I think it is instructive to contrast the experience of Canada with other countries of the global north experiencing significant immigration. Canada has spent its entire history struggling to accommodate cultural differences. At first this process was dominated by English and French groups but it has become much more complicated, now encompassing First Peoples, descendents of the original colonial powers, and descendents of immigrants from other areas. This process of negotiation is made even more complex by regional populations with highly distinctive characteristics (e.g., Quebec). What this means is that the question "what is Canadian culture?" cannot be easily answered—or perhaps cannot be answered at all. Another way to say this is that Canada is a country that isn't defined by its culture in any unified way. What is "The Canadian Way"? What is Canadian cuisine, or Canadian design? I don't know. Instead Canada is defined by a legal system (and even that isn't simple) of laws we are required to obey and a set of moral/ethical principles that are widely accepted (e.g., democracy, equality of opportunity).

Meanwhile, Canada has a "purposive" immigration system that invites applicants and selects among them (on the economic side at least). This system brings in a variegated population from every corner of the earth, practicing many lifestyles, following different religious traditions and, most importantly, one that isn't dominated by any particular group. Again, there are geographic specificities, but this is the large story.

Put these two things together and Canada has a contested "us" (longstanding Canadians) that cannot be culturally defined, and a complex "them" made up of multiple cultures (newcomers).

The contrast with Europe is particularly instructive. There we see longstanding resident populations who wish to retain a singular cultural identity—a well-defined "us". Immigration is less purposive, built on a combination of past guestworker policies, family reunification, and asylum systems, with little of what we call economic immigration (i.e., points-based admissions). The cultural profile of immigrant populations is therefore narrower, meaning that "them" is more uniform, more identifiable (easier to stereotype). This enables immigration to be seen as a kind of "clash of civilizations" where the gains of one side are registered as declines by the other: if immigrants are "accommodated" something of the host culture is lost; if the host culture holds fast to its values and culture immigrants cannot fully belong.

Perhaps I am being deliberately provocative, but in my view we need to continue down our path of complexity and ambiguity. We need to build a sense of "us" that is not defined by culture, that is open and dynamic, that is *prepared to change*. When I hear that immigrants are unsure of what to assimilate to in Canadian culture, it gives me hope. When I hear people say "we need to define and foster Canadian culture" I get nervous, especially if that sentiment carries a sense of cultural singularity. The old adage remains true: all systems of inclusion are by definition systems of exclusion (the stronger the sense of "us" the sharper the divide between "us" vs. "them"). Similarly our immigration policy must continue to admit a varied population of newcomers, not in a spirit of "divide

and conquer" but in a spirit of global fairness, with an emphasis on the idea that adding diversity to diversity strengthens Canada.

This vision has no foreseeable end product: Canadian society creates itself out of an evolving negotiation of identity between longstanding Canadians and newcomers. It is unpredictable. It is a vision of "integration" built on a platform of multiculturalism/interculturalism. It sees Canada as a polity, not a singular culture. Not everyone has to appreciate hockey… even in play-off season.