping encourage this (12J). But the middle three rows of Table 8 indicate that only one-third agree that this should be a requirement.

The responses in the middle of Table 9 indicate that students have a concern that equity programs may harm white males. These could, of course, be equity programs related to women, not directly connected to multiculturalism policy. Fifty-four per cent of males in the undergraduate survey agreed that this occurs, and even one-third of females agreed.

Table 9. Distributions of undergraduate student responses to statements about equity programs, by sex

View	Specified number of jobs for visible minorities (EMP1)		White males lose jobs from equity programs (EMP3)		More visible minority students
	Male	Female	Male	Female	All
Strongly disagree (1)	54%	23%	10%	17%	21%
Disagree (2)	17%	27%	14%	19%	18%
Neutral (3)	19%	33%	22%	31%	44%
Agree (4)	7%	12%	23%	23%	13%
Strongly agree (5)	3%	5%	31%	10%	4%
Sample size	255	427	256	428	690
Mean (5-point scale)	1.9	2.5	3.5	2.9	2.6

Source: SSAE98, EMP1, EMP3, and UM4

The final question in Table 9 demonstrates that there is not strong support among students for the university to seek out and enroll more visible minority students. Thirty-nine per cent of respondents disagree with this and only seventeen per cent agree. While views on this issue may be mixed with views about having more international students, this result, along with the fear that some are hurt by equity programs, indicates concerns among these undergraduate students about pursuing equity.

iv. Other aspects

The survey data address many other issues related to multiculturalism, although many of these do not have a direct connection to the principles of social justice examined in this paper. As an example of the way that undergraduate students look on multiculturalism, I include the data in Table 10. These come from responses of undergraduate students in a second-year sociology class I taught, entitled "Multiculturalism." On the first day of class, I asked the students to write a sentence or two about what they considered multiculturalism to mean. The words and phrases in Table 10 are drawn from these statements and organized according to themes that I considered them to address. While the data in Table 10 could be used in many different ways, I draw attention to two matters.

First, there are some words and phrases that mention aspects of the three principles of social justice examined in this paper. For example, the words equality, human rights, respect, and eliminate biases are parallel to the statements in the federal documents. At the same time, the principles of social justice do not appear to be the element of multiculturalism that is highlighted most by these students.

Second, I find the words and phrases I placed under the heading "Social Relations" to be of particular interest, in that they point to other ways of considering multiculturalism and social justice, by emphasizing participation and transformation of society.   In Table 10, and in other open-ended responses I obtained from students, it is apparent that many of these students have a sophisticated understanding of multiculturalism, one that points toward new forms of social relationships and social structures. While these do not fit with the theme of this paper, they do fit with other approaches to social justice, especially those of Nancy Fraser (Fraser, 1995; Fraser and Honneth, 2003). I have done a preliminary analysis of this (Gingrich, 2004) and hope to further examine these views in the light of these approaches in another paper.

Table 10. Student views of what multiculturalism means

Descriptive characteristics	Social relations
Descriptive characteristics	**Social relations**
diversity	promote healthy social structure
variety of backgrounds	come together
different people/backgrounds	interact/work together
many cultures	live as one community/same society
mixture	cohesion/unity
network of community, goals, values	blending
Canada	amalgamate into a larger culture
Mosaic (Regina festival)	not assimilation
Characteristics	accommodates all ethnic groups
equality	something society must "do"
same/human rights	responsibilities of living in a multicultural society
participation	**Barriers/discrimination**
learn	without fear of persecution
tolerance	eliminate biases
acceptance	non-absolutes/non-confrontational
respect	**Historical**
harmony	built by immigrants
interaction	**Problematic aspects**
cooperation	divides society/segregates
practice own cultures/traditions	hurts visible minorities
maintain own identity	racism and prejudice increase as more groups together
encouragement of cultures	conflicts can develop
different cultures fostered and valued	racism and hostility
share culture	outlawed cultural practices
integrated/merging of cultures	equality a myth
Attitude	polemics
celebrate differences	unequal treatment
pride in multicultural identity	
understanding and not passing judgment	

Source: Summarized from some of comments by forty Sociology 211 students, September 10-12, 2004.

C. Conclusion

1. Summary assessment

Statements in the federal documents and views of Canadians demonstrate an understanding of some parts of Miller's three principles of social justice. Equality appears to be the most widely accepted principle, especially in the area of citizenship, rights, law, and ability to participate in society. While the results show that there is concern about inequalities, the federal statements do not address social inequalities, especially as they relate to forms of social inequality, such as income and wealth or sex and gender inequalities. The need principle appears to be understood at one level, in that statements and views point toward addressing different needs, where they exist. However, there appears to be limited recognition that there are different needs, except perhaps in the area of language, and there is little indication of how the differing needs might be met. In terms of desert, the focus is mostly on removing barriers such as racism and discrimination and according recognition and respect to others. When the practical aspects of improving equity in the labour market or other instrumental spheres, there appears to be considerable hesitation about, if not outright opposition to, specific measures and programs to improve equity.

From this summary assessment, I conclude that Canadians generally accept the three principles of social justice and think they should operate in Canadian society. But there is considerable doubt about the need for strengthening the application of the principles and hesitation and uncertainty about what programs might achieve this.

2. Some limitations and suggestions for further research

In this paper I have not dealt with approaches to social justice other than the principles developed by Miller. Further, I have not dealt with criticisms of Miller's approach. In an earlier paper, when examining Fraser's approach to justice, I found Miller's principles somewhat static and limiting (Gingrich, 2004). Fraser develops a transformative approach to social justice, one that emphasizes the dual principles of redistribution and recognition in the context of social change. In my view, it would be worthwhile examining approaches to multiculturalism in the light of Fraser's theory and other approaches to social justice.

This paper also has a limited analysis of multiculturalism in two senses. First, I have not attempted to examine all aspects of multiculturalism, but only those that I considered most relevant to the three principles of social justice. There are other aspects of multiculturalism, some that may deal with principles of social justice other than those of Miller, and some with other concerns such as social solidarity and integration and diversity as a societal resource.   Second, the approach to multiculturalism is also limited, in that I primarily address the principles of multiculturalism that I understand the federal government documents to describe. Other writers and analysts have different interpretations of the meaning of multiculturalism. Again, it would be worthwhile to

analyze other approaches to multiculturalism in the context of different approaches to social justice.

Another major limitation of the paper is the set of documents and surveys examined. While the four federal documents provide key statements of the approach to multiculturalism in Canada, they do not deal with the programs and practice of multiculturalism. An analysis of programs, such as those related to employment equity and anti-racism, in the context of social justice concerns, should provide more insight into the practice of social justice in multiculturalism policy in Canada. The surveys were also limiting in that they were not designed to directly address views about social justice or multiculturalism. This analysis in this paper demonstrates that it is possible to obtain some conclusions about the dual issues of multiculturalism and social justice. What I found impressive was the consistency of results across the different surveys and across time. While some surveys pointed toward contradictory conclusions, in general the results about similar issues was relatively consistent. It would be interesting to develop a survey project that directly addresses the dual issues of multiculturalism and social justice. In addition to questions with formatted sets of possible responses, the student responses of Table 10 demonstrate that an in-depth exploration of how Canadians understand multiculturalism could be a worthwhile project.

3. Policy implications

Social justice is one of the themes of multiculturalism policy (Table 1) and the analysis in this paper demonstrates that some social justice issues have been addressed by federal policy. The emphases of federal multiculturalism policy have also shifted over time, with increased attention to issues that are important for social justice. It is also apparent that some aspects of social justice are widely accepted by Canadians and there is a broad support for these principles. If social justice is to be further addressed in federal multiculturalism policy, it is important to maintain the traditional emphases of this policy and begin to address some of the gaps identified here. The following recommendations emphasize the latter.

The equality principle is widely accepted in areas of citizenship, rights, law, and participation.   But there is limited recognition of this when individuals are asked about multiculturalism. That is, equality may not be considered to be as essential an aspect of multiculturalism as are some of the other aims of policy. There is also room for focussing on equality in other areas, by addressing issues of social inequality in the economic and sex/gender spheres. There could also be more discussion of the meaning of equality in specific areas, rather than at a general level. For example, in *A Canada for All*, there is reference to equality of outcome, but it is not clear what this means or implies. Multiculturalism programs and education could address the meaning of equality and what might help achieve this.

There appears to be limited recognition of the differing needs of different individuals and groups in multiculturalism policy and in views of Canadians. While the emphasis on improved recognition of prior experience of immigrants is one way that such

needs are increasingly recognized, there is only a limited understanding of what other needs are.   Multiculturalism research and policy could increase its focus on identification of specific needs of individuals and groups and of ways that these needs could be met. Further, some attention needs to be focussed on where these needs may imply departures from equality. Where this tradeoff exists, there need to be imaginative ways of addressing these, especially where Canadians do support special forms of minority rights.

Finally, in the sphere of recognition and status, there is broad acceptance of the desert principle, but such acceptance does not appear to extend to all parts of the instrumental sphere. Policy could focus more fully on needs and limitations on the operation of the equity principle. The anti-racism and non-discrimination thrust of *A Canada for All* help this, but such a focus may be insufficient. Where the equity principle does not operate in the labour market, it is important for researchers to demonstrate this and for policy-makers to develop policies and programs to address the limitations. Multiculturalism policy alone is unlikely to be sufficient here, but sound economic and social policies which create equitable and fair results for all are likely to be necessary.

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