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# New Zealand Sociology

# NEW ZEALAND SOCIOLOGY

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## Reviews

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# Horses and Hydro Lakes: The Reporting of Environmental Issues

*Doug Ashwell*
*Massey University*

Since the early 1970s public awareness and concern for environmental issues has increased. Many believe the media has been instrumental in raising the public's awareness. However, recent overseas research indicates that the media continue to use traditional methods of reporting, including the use of established 'primary definers'. Primary definers include groups such as government departments, recognised scientific bodies and large corporations which are favoured media courses for information on various issues. This has led the media to consider issues of the 'environment' only in terms of nuclear concerns, pollution and the conservation/ protection of endangered species. These issues are often framed in ways that are favourable to the 'primary definers' while limiting the reporting of alternative viewpoints. Using content analysis of two case studies, the following research shows that *The Dominion*, a leading New Zealand metropolitan daily newspaper, also privileges traditional 'primary definers' as their major sources of information on environmental issues with similar outcomes. The findings also show that for the issues examined in the media were guilty of 'shallow environmentalism'. The environmental content of the issues was only briefly reported and declined in importance to be replaced with issues that more easily met the criteria of more traditional news values. This approach, while increasing public awareness, does little to inform the public about the complexity of these issues nor does it help the public to make informed decisions about how problems may be resolved.

## Introduction

Since Earth day in 1970, public concern with environmental issues has risen and the media have been praised by many for the part they have played in this rising awareness. According to Lowe and Morrison (1984:75) the prominence given to environmental issues by the media is relatively new, with studies of the media in Britain, America, Canada and Japan indicating a build up of interest in environmental issues from the late 1960s levelling off in the mid-1970s. Although other issues such as unemployment and inflation have displaced environmental issues from centre stage they seem destined to remain a major feature of news. This trend has been reflected in the New Zealand media with many of the larger newspapers employing specialist environmental reporters. These include Allen Samson of *The Dominion*, Phillip English of the *New Zealand Herald*, Howard Keene of *The Press* and John Saunders of the *Evening Standard*, amongst others.

John Saunders, in his article 'Greening the Media: The Rise of Environmental Reporting' (1992) argues that a number of domestic issues including Cyclone Bola, the ICI chemical fire and fisheries stock depletion, to name a few, have increased the number and visibility of environmental issues in the New Zealand media. Although, he notes, those environmental reporters in general have to fight harder with editorial gatekeepers to get their stories published. Alongside this there is also evidence to suggest that the New Zealand public has a high level of concern for environmental issues. In 1989 the New Zealand Study of Values found that 82% of respondents questioned perceived the protection of the environment to be an urgent and immediate problem. Furthermore, 47% strongly approved of the

environmental movement and 24% believed that there should be stronger measures to protect the environment even if such measures hurt economic growth (*Evening Standard,* 21 April 1994). A more recent survey (Hosie and Russell, 1993) used some of the items contained in the 1989 New Zealand Study of Values and found similar levels of support and concern for environmental issues. This indicates that a reasonably high level of concern and awareness of such issues continues. How much the New Zealand media has influenced this increased level of awareness is difficult to measure. It seems reasonable to assume that for many people, the media are their primary source of information about environmental issues unless they are involved with environmental organisations. Therefore, public opinion about such issues will be largely reliant on how the media portray these issues. If this is the case then it is important to understand which environmental issues are reported and which are not; how environmental reporting is generated and what values inform its construction.

Recent overseas research[1] suggests that when reporting issues of environmental concern, the media tend to follow traditional methods of reporting. First, to be published environmental stories must meet the traditional standards of newsworthiness. For example, environmental stories that contain elements of risk, drama and negativity are more likely to get published than those that do not (see Greenberg, Sachsman, Sandman, and Salomone, 1989:275-276; Galtung and

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[1] Most of this research has been conducted in Britain and the United States by those involved in the fields of mass communication and journalism. A selection of this research can be found in *The Mass Media and Environmental Issues* by Anders Hansen, 1993. Leicester University Press.

Ruge, 1965:64-90). Second, journalists seeking background information on these issues continue to use their traditional sources. These traditional sources have been labelled 'primary definers' (see Hall 1978) and include groups such as the government, government departments, recognised scientific authorities and other established spokespeople for various issues. Smith (1993:395) argues that:

> These sources exercise social and political power by steering journalists toward one particular self-serving way of framing the story from among many possible ways in which any given set of circumstances could be framed and explained.

Environmental groups such as Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and New Zealand's Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society are not usually 'primary definers' although Greenpeace has had some success in this area (See Hansen 1993). Rather, these groups are used as secondary sources of information concerning issues of environmental concern. This leads to, for the most part, only those environmental issues containing elements of risk and drama, such as oil spills and nuclear accidents, being reported in any great detail. Being secondary sources often means that environmental groups have little influence on how such issues are framed as they have already been defined by information gained from more traditional sources.

These groups also find it difficult to get issues they are promoting heard because of the media's construction of the 'environment'. Overseas research suggests that the media construct the 'environment' in a particular way, which limits what can be considered an environmental issue. As Hansen (1993:xvi) notes, 'the environment' 'has

for some time been defined in the public sphere largely in terms of anything nuclear..., in terms of "pollution", and in terms of conservation/protection of endangered species'. Moreover, according to Greenberg, et al (1989:267), environmental news events that are sudden, violent and dramatic are more likely to get published than environmental stories concerned with chronic long-term risks, even if those risks are of equal consequence. For example a major chemical spill threatening a town water supply will be guaranteed coverage. Whereas poisoning of the same water supply due to continued exposure to agricultural chemicals may not receive coverage because of the long-term nature of the problem and its lack of dramatic content. Due to the important role that agriculture plays in the New Zealand economy, this latter issue may receive little coverage because of the reluctance on the part of editors to challenge the farming lobby.

In New Zealand some of the above findings have been supported by Hayward (1991:57), who argues that it is difficult for groups to be heard on environmental issues if their concerns lie outside the mainstream environmental issues 'of ecological and wilderness preservation'. For example, issues concerned with the urban environment are marginalised and do not get reported.

With these local and overseas findings in mind the current research examines how the New Zealand print media report local environmental issues. Using content and thematic analyses of two case studies, the research aimed to examine a number of questions. The first of which was whether the patterns of environmental reporting revealed by overseas researchers also hold in this country. Second, how does the New Zealand media represent the environment? Does it represent it in terms

of pollution; conservation/protection of endangered species or in terms of ecological and wilderness preservation? Thirdly, are the New Zealand media's main sources of information on such issues traditional 'primary definers' such as the government and its departments, large commercial interests and scientists. Are environmental groups only being used as secondary sources? Finally, are the stories 'framed' in ways favourable to 'primary definers', thus limiting the way in which these environmental issues are reported?

To examine these questions, New Zealand news products that centre on local environmental issues or have some local environmental content need to be analysed. Two case studies have been chosen for detailed investigation. The first issue investigated was the reporting of the Kaimanawa horse debate. This long term issue was chosen because it was unusual. The issue involved a debate concerned with nature or wildlife, manifest in the form of the Kaimanawa horses, versus the environment in the shape of the unique and virtually unchanged tussock lands of the Kaimanawa-Moawhango region in the North Island of New Zealand. The period of reporting investigated was from February 1993 until April 1994. The second issue was a short term event: the reporting of the low level of New Zealand's South Island hydro lakes that occurred between April and August of 1992. This issue was chosen because it represented a more 'traditional' type of environmental debate of development versus environment. The development talked of here is the generation of electrical energy by Electrocorp, a state owned enterprise versus the environmental issues of more sustainable energy production and the environmental integrity of the hydro lakes and the wildlife contained within them. These issues were also chosen because they also involved both

environmental groups and more traditional 'primary definers' such as the government. Examination of these articles should reveal how the media represent the environment, whether or not they favour traditional 'primary definers' and if so whether this influences the framing of these issues in ways which are favourable to those sources.

The type of news products analysed for both case studies are newspaper articles. News products of this type were chosen because past stories are easily accessible when compared to past television or radio news broadcasts. The newspaper chosen as the source of these stories on both issues was *The Dominion. The Dominion* was chosen, because it is recognised as a New Zealand metropolitan daily and because past issues were relatively inexpensive and easy to obtain in comparison to more provincial newspapers. *The Dominion* had also reported both issues in some depth. The details of these issues are outlined below.

## The Case Studies

**The Kaimanawa Horse debate**, as already noted, was chosen for its unusual nature and because it has been a long running issue within New Zealand and is still of current concern[2]. The debate concerns the damage that approximately 1300 wild horses cause to the tussock grassland in the Kaimanawa-Moawhango region of the central North Island of New Zealand. On one side of the

[2] Since writing this article this issue has continued to be a source of news with the latest development being the National Government's halting of a proposed cull before the General Election and then the subsequent roundup and sale of the captured horses.

debate are The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society (Forest & Bird), a nation-wide environmental group dedicated to the preservation of the wilderness and wildlife of New Zealand, which states:

> The ecological importance of the Kaimanawa tussock grassland has only been appreciated in recent years, both as the best surviving example of a once common ecosystem, and as the habitat of a number of rare and unusual plants (Forest & Bird 1991:38).

Forest & Bird argue that the presence of the horses in the area damages rare native grasses through overgrazing and the transportation of exotic grasses, which compete and eventually supplant the native varieties. Since the legal protection of the Kaimanawa horses by the Conservation Department in 1981, Forest & Bird have lobbied the Government to have the horses removed in order that the fragile ecosystem can be protected. They argue that the horses are an introduced species that are descendants from deliberately released domestic and army horses, escaped cavalry horses and farm hacks. As these horses are not a unique breed it is Forest & Bird's contention that they should be removed from the area in order that its unique plant life may be maintained. This lobbying was successful, with the government agreeing to, and conducting, roundups in June 1993.

In opposition to the stand taken by Forest & Bird are those members of The International League for the protection of Horses (ILPH). The ILPH[3] have campaigned

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[3] In the author's view the ILPH should not be considered an environmental group; rather, it is an animal welfare organisation. The ILPH is originally a British organisation

against the roundups of the Kaimanawa horses, arguing that roundups are a cruel method of herd control. They suggest that the true facts concerning the horse's genetic stock and actual herd size need more thorough investigation. They also maintain that the use of contraception is a more humane option by which herd numbers can be controlled.

**The South Island hydro lake level 'crisis'** this issue represented a more 'traditional' environmental issue of the environment versus 'development'. There were two major issues of environmental concern raised by the low levels of the South Island hydro lakes.

The first of these was raised in April of 1992, a month before the low lake levels threatened to disrupt the generation of electrical energy and in turn threaten to bring electricity rationing and power cuts to large parts of New Zealand. At this time it was reported that the unexpectedly low rainfall over the autumn months now meant that hydro lake levels were at critically low levels and winter power cuts seemed likely. This situation was heavily criticised by energy campaigner Molly Melhuish and Greenpeace's Kirsty Hamilton who both argued that the situation had been caused through Electrocorp's '"sell like hell" mentality and complete lack of energy conservation planning' (Grainger 1992:3). Both Molly Melhuish and Greenpeace raised the issue of energy conservation and the ideas of alternative energy sources but noted that Electrocorp's profit motive meant that the

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and its New Zealand branch has been operating for some six years. The main aim of this organisation is the prevention of cruelty to horses regardless of the environment in which they are found, whether it be open country like the Kaimanawa-Moawhango region or a captive environment like a racing stables.

corporation would not consider such issues. Molly Melhuish noted that 'Electrocorp had 'ruthlessly' pushed to increase electricity demand - even during the present seven-month drought in the hydro catchments...' (Melhuish in Grainger 1992:3).

The second issue of environmental concern was raised as the 'crisis' deepened and electricity supplies were being threatened with disruption. At this point Electrocorp asked government for permission to lower Lake Pukaki five metres below its normal minimum level in order to maintain power production and avoid power cuts. Under normal circumstances Electrocorp would have had to apply under The Resource Management Act in order to gain permission to lower the level of Lake Pukaki, a process which could take months. In this case the government responded by fast tracking legislation through Parliament giving permission to Electrocorp to lower the lake level. This decision in itself should have raised debate as it appeared that the Resource Management Act, designed to protect New Zealand's natural resources, was easily pushed aside in order to maintain electricity production and subsequently Electrocorp's profit margin. If such concerns were raised they were not reported. Instead Parliament's decision raised another environmental concern, that of the endangered black stilt. At the time of the lake level 'crisis', there were some 68 black stilts left in the world, 'eight of which used the river delta next to Lake Pukaki as a feeding area' (Gardiner 1992:1). Kevin Smith of Forest & Bird argued that these birds would suffer if the level of Lake Pukaki, the bird's breeding and feeding ground, was to be lowered a further five metres. Both the government and Electrocorp denied any harm would come to the black stilts through lowering the lake.

## Method of Analysis

Identical methods of analysis were used for both case studies. Stories published by *The Dominion* for the duration of each issue, or up until the time of writing in October 1994, were examined. The Kaimanawa horse stories only numbered 13 over a period of 14 months from February 1993 until April 1994. The stories concerning the low levels of the hydro lakes numbered 101 over a period of five months between April 1992 until August 1992. The large difference in the numbers of stories on each issue was unknown when this research was first contemplated.[4]

Each news story was subjected to three types of analysis: measurement, sources and keyword. Each story's headline size and the column length were measured and added together, giving the overall amount of headline and column space each issue has received in *The Dominion*. Although there is a large discrepancy between the number of stories in each issue useful comparisons can still be made. By using percentages and examining similar trends some tentative conclusions can be drawn about the treatment of environmental issues in New Zealand.

The second form of analysis involved reading each story and recording the sources quoted, both directly and indirectly, by the journalists writing the stories. These sources were then arranged into related subgroups. For example, in both cases quotes from government

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[4] Due to the large discrepancy of story numbers percentages were used in order to compare the two cases. Inferential statistics were not contemplated as the sample sizes were too small.

ministers or government departments were recorded under the subgroup heading government. The aim of this analysis was to find whether or not the New Zealand media also rely heavily on traditional 'primary definers', as has been found overseas. Comparisons were made between these 'traditional' sources and environmental groups which, according to Hansen (1991), do not fare as well. Direct comparisons between the two issues using this analysis were not possible as the primary definers were different in both cases, but similar trends were examined.

Finally, each story was analysed using a keyword search to find the themes being used to report these issues. This method of analysis follows the work of Shirley Leitch who studied the New Zealand media's reporting of national unemployment. According to Leitch, 'powerful story-tellers, such as news media organisations, can hope to limit the range within which public debate occurs (Leitch 1990:26). For example, according to Leitch (1990:28) in its reporting of unemployment during the 1980's the news media used the word 'unemployment' to mean voluntary idleness, blurring the distinction between those who choose not to work, the dole bludgers, and those who have no work to do, the victims of the economic system. By using the word in this manner alternative views of unemployment are excluded from the debate. The keyword analysis used here examined in what terms the two case studies had been reported and what themes had been used, in order to see how this may have limited how the environmental issues in question were framed or reported. This analysis was conducted by reading each story and identifying the key themes (words) used. These were recorded and then arranged into related subgroups. Again direct comparison between the two cases was not possible as the themes

were obviously not the same, but again similar trends were examined.

In many cases content analysis of this type of media would also involve an analysis of the latent content, i.e. photographs used with articles, as well as manifest content contained within the text. It was decided that for the purposes of this research only manifest content would be examined. The reasons for this were first, that the investigation was interested in how issues of environmental concern were reported, especially whether alternative viewpoints were included, from which the public could make informed decisions about the debate. Second, although both cases under investigation had issues of environmental concern, they were in many other ways quite different from each other. Therefore, as manifest content analysis is more generalisable (McQuail 1994) than latent content analysis, it offered the better method by which to compare the two cases.

## Headline and Column Size

The headline size and column length were measured for each story and the results were added together to give the total headline size and column length for each case study. From the results the average headline size and column length of stories from each case study were calculated. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 1.

As already noted the South Island hydro lake storage crisis generated considerably more stories (101) than the Kaimanawa horse issue (13 stories). On average, the headlines for stories published concerning the South Island hydro lake level crisis were 10cm$^2$ larger than headlines of stories published concerning the Kaimanawa

horses. Furthermore, the average column length for stories concerned with the hydro lakes level crisis, were 2cms longer than stories concerned with the Kaimanawa horse issue. The ratio of column length to headline size also indicates that the hydro lake stories have greater headline status than the Kaimanawa horse stories. It must be noted that these differences may be an artefact due to the fact that the South Island lake level crisis appeared as front page headline news more often than the Kaimanawa horse issue, and as front-page headlines are on the whole larger in size this may have skewed the mean headline and column size for these stories.

**Table 1.**
**Comparison of Case Studies by**
**Total Headline Size and Column Length**

| Case Studies | No. of Stories | Total Headline Size ($cm^2$) | Total Column Length (cms) | Average Headline Size ($cm^2$) | Average Column Length (cms) | Ratio Column Length (cms) to Headline Size ($cm^2$) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Horses | 13 | 169.57 | 219.9 | 13.04 | 16.92 | 1:0.77 |
| Hydro Lakes | 101 | 2402.35 | 1887.8 | 23.79 | 18.69 | 1:1.27 |

## Newsworthiness

Even if the above is the case, it does not explain why the South Island hydro lake level crisis generated so many stories and why it reached the front page more often than the Kaimanawa horse issue. To understand the reasons for this we need to examine the two issues in terms of newsworthiness. When analysed against the elements of newsworthiness compiled by Galtung and Ruge (1965), the South Island hydro lake storage crisis is the more

newsworthy of the two issues. According to Galtung and Ruge, to be newsworthy a story or issue must contain several of the following twelve major ingredients:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1/ | Frequency | 7/ | Continuity |
| 2/ | Threshold | 8/ | Composition |
| 3/ | Unambiguity | 9/ | Elite Nations |
| 4/ | Meaningfulness | 10/ | Elite Persons |
| 5/ | Consonance | 11/ | Personalisation |
| 6/ | Unexpectedness | 12/ | Negativity |

(Leitch, 1990:22)

The South Island hydro lake level crisis contained many of these elements. First, it had immediate frequency, with the crisis developing within 4-6 weeks of being first reported. Second, the issue could be told unambiguously, with the threat of power cuts making it meaningful or relevant to most New Zealanders and hence, third, it could be personalised. Fourth, these reported threats also gave the story the element of negativity. Fifth, the story also had consonance as the themes of electricity and power cuts could be easily integrated with other themes of daily life familiar to readers. For example, the theme of power cuts was integrated with the theme of crime when it was proposed that street lighting should be cut to save power. Sixth, the element of elite persons was also present as throughout the crisis media attention focussed on the Electrocorp Corporation and its executives and certain government ministers. Finally, the story also had continuity with the increasing crisis unfolding daily over the winter months. The combination of these elements gave the story a strong news threshold. In terms of newsworthiness this issue did not focus on the element of elite nations.

In comparison, the Kaimanawa horse debate did not have such a high news threshold. The levels of negativity

and relevance were lower than those concerned with the South Island hydro lake level crisis. The apparent suffering the horses would endure when rounded up gave this story its negative content, but to many New Zealanders the suffering of some wild horses is not as immediately negative or relevant as the threat of electricity rationing or power cuts. In addition, this issue did not have the same immediate frequency as the lake level crisis. Developments concerning the fate of the horses have occurred over long time periods and therefore are not well suited to the frequency of daily news events. The main ingredients that continue to ensure that this particular issue continues to get reported are the negativity already mentioned and the dramatic way in which the horses have been portrayed. In its coverage of this event, *The Dominion* dramatised the horses, through words and photographs, in such a way that the reader was given the impression that the horses were not unlike the wild Mustangs of the American West. The proposed roundups of such 'wild' creatures gave the story its negative content, as the roundups are quoted as being cruel and inhumane. Although these elements ensure that this issue is newsworthy, its newsworthiness threshold is lower than that of the lake level crisis.

Using the word 'wild' also implies that the horses are an endangered species, a common way for the media to portray environmental issues. But such a portrayal is misleading, because as already noted, these animals are not indigenous to the region, nor do they have any unique genetic qualities that would make them an endangered species. The result of this portrayal is to avoid the issue of the environmental damage the horses cause.

If the news values of negativity, relevance and frequency account for the size and relative importance of

the two cases, they are also responsible for the way the environmental issues in both are marginalised. The reliance on these news values and other common media strategies causes both the environmental aspects of these stories as well as environmental groups to be marginalised. This is reinforced by the results of the analysis of the media's chosen sources reported below.

## The Sources

All the sources referred to in *The Dominion* stories were recorded and sorted into related sub-groups. The results are shown in Table 2 and Table 3.

**Table 2.**
**Quoted Media Sources for the Kaimanawa Horse Issue for the Period February 1993 - April 1994**

| Source | Number of References | Percentage of Total Sources Acknowledged |
|---|---|---|
| Government | 12 | 41.4 |
| I.L.P.H. | 6 | 20.7 |
| Forest and Bird | 1 | 3.5 |
| Roundup Personnel | 5 | 17.2 |
| Other | 5 | 17.2 |
| Total | 29 | 100.0 |

As Table 2 shows, most references for the Kaimanawa horse story belonged in the Government category at 41.4%. Included in this category were statements from government ministers and the Conservation Department. The next largest group came from the ILPH at 20.7%. The next largest groups were the categories of Roundup Personnel and Other at 17.2% each. This latter category had quotes from a veterinarian, an equine expert, the Attorney General and a court

justice. The Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society was only referred to once in these stories and therefore was only 3.5% of all sources quoted.

In examining these results it can be seen that the major source of references came from the Government, a recognised 'primary definer'. But, the 'recognised' environmental agency in this debate, The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, was only referred to once, illustrating that it was not used as a 'primary definer' of this issue. Rather it was used as a very limited secondary source of information. This result suggests that *The Dominion* has a similar level of bias towards traditional 'primary definers' as their overseas counterparts, where, for example, Hansen (1991:450) found that:

> environmental groups appeared as primary definers in only 6 percent of stories, compared with 23 percent for public body or authority representatives, 21 percent for government, and 17 percent for independent scientists or experts.

The interesting aspect of these results is the number of times the ILPH is quoted. As already noted this organisation is seen as an animal welfare organisation rather than an environmental group. This is a surprising result, as the ILPH would not normally be considered to be a 'primary definer'. But, as already noted, *The Dominion* had reported the issue in a way that had dramatised the issue in terms of wild horses against a cruel and inhumane roundup. In terms of this story frame the ILPH seems a natural choice of 'primary definer'. But this raises the question of which came first, the selection of story frame or the selection of the media source? A definitive answer to this question is not possible without

further research into how journalists and editors decide to frame such issues.

**Table 3.**
**Quoted Media Sources**
**for the South Island Hydro Lake Level Crisis**
**for the Period April 1992- August 1992**

| Source | Number of Quotations | Percentages of All Sources Acknowledged |
|---|---|---|
| Electricity Industry | 119 | 51.7 |
| Government | 41 | 17.8 |
| Economic | 23 | 10.0 |
| Environmental Agencies | 13 | 5.7 |
| Meteorological | 10 | 4.3 |
| Local Bodies | 5 | 2.2 |
| Other | 19 | 8.3 |
| Total | 230 | 100.0 |

The analysis of media sources for the South Island hydro lake level crisis shows similar trends to those above with the exception of the ILPH result. As Table 3 illustrates, the largest number of references for the South Island hydro lake crisis was in the Electricity Industry category at 51.7%. This group contained statements from Electrocorp and local electrical supply agencies. The next largest group was the government category, at 17.8%. Contained within this group were quotes from government ministers and government departments. Next were quotes from Economic sources (10%) and this group contained statements from the Bureau of Economic Research (BERL), the Manufacturers' Federation and various large firms. The Other category was the next largest group of references at 8.3%. This group included statements from sources such as the Police, church leaders, prayer meeting convenors, the Plunket Society and the Family Planning Association. Comments made in this group

referred to issues such as the problems of extra crime caused by street lights being turned off and maintaining heating in order that babies would not become ill.

Environmental Agencies, i.e. Greenpeace, Energy For Our Future and The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society came behind this group, being referenced only 13 times or 5.7% of the total figure. The last two categories were Meteorological and Local Bodies, making up 4.3% and 2.2% respectively. The former category was comprised of references from various sources concerned with rainfall in the Southern Alps and the latter category was made up of statements from local and district councils.

This data again illustrates that *The Dominion* has privileged the traditional 'primary definers' when reporting this issue. The largest source of quotes came from the Electricity industry, especially Electrocorp - the Government State Owned Enterprise in charge of New Zealand electricity generation. Electrocorp's position as New Zealand's main electricity generator, and its quasi-governmental status, ensured its choice as a 'primary definer' of this issue. The next largest group of sources came from Government and economic agencies respectively. These sources are also recognised as 'primary definers', with economic agencies having more prevalence since the instigation of New Right economic policies in 1984. Environmental agencies, as in the Kaimanawa horse debate, were only used as secondary sources, comprising only 6% of the recorded sources. Again this figure is in line with the findings of Hansen (1991).

This bias towards 'primary definers' as already mentioned, leads to the stories being framed in ways

which are advantageous to the 'primary definers' whilst marginalising alternative sources and alternative ways of framing the story. The above results illustrate that in both the Kaimanawa horse debate and the South Island hydro lake level crisis the reliance on traditional 'primary definers' leads to environmental groups being marginalised to the status of secondary sources. Thereby, denying their alternative viewpoint concerning the above issues being reported or if such viewpoints are reported they are marginalised. This being the case, it is arguable whether the public can make an informed decision concerning these issues from the way these issues have been reported.

To test whether the reporting of these issues does in fact privilege 'primary definers' the stories were subjected to a keyword search or thematic analysis, the results of which are reported below.

## The Themes

The stories from both case studies were subjected to a keyword search to find the themes being used in the reporting of these issues. These keywords were recorded and arranged into thematic categories. For example the number of times the term 'wild horses' was used in the Kaimanawa horse stories was recorded and placed into the thematic category of the same name. The results of these analyses are shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4 indicates the keywords or themes used by *The Dominion* in the stories published concerning the Kaimanawa horse issue for the period 1993 to April 1994. The first eight themes, which all concern horses and their treatment, comprised the largest proportion, totalling 72.9%. The theme of Environmental Damage Caused by

Horses only makes up 15.3% of the recorded themes. The category Other, included themes dealing with political motivation, the resignation of the Conservation Department animal ethics committee chairman and allusions to members of the ILPH as 'horse lovers'. This latter category comprised 11.8% of the themes used.

**Table 4.**
**Frequency of Themes Used by *The Dominion* in the Reporting of the Kaimanawa Horse Issue**

| Themes/Keywords | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Total Themes/Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| Wild Horses | 5 | 8.4 |
| Cruelty to Horses | 4 | 6.8 |
| Killing of Horses | 9 | 15.3 |
| Pet Food Prices | 5 | 8.4 |
| Contraception/Census | 6 | 10.2 |
| Roundup of Horses | 6 | 10.2 |
| Humane | 4 | 6.8 |
| Sale of Horses | 4 | 6.8 |
| Environmental Damage Caused by Horses | 9 | 15.3 |
| Other | 7 | 11.8 |
| Total | 59 | 100.0 |

These results reinforce the point that the Kaimanawa horse issue has been framed around the horses and their fate rather than the environmental damage they cause. When viewed in the light of the media source analysis this result illustrates how the story has been framed according to the information given by the 'primary definers' of this issue, the government and the ILPH. But this case is unusual because in spite of the government being the 'primary definer' of this issue, the story frame did not entirely serve its interests. The government's proposed roundups, designed to control the horse population, were being labelled cruel and inhumane, placing the

government in a negative light. Instead the story frame and the themes used seemed to support and enhance the arguments put forward by the ILPH. These results combined with those of the source analysis show that by constructing the issue around the treatment of the horses *The Dominion* media has downplayed the issue of the environmental damage caused by them. This result is ironic because, as already noted, the debate centres around the need to control horse numbers in order to minimise the environmental damage they cause. By using this construction of the events *The Dominion* has also downplayed the context through which the audience can make sense of the central issues.

*The Dominion's* construction of the South Island hydro lake level crisis also downplayed the environmental elements contained within the issue. This can be clearly shown in the thematic analysis the results of which are shown in Table 5 which shows the themes or keywords used in stories published by *The Dominion* concerning the South Island hydro lake level crisis for the period April 1992 - August 1992.

As the results indicate, there were three major themes used by *The Dominion* in the reporting of this issue: Power Crisis/Rationing and Blackouts, Power Savings and Rain/Low Lake Levels. Together these themes made up 44.8% of those recorded. In contrast the theme of the black stilt and the environmental themes concerned with alternative energy generation and power conservation made up only 8.6% of the total themes used.

**Table 5.**
**Frequency of themes Used by *The Dominion* in the Reporting of the South island Hydro Lake Level Crisis**

| Theme/Keyword | Number of Occurrences | Percentage of Total Themes/Keywords |
|---|---|---|
| Electricity Generation | 29 | 6.1 |
| Power Crisis/Power Rationing/ Blackouts | 85 | 17.9 |
| Power Savings | 63 | 13.2 |
| Rain/Low Lake Levels | 65 | 13.7 |
| Lake Pukaki/Lake Lowering Bill | 27 | 5.7 |
| Black Stilts | 17 | 3.6 |
| Meteorological | 10 | 2.1 |
| Law and Order | 5 | 1.1 |
| Government | 12 | 2.5 |
| Economic | 29 | 6.0 |
| Electrocorp Marketing Strategy | 28 | 5.9 |
| Criticism of Electrocorp | 29 | 6.0 |
| Environmental Issues | 24 | 5.0 |
| Inquiry into Crisis | 9 | 1.9 |
| Health Issues | 9 | 1.9 |
| Other | 35 | 7.4 |
| Total | 476 | 100.0 |

These results suggest that this story has been framed to show that the crisis is really caused by low rainfall in the South Island hydro lakes catchment area, causing an electricity generation crisis which would end in power cuts and blackouts unless consumers make large power savings. This framework minimised the criticism being directed at Electrocorp and government for their part in the crisis. This suggests that in their privileged role as 'primary definers' these two groups have been able to manipulate the framework of the issue to their own advantage. At the same time, this framework has caused alternative viewpoints to be marginalised. In common with the Kaimanawa horse issue *The Dominion's* construction of this issue, combined with the position of environmental

organisations as secondary sources, has led to the environmental aspects of these issues being downplayed. This result is again consistent with overseas findings. Such environmental issues as those concerned with alternative power generation and energy conservation do not fit into the media's construction of environmental problems as issues of wilderness and ecological preservation. Therefore, as Hayward's (1993) findings predicted, Greenpeace and the group Energy For Our Future, have had difficulty in having their viewpoint reported.

It must be noted that the reporting of the plight of the black stilts does seem to fit with the media's normal portrayal of the environment as issues involved with endangered species and wilderness protection. But, this issue received limited reporting and was quickly replaced with more traditionally newsworthy stories.

Again, these results show that *The Dominion's* construction of this and the Kaimanawa horse debate, combined with their chosen sources have marginalised the environmental aspects of both stories, thus making it difficult for the reader to understand the issues in their entirety.

## Conclusion

The results of the research presented here indicate that *The Dominion* does tend to treat environmental issues in ways similar to its overseas counterparts. They have tended to privilege 'primary definers', such as government as their primary sources, whilst relegating environmental organisations to the position of secondary sources. This resulted in the issues in question being, for the most part, framed in ways that served the 'primary definers' interests,

thus limiting the chances of alternative viewpoints being reported. This was especially the case for Greenpeace and the group Energy For Our Future which were treated as secondary sources. Their concerns about alternative energy generation and conservation lay outside the media's normal construction of the environment as issues concerned with pollution, and the protection of endangered species and wilderness areas.

Where *The Dominion* did frame stories in terms of endangered species as in the terms of the black stilts and the Kaimanawa horses it did so with differing results. In the case of the black stilts the coverage was limited and very brief and rapidly replaced with more newsworthy issues such as the threat of power cuts. In the case of the Kaimanawa horses constructing the debate in terms 'wild horses' implied that these animals were an endangered species, but as pointed out this is not the case and therefore this story frame is misleading and avoids the issue of the environmental damage these animals cause. But this story frame did produce an unusual result in that the ILPH was the second largest 'primary definer' of the Kaimanawa horse issue even though the group had only been in existence for four years. At the same time this story frame did not favour government, the major 'primary definer' of this issue, as it criticised the Conservation Department's methods of trying to control the horse population. This unusual result prompts the question 'Which comes first, the story frame or the source?' The answer to this question may give insights into the importance that story frames have on the selection of sources, or the selection of sources has on story frames. Alternatively, it may indicate what journalistic strategies are at work when sources are being chosen or story frames structured.

Although this research is limited and more is required to find whether these results are generalisable to a wider range of media and issues, the combined findings indicate that *The Dominion* does treat environmental issues in similar ways to their overseas counterparts. Through its privileging of 'primary definers', choice of story frames and reliance on traditional values they have marginalised environmental groups and any alternative viewpoints on the issues these groups may have had. Also, limiting environmental reporting to issues concerned with pollution and protection of endangered species or wilderness areas leaves many issues unreported, for example, the potential dangers of genetic engineering. This type of 'shallow environmentalism' does little to inform the public about the complexity of these issues and thus many of them remain largely excluded from the public sphere. So, although the media can be praised for raising public awareness of such issues this awareness remains selective.

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# Expanding the Boundary of Moral Panics: The Great New Zealand Zeppelin Scare of 1909

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## *Abstract*

This article examines an episode of collective delusion involving mass sightings of phantom German Zeppelins that transpired in New Zealand during 1909. The major indicators and theoretical perspective of moral panics will be outlined, followed by a description of the Zeppelin scare. While the incident does not meet the contemporary sociological consensus as to what criteria constitute a moral panic, the authors contend that the present definition of a moral panic should be expanded to include the Zeppelin scare and similar episodes.

> There floated on high
> In the month of July
> An airship of wondrous construction.
> The folks got a fright
> When they saw its bright light,
> For they thought it was bent on destruction.
> L.J. Allan, *Southland Daily News* (2 August 1909:5)

This paper examines waves of claims and public discourse surrounding mass sightings of imaginary German Zeppelin-type dirigibles over New Zealand between July and September 1909, fostering widespread concern and fear among sections of the community. While the societal reaction to the sightings does not

conform to the standard definition of a moral panic as defined by Cohen (1972), we argue that the present conceptualisation of what constitutes such panics is overly narrow and should be expanded to encompass such episodes. We begin by providing a brief overview of the major indicators and theoretical orientations of moral panics, followed by the narrative describing the 1909 Zeppelin sightings and conclude with an analysis of this chain of events from the moral panic perspective.

## Moral Panics — An Overview

The first known use of the term 'moral panic' was in 1971 by Jock Young (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994:12). However, the term only gained widespread sociological usage following the 1972 publication of a popular study by South African born sociologist Stanley Cohen on exaggerated public reaction to a relatively minor disturbance by two youth factions (the Mods and Rockers) in Clacton, England during Easter Sunday, 1964. Initially describing this phenomenon as 'community sensitization; (vide Cohen, 1967:280), he subsequently employed the term 'moral panic' which has since become a recognised subject of study within the collective behaviour literature. In formulating his now classic definition of moral panic, Cohen utilised a labelling or interactionist view of deviance (an early precursor of contemporary social constructionism) which involves a relativist definition emphasising its ambiguous, dynamic nature, the role of social controlling agents in creating and maintaining deviant labels, and the consequence of such designations in fostering further deviations. In defining a moral panic, Cohen noted how societies:

> Appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or groups of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people;... Sometimes the panic passes over and is forgotten, except in folklore and collective memory; at other times it has more serious and long lasting repercussions and might produce such changes as those in legal and social policy or even in the way the society conceives itself
>
> Cohen (1972:9).

Stereotyping is a key component of the process of media amplification which Cohen traces and involves the use of spurious attribution (Cohen, 1972:54-57). During the initial phase of the labelling process, stigmatisation of the Mods and Rockers involved the use of 'emotive symbols' (e.g. 'thugs' or 'hooligans'), while subsequently 'guilt by association' was common in media coverage. Media amplification using spurious attribution is also supported by existing stereotypes such as racial myths.

## Moral Panic Indicators

More recently, sociologists Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) argue that moral panics can be identified by five indicators: concern, hostility, consensus, disproportionality, volatility. First, there must be sufficient *concern* and even fear about the perceived threat to the community well-being. The concern should be measurable in some way through such means as opinion polls, public

commentary via the media or through organised social movements. Second, the public concern must engender increased *hostility* towards the identifiable group or category which is perceived as threatening to the community. The advent of hostility towards those responsible for the threat produces a dichotomy of stereotypes consisting of 'good' or respectable individuals who want to rid themselves of the undesirable threat posed by the 'folk devils'. Barlow (1993:258) draws a parallel between the good versus evil continuum by observing how police routinely round up suspects for crimes based on stereotyped characteristics such as age, race or socio-economic background. Third, for a moral panic to exist, there must be agreement or *consensus* that a problem or threat exists among at least some section of the society. Goode and Ben-Yehuda contend that moral panics may, however, be limited to a region or section of society. However if the number of people affected is unsubstantial, there would be little chance that a moral panic exists (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994:34-35). Fourth, is the indicator of *disproprtionality*. There is an assumption that the degree of public concern or numbers of people affected by a moral panic may be disproportionally high compared to the reality of the actual threat posed by the moral panic. Goode and Ben-Yehuda state:

> In moral panics, the generation and dissemination of figures or numbers is extremely important – addicts, deaths, dollars, crimes, victims, injuries, illnesses – and most of the figures cited by moral panic 'claim-makers' are wildly exaggerated. Clearly, in locating the moral panic, some

measure of the objective harm must be taken (36).

While the degree of objectivity is an important consideration when examining claims about the existence or size of a moral panic, the concept of the moral panic is contingent or disproportionality. For if the degree of disproportionality cannot be determined, it is impossible to conclude that a given episode of concern represents a case of moral panic. Media amplification and stereotyping are clearly relevant to the disproportionate way in which a threat is portrayed and raises the issue of social constructionism.

Fifth, by their characteristics, moral panics exhibit *volatility* in that they may erupt at any time and just as easily subside. Some moral panics leave a residue in terms of ongoing social movements after they have abated while others dissipate without trace leaving the moral and social fabric of the society intact. However, while they may be short-lived experiences, moral panics may have historical antecedents which have lain dormant over time and re-occurred in the same or other locations. For example the Renaissance witch craze 'flared up at one time and place and subsided, burst forth later in another location and died down, and so on' (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994:38). It should be emphasised that while volatile, moral panics are fundamentally related to structural conditions such as various demographic, political and gender factors which contributed to the early modern witch-hunts (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994:144-184).

## Actors in Moral Panics

Much of the moral panic literature examines the underlying motives of the various actors involved. Examples include the Renaissance witch crazes (Baroja, 1965), the Israeli drug abuse panic (Kandel and Adler, 1981) and the American drug abuse panic (Goode, 1990). When analysing moral panics, it is also important to consider which specific groups emerge as a threat to societal values and interests. Moral panics in themselves do not speak to a silent majority which is simply out there waiting to listen. Rather, they provide raw materials in the form of words and images where individuals are encouraged to identify their deepest interests in terms of emanating or sustaining a moral panic.

The contemporary mainstream sociological approach to studying moral deviation is social constructionism, and advocates of this perspective treat the dimension of claims-making as the primary focus of analysis. Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994:24-28) identify five groups of actors who typically have pivotal roles in the creation and perpetuation of moral panics. Firstly, *the media* may be a major vehicle for reporting moral panics and may be responsible for exaggerating the amount of attention given to a particular event. The press may also distort events, fuelling mass hysteria over a perceived threat to society. There is also a dimension of *public* concern. There must be some raw material in the first place out of which a media campaign can be built. Without sufficient factual information, public hysteria is unlikely to eventuate, thus negating the possibility of a moral panic. Hence, the media's exaggerated reportage of an event must touch a responsive chord with the public before concern is sufficient to constitute a panic. *Law*

*enforcement* comprise the third group of actors. In times of perceived or real danger to the community, citizens expect that the police and the law courts will act to protect individuals personal safety. During these occasions ties between the police at local and national levels are strengthened in order to more effectively deal with the problems which Cohen (1972:85-86) calls diffusion. The next category involves *politicians and legislators* who symbolically align themselves against the forces of evil during periods of societal crisis. They often taken immediate action by altering existing laws or by increasing sanctions for infringements against the common good of society. Finally, at some stage moral panics generate appeals or campaigns which may result in the formation of fully-fledged *action groups* who attempt to copy with the new threat. These consist of what Howard Becker (1963) termed 'moral entrepreneurs' who believe that existing remedies to the problem are insufficient, thus necessitating the formation of a collective response to remedy the situation.

## Theories of Moral Panics

According to the *grassroots model*, moral panics emanate from the general public's widespread concern over an event or issue. These expressions of concern also spread to other sections of society such as the law, politicians and the media. The level of initial concern may not be overt but may buildup until the level of strain is such that immediate action is called for to find a solution to the threat. As a result, action groups are formed to address the issue. A central characteristic of the grassroots model is that large numbers of citizens perceive a real danger from the threat in terms of their values and personal safety.

The *elite model* follows the Marxist tradition by arguing that elite or the most powerful members of society consciously undertake a campaign to generate and sustain a moral panic across society as a whole. The motive for this course of action is to divert the public's attention from the real problems of society so that the elite can maintain its power base. This enables the elite society members to sustain their domination over the media, and the direction of government policies over issues such as law enforcement and the control of resources. This analysis has been advanced by arguing that individuals are persuaded to 'experience and respond to new contradictory developments in ways which make the operation of the state power legitimate, credible and consensual' (Hall et al., 1973).

The *interest group theory* contradicts the elite model by maintaining that the middle class/professional group is more likely to emanate and sustain a moral panic. Goode and Ben-Yehuda argue that professional associations such as church leaders may have a stake in highlighting an issue and be responsible for focusing media attention away from a particular position (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994). This may contradict the interests of elite groups and provide interest groups with their own source of power in terms of the direction or timing of moral panics. While members of interest groups may sincerely believe they are advancing a cause, they may also be advancing their status and power at the same time.

These theories of moral panics are not morally exclusive and may be combined. Thus, for example, the early modern witch-hunts derived both from popular belief in cures and misfortune but were also 'informed' by elite theories of demonic conspiracies.

## The Zeppelin Scare

In 1908, a frightening realisation became evident in political circles across the United Kingdom, which was soon to send shock waves to British subjects throughout the Commonwealth in the form of press reports, commentaries, and debates. For centuries, British citizens had slept peacefully, knowing that they possessed the world's unrivalled naval power and that an invasion of the motherland or an attack on its remote outposts was inconceivable. However, this situation changed suddenly in 1908 as rapid aeronautical advancements coupled with Germany's Zeppelin development, promoted widespread speculation that the British Empire was vulnerable to an aerial attack. Perhaps no more intensely was this fear felt than in the remote outpost of New Zealand.

The year 1909 was a turbulent one in New Zealand history, characterised by enthusiasm over rapid, dramatic, aeronautical achievements, xenophobia, invasion fears and a sudden perception of vulnerability. Amid this setting, a remarkable event occurred. Between Sunday evening July 11th and September 2nd, tens of thousands of New Zealand residents reported seeing Zeppelin-type dirigibles. Perhaps equally remarkable, the episode has yet to be thoroughly documented. This event has been virtually forgotten by contemporary scholars, and coincided with concern in the British Empire, of Germany's increasing military prowess, especially their Zeppelin fleet.

Two subjects dominated New Zealand newspaper headlines prior to the sightings: rapid aviation advancement, and concern over the adequacy of the

country's defence from a potential German invasion. Early in 1909, dominion press discussion focused on the likelihood of Germany directly attacking the British Isles, but by mid-year there was concern of an attack on the Empire's more vulnerable, remote colonies. This engendered considerable anxiety in New Zealand. At this time the dominion had one of the world's most dynamic economies derived from such natural resources as gold, minerals, timber, beef, sheep, wool, hides, forestry products, and farm and refrigerated produce, which likely fostered a perception by many citizens, that New Zealand would be a prime German target.

In the months prior to, and encompassing the sightings, invasion fears intensified as New Zealand newspapers described 'the wild rate at which shipbuilding is proceeding in Germany and England'.[1] Responding to fears that the German military would soon supersede Britain's long-held naval superiority, Britain decided to concentrate its naval fleet near the motherland, fostering fears that New Zealand was vulnerable to hostile foreign powers. The former commander of the Australian naval force, British Admiral Bowden Smith summarised the situation:

> I think New Zealand and Australia should be awakened to the matter of defence. We have withdrawn our ships...from foreign stations, and concentrated them round...Britain. We all know...[why]. Germany is showing such a feverish haste to build up a big navy... ...In the event of attack by armed fleets New Zealand and

[1] *The Dominion*, 1 May 1909:3.

> Australia would have nothing to show against them.[2]

Heavy press coverage detailing the inadequacy of British defences and the German military buildup began on March 22nd, when the New Zealand government made a heavily publicised decision to offer Britain funding for one and possibly two Dreadnought-class battleships to bolster defences. Throughout this period until June 14th when Parliament approved the offer, there was virtually daily press coverage on the militarisation issue, and the general inadequacy of New Zealand defences.

The Dreadnought offer kindled patriotic motherland sentiment and, almost simultaneously with its announcement, public meetings were held by the New Zealand government to debate the suitability of compulsory military conscription in response to the imminent nature of the perceived threat. On May 12th, the New Zealand *Dominion* reported on the British House of Commons' 'Great Debate' on military strategy for Empire defence. A New Zealand correspondent in attendance reported on the sense of 'semi-hysteria'.[3] Similar patriotic fervour was expressed at town meetings across New Zealand as citizens debated the conscription issue. The following display of emotionalism at one meeting, is typical: 'The resolution was received with loud applause, mingled with hooting. A few of the audience commenced to sing "Rule Britannia", but their voices became inaudible when a score or two Socialists sang a few lines of "The Red Flag"'.[4]

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2 *The Dominion*, 8 May 1909:5.
3 *The Dominion*, 12 May 1909:5.
4 *The Dominion*, 14 May 1909:5.

## From Dreadnoughts to Zeppelins: The Plausible Threat Solidifies

Simultaneous with the appearance of press accounts describing fears of a German military attack on Great Britain, and on New Zealand in particular, numerous reports detailed rapid aviation advancements. At the forefront of this reported technology was the Zeppelin which although remaining impractical, was slowly gaining in scope and capability. During 1909 'the aeroplane came of age' with French aeronaut Louis Bleriot's dramatic flight across the English Channel on July 25th, and aircraft were gaining rapid acceptance as a potentially practical device for long-distance transport (Gibbs-Smith, 1985:145-146). Then, suddenly, on May 19th, it was reported that Germany was contemplating a shift in its military strategy away from naval warship construction, to producing a fleet of Zeppelins capable of travelling long distances in short periods, while transporting soldiers and ordnance.[5] Letters from worried citizens appeared in the New Zealand press, responding to earlier accounts which had exaggerated the German threat. Once the danger was defined as real, and the belief that the British defence scheme was inadequate, New Zealanders began redefining what had been perceived as an adequate local defence force. For example, in mid-September 1908, the annual report of New Zealand's Chief Artillery instructor noted that despite deficiencies, 'the records of the field garrison

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[5] The following headline typified press reaction: 'Military airship preferred to dreadnoughts... A remarkable agitation is going on in Germany to build a huge aerial fleet, instead of many dreadnoughts', *The Dominion*, 19 May 1909:7.

artillery volunteers show that considerable progress has been made in both efficiency and shooting...[and] artillery volunteers throughout the Dominion were [sic] never more efficient than they are now'.[6] However, once intense coverage detailing the German arms buildup and invasion fears emerged in the national press, and reports of an inadequate British defence of New Zealand were widely accepted, the dominion's military capability was suddenly viewed as ill-prepared and inadequate, a position espoused in many editorials. For instance, one editor stated that defences were insufficient to repel a single 'good' enemy ship, complaining of insufficient artillery, ammunition, manpower and searchlights in Auckland Harbour, and concluded by saying 'citizens may well wonder what the Government has been doing that it should have left the country in such a defenceless state'.[7]

From about 1880 to the early twentieth century, a massive popular literature appeared on the theme of science and inventions. The general mood of this literature was positive, trumpeting the wonders of science and technology (Clarke, 1986). However, during the first decade of the twentieth century, amid rapid aviation advances, Germany's growing naval prowess in the form of Nassan-class battleships coupled with its leadership in aerial technology, popular fiction often took on a more dark and sinister tone. In addition to widespread press discussion of the likelihood that aircraft would soon play a major part in a looming confrontation with Germany, the notion of aerial warfare was a popular science-fiction theme (Clute, 1995:44-45).

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[6] *The Dominion*, 19 May 1909:8.

[7] *The New Zealand Herald*, 1 May 1909.

In 1908, the influential H.G. Wells novel *The War in the Air* was published, and serialised in *Pall Mall Magazine*. In it, airships inflicted horrific damage on New York by dropping bombs. Serials sharing a similar theme were common. For instance, *Chums* published a lengthy series of stories by Captain Frank Shaw in 1908, 'The Peril of the Motherland', whereby Russia had declared war on Britain, wreaking havoc with a fleet of airships. It was within this socio-political context that Zeppelin invasion rumours circulated across New Zealand and the first sightings occurred.[8]

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[8] It is notable that just prior to and encompassing the New Zealand sightings, a spate of phantom airships, typically described as Zeppelins, were observed across England, accounts of which appeared widely in the dominion press. See 'Airships and scareships', *Evening Star*, 7 July 1909, and numerous other New Zealand newspapers. The following is an excerpt from this account: 'The people who are always discovering German spies in England disguised as waiters or tourists have found a new occupation of apparently absorbing interest. They are writing to the papers to report having seen mysterious airships making midnight voyages over various parts of England. The ghostly vessels have been seen at spots as distant from each other as Belfast and East Ham, but the most numerous reports are from the eastern countries. The "Daily Express" is full of dark tales of a long cigar-shaped craft dimly visible through the night air, passing overhead with a whirring noise. Those watchers who are particularly lucky espy searchlights and hear "foreign sounding" voices'. For similar accounts in the New Zealand press, see 'Mysterious airships', *Timaru Herald*, 23 July 1909; 'Real scareship', *Timaru Herald*, 14 August 1909.

## The Zeppelin Sightings

The panic began on the evening of July 11th on the Otago coast, when several Kaitangata residents reported observing the mysterious light of a possible airship for 30 minutes as it bobbed in and out of view to the east over the Wangaloa Hills. The witnesses were prepared to sign an affidavit as to their veracity.[9] It was widely rumoured that the German vessel Seestern, which had recently left Brisbane, was somewhere off the South Island where it 'set the airship free' for secret aerial reconnaissance sorties.[10]

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[9] *Otago Daily Times*, 16 July 1909:10; 'A mysterious light. Was it an airship? Excitement in the sout', *The New Zealand Herald*, 27 July 1909.

[10] The following account appeared in: 'Was it made in Germany', *Evening Star*, 27 July 1909. 'The explanation that is finding favor with those who have put two and two together is that the fact that German vessels are in New Zealand waters is responsible for it. They aver that the German Government yacht Seestern, for which the German warship Condor, which left Auckland on Sunday, is "supposed" to search for (the Seestern being said to be considerably overdue at the Island from Brisbane), is, they state, in reality off the New Zealand coast. They are not backward in advancing the theory that the Seestern set the airship free somewhere in the neighbouring of the Nuggets, where it was first observed. ...A thorough elucidation of the whole mysterious lights is awaited with keen interest'. For similar discussions of the German origin of the mysterious lights, refer to: 'The "German" theory', *Evening Star*, 29 July 1909; 'The German scare', *Timaru Post*, 28 July 1909; 'Airship mysteries', *The New Zealand Herald*, 27 July 1909. In a letter to the editor of the *Otago Daily Times*, 3 August 1909, one resident proclaimed: 'Now, with regard to the origin of this airship, I pinned my faith at the start to the

On July 19th, a mysterious flickering light was reported by three residents in Oamaru.[11] Widespread sightings began on the 24th, the day after a spectacular daylight incident at the Otago town of Kelso where 23 schoolchildren and an adult described a Zeppelin-type airship swoop low over the township, of which four details sketches were produced by witnesses. An excited reporter proclaimed the drawings to be 'nothing short of dumbfounding'.[12] Shortly after this sighting, a party of young men from Kelso trekked into the nearby Blue Mountains in a vain attempt to locate the vessel.[13] Local police also searched.[14] This incident received heavy press coverage, and a deluge of reports followed over the next ten days. On the following evening, July 24th, to the southeast of the Blue Mountains at the coastal hamlet of Kaka Point, another dramatic account was recorded of an airship flying over the beach. A Mr. Bates and several boys observed 'a huge illuminated object moving about in the air'. The vessel appeared as if it was attracted to their lantern, the boys ran off

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German cruiser theory, and I will stick to that... Where is this cruiser Seestern and where is the Condor? One or both of these boats may have dirigibles of this type stowed away on board. Deflated, 'the thing' may be quite compact, and the gas generator—of course, a more unwieldingly piece of goods—remains on board when "the bird" flies away'.

11 Brunt, A. 1975. The New Zealand UFO wave of 1909, Part II. *Xenolog*, Number 101:12-16.

12 'The airship mystery. Stories of mysterious lights', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909.

13 'The mysterious lights. Seen in widely separated districts', *Otago Daily Times*, 30 July 1909.

14 'Searching at Kelso', *Evening Star*, 29 July 1909.

leaving the lantern behind.[15] If the vessel flew within close range again, some of the boys said they would 'try to "prick the bubble" with a bullet'.[16]

Near the Southland town of Gore on July 30th, two mining dredge hands working the night shift claimed to see an airship at 5 a.m. descend in the fog and circle the area, and 'that two figures were plainly discernible on board'.[17] Later that day, great interest was generated by a rumour that a Zeppelin had crashed at Waikaka, northeast of Gore, killing two or three Germans.[18] The report by the dredge hands followed other airship sightings in the Gore vicinity over the previous several nights,[19] and local reports of mysterious luminous lights.[20] On Sunday evening August 1st, a large crowd gathered in front of the post office at Temuka, debating the origin of a mysterious luminous orb which was soon revealed as a prank by some boys who had placed a candle in a hollowed turnip and raised it to the top of the

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15 *Clutha Leader*, 27 July 1909.

16 *Clutha Leader*, 27 July 1909.

17 'Two miners see a "ship"', *The Dominion*, 31 July 1909; 'Airship seen by two dredge hands. At close quarters. Two persons on board', *Evening Star*, 30 July 1909; 'Close view of the craft', *The Auckland Star*, 31 July 1909. The time and location of this sighting suggests that they misidentified the moon.

18 'Testimony by school children. A black object', *Evening Star*, 31 July 1909.

19 'With a headlight attached', *The Dominion*, 31 July 1909; 'More airship stories', *The Auckland Star*, 30 July 1909. This includes a report in early August of a Gore man who observed an airship that appeared to sport two large fans. Refer to: *Waikato Argus*, 3 August 1909.

20 'In the Gore district', *Evening Star*, 29 July 1909.

High School flagpole.[21]

From the South Island, the panic soon moved to the north. Tuesday night, August 3rd, on the North Island in the Hawke's Bay District, a Waipawa man stated that while riding his horse near the local racecourse, a large, grey torpedo-shaped vessel with lights at the prow and stern, passed overhead, and one of three visible passengers 'shouted out to him in an unknown tongue'. The ship rose to a great height, circled and disappeared behind a hill.[22] Similar reports followed, but by early August the New Zealand wave began to wane. The last known sighting was near the Northland goldmining community of Waihi on August 9th.[23]

Once the Zeppelins' existence was widely accepted, various past and concurrent events and situations that would ordinarily have received prosaic interpretations, were redefined as airship-related. On the night of July 14th, Mary Guinan of Kelso observed a gradually dimming 'star', but after hearing of subsequent airship sightings, she at once concluded that it was indeed an airship that she had seen'.[24] A mysterious 'swaying light' was observed by several Christchurch residents for three weeks and prompted little comment until the widespread reporting of Zeppelin sightings.[25] Later, when a farmer in the Black Hills found two petrol cans

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21 *Geraldine Guardian*, 3 August 1909.

22 *Hawkes Bay Herald*, 6 August 1909.

23 Brunt, A., 1975. *Op.cit.*, p.7, quoting a New Zealand Broadcasting Service documentary from 1961; 'The mysterious lights', *Geraldine Guardian*, 12 August 1909.

24 'The mysterious lights', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909.

25 'A strange light in Canterbury', *Evening Star*, 29 July 1909.

on a remote eminence inaccessible by motor car, it was suggested the oil was used to fuel an airship motor.[26] In another incident, a farmer thought an airship may have landed for repairs after finding several screw wrenches in a field.[27] W.S. McIntosh of Hedgehope reported that when he and two friends were trapping near Glenham during the previous winter, they observed a mysterious aerial illumination 'resembling a searchlight' hovering about 35 feet off the ground at 300 yards distance. McIntosh said: 'At the time...I did not say much about it, as I knew people would not credit it'.[28]

While the likelihood of a Zeppelin was the prominent explanation, alternative folk theories included the possibility of a local inventor conducting secret airship trial flights;[29] someone with a knowledge of chemistry attaching a luminous cloth to a carrier pigeon or seagull,[30] 'a visitation from another world',[31] and a myriad of atmospheric and meteorological phenomena.[32]

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[26] *Timaru Post*, 11 August 1909.

[27] *Timaru Post*, 11 August 1909.

[28] 'Seen last winter', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909.

[29] 'Was it an airship', *Timaru Post*, 14 July 1909; 'One man sees an airship', *The Dominion*, 31 July 1909.

[30] 'Observed at wide intervals', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909.

[31] *Clutha Leader*, 30 July 1909.

[32] 'Oamaru opinions', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909; 'A possible explanation', *The Dominion*, 3 August 1909. One man suggested the possibility of 'a luminous haze or cloud'. See *Otago Daily Times*, 30 July 1909. For a suggestion that some reports were ignis fatuus or 'will-o'-the wisp' (phosphorescent light generated from decaying organic material) or electrical discharges common at on ships ships at sea during foggy weather (corposant or St. Elmo's Fire), see 'Jack in the lantern', *Eveing Star*, 30 July

Many press accounts described the airships' presence factually, especially at the beginning of the episode, when ambiguous aerial 'lights' were often positively identified as 'airships'.[33] However, as the episode continued, the press generally grew more incredulous of the reports. One editorial associated the reports to alcohol consumption, noting that airship sightings 'may mean development of the keg business'.[34] In accordance with prevailing psychological theories of the period, in particular Gustav LeBon's view of crowd contagion as a form of mental disorder, psychopathological explanations were often advanced. One press columnist compared sightings to religious revivals, implying that LeBon's concept of primitive instinct was aroused and rationality lost.[35]

Some witnesses were characterised as suffering from 'aerialitis'.[36] A letter published in the *Otago Daily*

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1909; 'Seen at Temuka', *Geraldine Guardian*, 31 July 1909; 'Atmospheric luminosity' [letter], *Southland Times*, 31 July 1909; 'The mysterious light. Supposed airship', *Timaru Post*, 30 July 1909.

33 'The airship mystery seen at Dunedin', *Evening Star*, 28 July 1909:4; 'Clear evidence', *Evening Star*, 28 July 1909:4; 'The Kelso airship. Cumulative evidence', *Otago Daily Times*, 29 July 1909:7, 'The airship, seen in North Otago', *Otago Daily Times*, 30 July 1909:8, 'What the dredge-men saw, *Auckland Weekly News*, 5 August 1909:21; 'The airship. Further evidence from Kelso. Statements by eye-witnesses', *Otago Daily Times*, 6 August 1909:5.

34 *The Dominion*, 28 July 1909:6.

35 *Otago Daily Times*, 7 August 1909:6.

36 *Dunedin Evening Star*, 4 August 1909:5; *The Dominion*, 11 August 1909:8.

*Times* described the sightings as a 'craze', warning of the danger of lost self-control. The author classified the reports as a 'popular delusion', in reference to Charles Mackay's (1852) classic book on the subject.

> Sir.—The airship craze is getting beyond a joke. There is a danger of our level-headed community becoming the laughing stock...[to] the greater world. We do not want to be advertising in that way... ...The world has had a great many examples of 'extraordinary popular delusions', such as the South Sea Bubble, the tulip mania in Holland...the persecution of witches... These phenomena arise in times of public excitement, when every whisper and shrug is taken as evidence, and the capacity to weigh matters is for the time submerged by some human passion, such as fear or greed.[37]

The author concluded by noting that the 'German scare, the Dreadnought episode, and the conquest of the air' had combined to create an improbable yet plausible threat which culminated in a popular delusion. One resident wrote to express surprise at the public's gullibility, facetiously noting that a Zeppelin invasion by the 'Germans or Japs' was remote, but it was almost certainly an attack by octopus-like Martians. 'The presence of a dead squid on the beach at Burkes a few days ago is fairly conclusive evidence'.[38] It was widely noted in many newspapers from late July, that sales of fire balloons[39] had increased dramatically,[40] and their

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[37] Letter to *the Otago Daily Times*, 3 August 1909:10.

[38] 'That flying machine' [letter], *Evening Star*, 3 August 1909.

[39] Fire balloons were available in New Zealand during this period and typically sold at shops selling pyrotechnics. They consisted of paper balloons with candles attached

remains were often found in the vicinity of sightings. Press accounts became increasingly sceptical in early August,[41] as numerous reports of mysterious aerial lights were increasingly described as stars[42] or fire balloons.[43]

On July 29th, *The New Zealand Herald* editor described them as 'Flights of Fancy' while commentary in *The Evening Post* referred to them as 'Hot-air' ships, remarking that a combination of hoaxes and misperceptions of heavenly bodies comprised 'the nucleus of an aerial German invasion'.[44] After residents reported seeing what appeared to be a searchlight circling above the town of Nelson, a reporter quipped: 'It has come at last. We have been expecting the dread

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near the mouth and made buoyant by the generation of heat. The stimulus for artificial devices sent aloft during the Zeppelin sightings, was more likely to have been kites, which were more popular and cheaper.

40 'Possible explanations', *Otago Daily Times*, 30 August 1909; 'Fire balloons suggested', *Evening Star*, 29 July 1909; 'A fire balloon found in Dunedin', *Geraldine Guardian*, 31 July 1909.

41 For instance, on the evening of August 10th, four reports of mysterious lights were recorded in the *Southland Times*, 11 August 1909. The first two were from Goulburn and Moss Vale in Australia, the other two from Waihi and Stony Creek in New Zealand. The reports were limited to no more than four sentences and appeared as follows: 'In the air. Glimmers at Goulburn'; 'Visions in Victoria'; 'Wonder at Waihi' and 'Stony Creek Strategem'.

42 'A remarkable sight. Strange movements of a star', *The Dominion*, 7 August 1909.

43 'A fire balloon. Found in York place', *Otago Daily Times*, 30 July 1909; 'Fire balloons', *Tapanui Courier*, 4 August 1909.

44 'Hot-air ships', *Evening Post*, 2 August 1909.

news for weeks...'[45] By early August, press accounts became increasingly incredulous, even despite vivid descriptions, of which the following is typical:

> Nelson took more interest in astronomy last evening than it has ever done before. People in all directions stood and stared upwards at the sky. An airship had come to Nelson.
>
> There it was, plain enough. Some people could even tell that it had an acetylene lamp at the front of the car (gondola) which was shining so brightly. Others declared that there were lights shining, just as is the case with a motor car.
>
> Attempts, fortunately unsuccessful, were made to break into the Atkinson Observatory and Mr. F.G. Gibbs was literally besieged by telephone and callers. The fact that the light was seen to move was what particularly gave rise to the opinion that the 'airship' which was making those might attacks down south, had at last arrived in Nelson, and was skimming about in the air above the town.[46]

The *Timaru Post* described the aforementioned account as a case of 'airship fever'.[47] On August 4th, the *Otago Witness* reported that their offices had been inundated with various cartoons mostly depicting 'a person under the influence of "John Barleycorn", gazing with drunken gravity at a street lamp or the town clock or some kind of light which no sober individual would ever

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45 *Thames Star*, 31 July 1909.

46 *The Nelson Mail*, 3 August 1909.

47 'The supposed airship. Nelson people hoaxed', *Timaru Post*, 3 August 1909.

mistake for an airship'.[48] Another newspaper attributed the sightings to 'the silly season', a term used to describe the tendency of reporters to print articles on trivial topics for lack of more worthy news.[49] When the sightings reached the capital city, the *Southland Times* announced sarcastically: 'Wellington Bitten at Last'.[50]

Advertisers also capitalized on the airship sightings, with one proclaiming: 'The latest news by air ship to Kelso was that Andersons' selling out sale is still booming...'[51] Mr. G. Whealer of Bluff, an agent for a local liquor manufacturer, wrote that a message was dropped from the airship by Martians on Bluff Hill, requesting 10,000 more cases of Gilmour & Thompson's Scotch Whiskey.[52]

After a three-week absence of reports in New Zealand, a final flurry of sightings emanated from Gore, as hundreds reported a dark cigar-shaped object near the Tapanui Hills between 4:30 and 6 p.m. on September 1st and 2nd.[53] The reports abruptly ended when a press correspondence visited the site and found that the sensation was caused by 'repeated flights of thousands of starlings, which, prior to nesting season, were making their temporary homes in a clump of pine trees' at Holland's farm.

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48 'The mysterious lights. Seen in widely separated districts', *Otago Witness*, 4 August 1909.

49 'The "airship"', *Tapanui Courier*, 4 August 1909.

50 *Southland Times*, 4 August 1909.

51 *Tapanui Courier*, 28 July 1909.

52 *Southland Times*, 2 August 1909:5.

53 'More seeing at Gore', *The Southland Times*, 2 September 1909; *The Southland Times*, 3 August 1909.

> About 5.00 p.m. movements from the pine trees commenced. The birds would rise up in one thick black mass and circle round in the sky. Their evolutions were wonderful to behold. At first they would look like a dark cloud; then they would assume the shape of a very long strip, darting up into the air and then descending with very great rapidity towards earth, at one minute compressed formation, and at another in extended line. ...As they ascended into the air their numbers were so great that their wings make a great noise, just as if it was the whirl of machinery in motion.

The reporter quipped that 'birds; only birds! soon became the general cry'.[54] With the debunking of the Gore sightings, the New Zealand airship scare came finally to a close.

## Conclusion

The 1909 New Zealand Zeppelin scare meets all but one of the criteria of a moral panic as identified by Cohen (1972). First, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that the reported sightings provoked strong feelings of fear and resultant hostility among sections of the populous. The initial fear quickly turned into hostility against the German threat as highlighted in the community meetings held across the country. Hence consensus about the possible threat of an uninvited German presence above New Zealand was sufficiently real to a significant proportion of the population to constitute a moral panic. Second, the threat was disproportionate to the reality of an actual German Zeppelin invasion. Despite sporadic reported sightings

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[54] *The Southland Times*, 4 September 1909.

of Zeppelins, there were no other indicators to suggest a German invasion or military threat. The sudden dissipation of the threat and its uncertainty in terms of its volatility and unpredictable lifespan is a recognised factor of moral panics (Goode and Ben-Yehuda, 1994).

Additionally, the Zeppelin moral panic may be viewed as fitting the grassroots model since it originated from widespread public concern about the perceived threat to the public good. By comparison, there is nothing to suggest that this scare constituted the elite engineering model or the interest group theory since there is no evidence to suggest that specific class or organised groups stood to benefit from the Zeppelin threat. However, it is apparent that socio-political events pertaining to the advent of German nationalism and its move towards superiority in air power proved to be a catalyst for producing hysteria among a significant portion of the New Zealand population. Hence while Cohen (1972) considers the origins of moral panics it would appear that there is a need to place greater emphasis on the political and social contexts in order to more accurately assess moral panic origins. While this moral panic fits the grassroots model in terms of the type of public response, there is no evidence to suggest that it resulted in any form of organised or collective response. The initial public meetings voicing the concerns of citizens failed to metamorphose into any form of social movement or action groups to rally against the perceived threat. In this sense, the Zeppelin scare only resembles the initial stage of the grassroots model due to the lack of a collective public movement to dispel the perceived folk devil.

Equally, there appears to be only a limited number of actors involved in the Zeppelin moral panic. The narrative indicates that a significant number of citizens reported sighting the Zeppelin dirigibles at different times and locations. This produced widespread panic and hostility among the populace and was duly reported by the media. In this case, however, the media played a contradictory role by at first fuelling the hysteria over the threat through its sensationalised reportage, then, later dispelling the claims by labelling them as inauthentic. Additionally, the panic did not appear to draw explicit reactions from either politicians, church leaders or the police with regards to the perceived threat to the well-being of the public, once more indicating the partial nature of this moral panic. However, numerous members of all three groups reported observing the phantom Zeppelin during the episode, implicitly lending credence to the existence of the Zeppelin(s).

While the Zeppelin scare of 1909 does not meet all of the major criteria identified as constituting a full moral panic, it does highlight the need to view such events as idiosyncratic due to their specific political and historical contexts. What may be more important for future studies is to consider not only the origins and forms of collective behaviour which constitute an identifiable moral panic, but also the impact or outcomes of moral panics in terms of the effects on significant sections of a given population.

In his discussion of the role of the mass media in precipitating moral panics, Cohen (1972:31-38) notes that media portrayals are typified by a four-step process involving exaggerated attention, exaggerated events, distortion, and stereotyping. Each of these factors were

clearly evident in the narrative. First, in the months prior to the outbreak of Zeppelin sightings, the New Zealand press had given exaggerated attention to the threat of a German invasion that was highly unlikely, through an even more improbable vehicle, Zeppelins. Discussion of a possible invasion of New Zealand was disproportionate to the practical likelihood. It would not have been strategically sound under the circumstances and would have required a considerable commitment of military personnel and resources to travel a vast distance and to maintain an occupying force. Second, events were also exaggerated as observations of mysterious nocturnal aerial lights became the focus of over-reporting and speculation in disproportion to their importance based on an absence of confirming evidence. Third, only a handful of witnesses specifically reported seeing a Zeppelin, just ambiguous lights that were assumed to have been one, and at the beginning of the episode, the press commonly used such words to describe the lights as 'Zeppelin', 'airship', 'ship', and 'vessel', and adjectives like 'mysterious', 'strange', and 'unusual'.

Fourth, the media reported on the Zeppelin scare in stereotypic fashion; strange nocturnal aerial lights were observed, journalists and witnesses speculated that the object was an airship, and witnesses were typified as reliable.[55] One aspect of sterotyping is what Cohen terms 'guilt by association'. Any nocturnal aerial object

[55] It is worth noting that this pattern changed near the end of the wave to a negative stereotypic motif as nocturnal aerial lights were observed, journalists and witnesses typically speculated as to their mundane origin, and 'believers' were typified as gullible, irrational or simply the victim of an optical illusion.

that was deemed to have been mysterious in any way, was speculated to have been airship-related. Another example of guilt by association involves what would ordinarily have been the routine presence of German vessels off the New Zealand coast. In this instance, because they were German, it was assumed that they had been involved in secretly catapulting a Zeppelin into the air at night. In the final analysis, despite widespread exaggeration, distortion and stereotyping about the presence of Zeppelins overflying New Zealand, not a single shred of explicit, credible evidence to support this claim, was ever produced.

## Contemporary Parellels

The 1909 New Zealand Zeppelin scare parallels exaggerated political and military fear surrounding UFO sightings during the early Cold War years, which the mass media was instrumental in proliferating. The Post-World War II Cold War fostered a Western moral panic over communism. It is within this 'Red Scare' context that waves of claims and public discourse about the existence of flying saucers began in 1947 with Kenneth Arnold's famous sighting of June 24. His use of the word 'saucer' provided a motif for the global wave of flying saucer sightings during that year (Johnson, 1950) and other waves since (Bullard, 1982). However, a review of his original news conference reveals that Arnold described the objects as crescent-shaped, referred to their movement as 'like a saucer would if you skipped it across the water' (Gardner, 1957:56; Story, 1980:25). The Associated Press account describing Arnold's 'saucers' appeared in over 150 newspapers, encouraging others who had observed mysterious aerial phenomena to report their sightings and heightening

fears of a Soviet attack (Bloecher, 1967). In this regard, widespread sightings of flying saucers are a social construction of reality unique to the twentieth century,[56] with popular public opinion pertaining to what aerial perceptions constitute a 'saucer' being a manufactured concept propagated by the mass media (Hackett, 1948:869).

During the early Cold War years, extraterrestrial theories to account for flying saucers were rare prior to 1950. A poll by Gallup (1947) revealed that 90% of Americans surveyed were aware of flying saucer sightings, and most believed that U.S. or foreign secret weapons, hoaxes and balloons were responsible. 'Nothing [in the poll] was said about 'alien visitors', not even a measurable 1% toyed with the concept' (Gross, 1982:30). In fact, Kenneth Arnold made his sighting public despite possible ridicule, believing they may have been guided missiles. For several weeks following Arnold's sighting, the Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted background checks on saucer witnesses and examined the possibility that many reports were planted as misinformation by Soviet agents in order to promote fear and panic (Maccabee, 1977:3; Gross, 1982:16).

The common notion that flying saucers represented a U.S. or foreign power secret weapon dominated popular opinion through May 1950, when a new poll found that just 5% placed them in the category: 'comets, shooting stars; something from outer space' (Clark, 1998:378). Later in 1950, the secret weapon motif

[56] There are a few scattered historical references to disc-shaped objects, but no consistent pattern emerges until 1947.

rapidly shifted to that of an extraterrestrial genesis, and has remained so since, after the publication of several popular books and magazine articles advocating the extraterrestrial hypothesis (Bullard, 1982).

Moral panics are an important, fascinating sociological phenomena that can manifest in many ways, the understanding of which can provide insights into wholly fictitious or exaggerated threats by 'folk devils' and 'deviants'. In the case of the 1909 Zeppelin scare, and the early Cold War saucer fears, the reported sightings of sinister foreign technology, were barometers of the social climate and the symbolic reflection of xenophobic anxieties. In this regard these separate waves of claims and public discourse surrounding mysterious aerial sightings were each unique signs of their respective times. At the dawn of the twenty-first century and a new millennium, one wonders what new technological threats will arise, what new folk devils will emerge and what exaggerated reactions they will engender?

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# Working Through Differences: The Politics of 'Isms' in Aotearoa

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## *Abstract*

Pressure is mounting in Aotearoa New Zealand to formalise multiculturalism as a counterweight to 'biculturalism' for working through differences in a changing and increasingly diverse society. This paper proposes to problematise the debate over diversity by refracting the politics of 'isms' through the prism of multiculturalism as discourse and practice. The paper argues that official multiculturalism is not intended to celebrate differences or promote diversity. Envisaged instead is a reconstituted society in which diversity is incorporated through institutional accommodation as legitimate and integral, without undermining either the interconnectedness of the parts that secured the whole or the distinctiveness of the constituent diversities. The paper also argues that the subsequent de-politicization of diversity under official multiculturalism has had the effect of isolating Canada's 'consensus' multiculturalism from the 'insurgent' discourses that animate 'critical' multiculturalisms in the United States. Insofar as critical multiculturalisms invoke challenges whereas consensus multiculturalism invites accommodation, it would appear New Zealanders may confront an array of models for engaging with diversity, but not without carefully weighing its 'post-bicultural' options. In that New Zealand's biculturalism is tantamount to a 'multiculturalism for Maori', a bi-nationalist alternative is proposed that

simultaneously transcends yet enhances the salience of multiculturalism either as 'consensus' or 'resistance'. The paper concludes by exploring the implications of 'ism' politics against the backdrop of Aotearoa's post-colonising efforts at promoting a dual arrangement that constructively engages an official multiculturalism within a bi-national framework.

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## Introduction: 'Isms in Collision'

New Zealand has long enjoyed an international reputation in the harmonious management of ethnic relations. This assessment is accurate to some extent, even if the outcome may have been tarnished in recent years and conceived by accident rather than design. Yet the challenge in crafting a new political order in which differences are recognized and rewarded has proved both elusive and daunting. To the extent that many Pakeha New Zealanders reject an openly monocultural framework, they vaguely endorse a preference for multiculturalism or biculturalism - in principle if not always in practice (Massey University, 1996). But this 'official' commitment to biculturalism is currently being contested by signs of a re-emergent multiculturalism

(Pearson, 1995; Vasil and Yoon, 1996). Efforts to diffuse a perceived preoccupation with Maori-Crown relations may account for this shift; so too may the need to accommodate new demographics, with the flow of Asian immigrants superimposing new ethnic 'faultlines' upon existing dualities. Some would argue that the differences between multiculturalism and biculturalism are minor and inconsequential. Others disagree, and acknowledge a fundamental split in terms of scope, objectives, underlying rationale, strategies, and proposed outcomes. Still others concede major differences; nevertheless, repeated and often imprecise use has rendered biculturalism virtually indistinguishable from its multicultural counterpart. Proposed instead is an 'ism' that properly captures the duality inherent in a bi-national society (Fleras, 1997).

Debates over 'isms' are hardly exclusive to New Zealand. Multicultural principles and practices continue to animate cultural politics in Canada and the United States, albeit in fundamentally different ways. References to Canada's official multiculturalism embrace a commitment to consensus by way of 'conformity' and 'accommodation'. By contrast, the thrust of popular multiculturalisms in the United States are critical in contesting the organization and control of cultural space. Such an oppositional discourse is of comparative interest in its own right, but may prove especially relevant when working through differences in Aoteoroa. This paper explores the politics of 'isms' in Canada and the United States as they apply to Maori-Crown relations by examining the contested relationship between multiculturalism and biculturalism on the one hand, and bi-nationalism with bi/multiculturalism on the other. The paper argues that the term multiculturalism

resonates with multiple meanings, depending on the context, yet the proliferation of these 'duelling discourses' is not without disadvantages should Aotearoa opt into an official multiculturalism. It is also argued that neither multiculturalism nor biculturalism as currently articulated can constructively engage with the substantive diversity that tino rangatiratanga inspires (Durie, 1995). Only a commitment to the relational and non-dominating autonomy of bi-nationalism can adequately advance Maori models of self-determination without forsaking the legitimate interests of non-Maori New Zealanders (Fleras and Maaka, 1998). A multiculturalism within a bi-national framework is proposed as a preferred path for engaging with diversity, reflecting in part the author's status as a Canadian with longstanding research involvement in Aotearoa.

## Problematising Multiculturalism: 'Pasting Jello to the Wall'

Pluralistic societies confront a paradox in grappling with the question of how to make society safe 'for' diversity, yet safe 'from' diversity (see Schlesinger, Jr, 1992). A social and political framework must be established that can engage with differences as differenced, but without eroding national unity and social coherence in the process. White settler dominions such as Australia and Canada have endorsed multicultural principles as a framework for 'accommodating' immigrant minorities (Pearson, 1996:250-57; Vasta and Castles, 1996:1-11). Yet staunch support for multiculturalism has not congealed into any consensus over definition, attributes, or applications (Editorial, 1997). Todd Gitlin (1995:228) describes the disarray when he writes:

> The word is baggy, a melange of fact and value, current precisely because it is vague enough to serve so many interests. Partisans may use the term to defend the recognition of difference, or to resist policies or ideas imposed by conquerors, or to defend cosmopolitanism - the interests and pleasures that each may take in the profusion of humanity. The purists of identity politics use it to defend endless fission, a heap of monocultures. On the other side, multiculturalism and its demonic twin, 'political correctness', serves conservatives as names for a potpourri of things they detest - including an irritating insistence on the rights of minorities.

Contradictions prevail: on the one hand, multiculturalism may encourage what it sets out to control or discourage; on the other, it ends up controlling what it sets out to encourage. A de-constructing of multiculturalism exposes a social formation both 'westocentric and masculinist (Hesse, 1997); yet the interrogating of multiculturalism as discourse and practice has proved effective in de-stabilising the status quo (Goldberg, 1994). Multiculturalism simultaneously evokes a preference for consensus, but does so alongside a platform of criticism and reform; of hegemony yet resistance; of conformity yet diversity; of control yet emancipation; of exclusion yet participation; of compliance yet creativity (see Vasta, 1996:48). These paradoxes are nicely captured by a University of Canterbury Stage 2 student who concluded an Ethnicity paper by declaring without even a hint of irony: 'This country [NZ] needs one policy for everyone, no matter what race, if it wants to truly be a multicultural society'. In short, multiculturalism can mean whatever meaning is assigned to it. Such flexibility can be helpful at times: It

may also foster needless misunderstanding as interactants grope about for common ground.

## Multiculturalism: De-Constructing the 'Multi' and the 'Cultural'

The centrality of multiculturalism to contemporary discourses has yielded such an array of meanings that many despair of any clarity or consensus. Both championed yet maligned, idealised as well as demonised, the term has absorbed a broad range of often conflicting social articulations that resist integration (Caws, 1994:381-82). References to multiculturalism without a qualifier have proved misleading, given that its use as a stand-alone concept can be stretched to mean everything, yet nothing. Foremost are the multiple ways in which differences are constructed, coded and engaged under multiculturalism, with the main codifications reflecting a multicultural continuum from the conservative and liberal to the post-modern and critical (McLaren, 1994:47-55). No less important are the analytically distinct yet interconnected layers of meaning associated with multiculturalism, including its existence at the level of: (a) fact (what is); (b) ideology (what should be); (c) policy (what is proposed); (d) process (what really happens); (e) critical discourse (what is being contested) and (f) social movement (collective resistance) (Fleras and Elliott, 1996:325-36). Failure to separate these diverse interpretive levels will invariably generate chaos or confusion, particularly in response to such questions as 'Is New Zealand a multicultural society?'

Different dimensions of multiculturalism can be discerned. Multicultural references span the spectrum from a focus on cultural identity and social equality at

individual or group levels, to an emphasis on national interests or society-building - at times concurrently, at other times in opposition. Gender differences are pivotal in shaping multicultural narratives. The politics of gendered differences acknowledges that gender intersects with race, ethnicity, class, and sexual preference to generate overlapping hierarchies of denial or exclusion in ways that are mutually constitutive and reinforcing yet contradictory (see Bottomley, et al. 1991). Yet women of diversity are rejecting being 'differenced' as objects that are acted upon or as explanatory variables in testing hypotheses, but are repositioning themselves as multiply organised subjects whose activities are socially constructed in contested and evolving contexts (Gillespie, 1996; Lamer, 1996:160). Multiculturalism also fluctuates in magnitude and scope: It can be interpreted in terms of its relationship to society, its impact on institutional levels, its effects on an intended target group or implications for individual mindsets. Or consider the different styles of multiculturalism: according to Stanley Fish (1997) a boutique multiculturalism endorses superficial differences, an abstracted multiculturalism supports differences but only in principle and a radical multiculturalism embraces diversity regardless of cost to other groups or society. The dilemma is obvious: too little diversity makes a mockery of multiculturalism; too much diversity is an existential nightmare. Working through differences that are minor or abstracted may be one thing; living together with differences that are substantive yet acknowledged as relational, contextual, and socially constructed is quite another challenge (see Halka, 1996).

Multiculturalism in general refers to a process of engaging with diversity as different yet equal. It advocates the once unthinkable postulate that people with different ethnocultural backgrounds can co-exist without provoking conflict or incurring a penalty. Popular versions of multiculturalism tend to dwell on the celebrating of differences as differences, valuable in their own right or in challenging for cultural space. An official multiculturalism produces a different reading. Multiculturalism as official policy entails a doctrine and set of practices for promoting an inclusive society by 'managing' diversity in a proactive manner (Fleras, 1994:27). A framework is established for the full and equal participation of minorities through removal of discriminatory barriers (both cultural and structural) in society. Cultural space is created that confirms a minority right to be different yet the same ('equal') when circumstances dictate. Contrary to widespread belief, an official multiculturalism is not primarily aimed at targetting ethnic minorities. Emphasis is directed at transforming the mainstream by modifying public perception of and receptivity to, diversity. Initiatives are applied to the redesigning of 'malestream' institutions and 'whitestream' mindsets through modification of rules, rewards, structures, and symbols along pluralist lines. A social and political climate is subsequently fostered in which diversity initiatives can be introduced without inciting a backlash or social turmoil. Inasmuch as multiculturalism engages with diversity by challenging society to move over and make space, the re-mapping of Aotearoan cultural politics may take its cue from developments in Canada and the United States.

## Canada's Consensus Multiculturalism: 'Assimilation in Slow Motion'

The irony is improbable: from its inception in 1971, when it barely garnered a paragraph in Canada's national paper, official multiculturalism has evolved to the point where it constitutes a formidable component of Canada's national identity, having profoundly altered how Canadians think about themselves and their relationship to the world (Fleras and Elliott, 1991:323). The world's first and only constitutional multiculturalism can be best described as an expression of capitalist state ideology in the manufacture of consent through accommodation of competing interests (see also Jakubowicz, et al. 1994). Multiculturalism in Canada originated as a pragmatic response by vested interests for achieving political goals in an electorally astute manner (Peter, 1978). Of particular note was mounting pressure on the state to 'accommodate' and 'manage' the vast scale of post-War immigration by expanding the rights of social citizenship (Pearson, 1995; Wilson, 1995). Multiculturalism was endorsed as a device for facilitating the absorption of new Canadians on the then unprecedented assumption that unity could be forged from, and co-exist with, diversity. By making a virtue of necessity, in other words, multiculturalism parlayed a potential weakness into strength without necessarily revoking a commitment to social cohesion, national identity, domestic peace, economic advantage, and global status (Kurthen, 1997).

Twenty-five years of official multiculturalism have been instrumental in orchestrating a national consensus around majority acceptance of minority participation. The discursive logic that animates Canada's 'consensus'

multiculturalism has remained constant in its quest of those integrative society-building functions. Multiculturalism continues to persist for precisely the same reasons, namely, the containment of ethnicity by modifying the rules of engagement and entitlement in a modern democratic society. Only the means for 'managing' diversity have evolved in response to demographic upheavals and political developments, with cultural solutions giving way to structural reforms and, more recently, the promotion of shared citizenship (Annual Report, 1997). Multicultural attainment of these goals is varied, spanning the spectrum from promoting proactive measures to fostering tolerance toward diversity, reducing prejudice, removing discriminatory barriers, eliminating cultural ethnocentrism, enhancing equitable access to services, expanding institutional engagement, and improving intergroup encounters. Interesting to note that Australian multiculturalism also conveys a pragmatic concern with addressing the needs of disadvantaged or alienated ethnic groups, yet remains firmly planted in preserving national interests, core values and institutional structures (Rizvi, 1994; Jupp, 1997).

Canada's multiculturalism operates at two levels. First, it acknowledges the right of each individual to identify with the cultural tradition of their choice, as long as this ethnic affiliation does not interfere with the rights of others, violate the laws of the land or infringe on core values or institutions. Everyone has the right to be treated the same irrespective of their ethnicity; everybody also has the right to be treated differently because of their ethnicity without incurring a penalty in the process (Breton, 1998). Cultural differences are thus transformed into a discourse about *social inequalities* in need of government intervention (McLaren, 1994:58;

Hesse, 1997). Second, official multiculturalism is concerned with society-building functions. Multiculturalism does not set out to celebrate ethnic differences *per se* or promote cultural diversity; nor does it condone the creation of segregated ethnic communities with parallel power bases and special collective rights. The objective of an official multiculturalism is to create a cohesive society in which differences are incorporated as legitimate and integral without undermining either interconnectedness or distinctiveness (Fleras and Elliott, 1996:328-34). Diversity is endorsed, to be sure, but only to the extent that all differences are equivalent in status, subject to similar treatment, and do not interfere with the state's self-proclaimed claim to define the limits of permissible differences (see Johnson, 1994). Reducing all differences to the same level by sanitising their salience may jeopardise multiculturalism's reputation as a progressive force. Yet this very de-politicization of ethnicity is precisely the reason behind its political popularity.

In short, Canada's official multiculturalism has proven double-edged in impact and implications (Fleras, 1994). To one side, the existence of counter-hegemonic multicultural discourses cannot be discounted, thus reflecting the ability of the powerless and dispossessed to convert the very tools for controlling them into levers of resistance and change (Pearson, 1994). Minority women and men are not passive actors in the political arena, but have dissembled official multiculturalism into sites of struggle for access to symbolic and material resources (Pearson, 1995). To the other, an emphasis on official multiculturalism has proved a politically workable strategy for de-radicalizing ('depoliticizing') ethnicity, in part by legitimizing state-approved

differences as integral to society, in part by transforming institutions into public spaces where minorities can participate without ethnic entanglements. Far from being a threat to the social order, in other words, Canada's official multiculturalism constitutes a discourse in defence of ideology by circumscribing the permissable range of acceptable behaviour (Thobani, 1995). No voice shall predominate in creating a community of communities under multiculturalism, the saying goes, except the voice that says no voices shall predominate (James, 1997). In defining which differences count, what counts as difference, containment by multiculturalism could hardly be more artfully articulated.

## Multiculturalisms in the USA: 'Isms' of Resistance

Emergence of multiculturalism has attracted unprecedented attention in a society whose ideological moorings anchored a melting pot mentality. A Nexis database of major newspapers as recently as 1988 yielded no references to multiculturalism; by 1994, 1,500 entries had appeared (Glazer, 1997). Expansion of multiculturalism has been applauded for reasserting people's control over lives, detested as political correctness gone mad, deplored for 'fetishising' diversity at the expense of national vision and collective goals, and dismissed as a humanizing ideal that is somewhat prone to excessive zeal (see Higham, 1993). The very existence of such reactions is somewhat unexpected since talk of diversity was conveniently occluded by the assimilationist slogan '*e pluribus unum*' (from many, one). But multicultural discourses have challenged the venerable liberal principle that individuals are endlessly variable yet fundamentally alike. Advocated instead is the distinctly 'UnAmerican' axiom that personal patterns of engagement

and entitlement should reflect disadvantage or birthright rather than merit, identity rather than conformity, appeals to diversity rather than the logic of universality (McLaren, 1994:44-45).

Of course, not all multicultural discourses are cut from a critical cloth. Under a 'happy face' multiculturalism, a universalist centre is promulgated that ostensibly celebrates diversity while simultaneously scaling it back for purpose of control or containment (Eisenstein, 1996; Hesse, 1997). Liberal pluralism also espouses a multiculturalism, but one that is devoid of critical content, historical context, or patterns of power (Giroux, 1994:336). Yet there is no mistaking the surge of 'subversive' multiculturalisms in interrogating the culture of whiteness that historically defined public perception of what was necessary, normal, and inevitable (D'Souza, 1996; Eller, 1997). A critical multiculturalism transcends the simple construction of identities or celebration of tolerance. Embraced instead is a discourse that is structured in challenging the authority and legitimacy of white supremacy: relations of power and racialised identities become part of the language of critique in contesting the racism, sexism and patriarchy embedded in American society (Giroux, 1994:336-41). Differences do not just exist under critical multiculturalism except as part of the struggle to create public culture. Inasmuch as multicultural interests are openly contesting the power to shape the production and reproduction of knowledge in institutions from education to media, critical multiculturalism is inseparable from debates over 'what society is for' (Taylor, 1992).

**Multiculturalism as Critical Discourse**

Multiculturalism as critical discourse pivots around four themes: postmodernism; cultural relativism, identity politics and collective rights. In forsaking a reality that is coherent, objective and amenable to rational analysis by dispassionate language, postmodernism espouses a mind-dependent world that has no centre or authority', only different viewpoints where everything is relative and everything could be true or equal because nothing is absolutely knowable, given the inseparability of theoriser and theorised. Acceptance of reality as perspectival and provisional as well as socially constructed and culturally constrained has the effect of fragmenting a post-modernising world into a multiplicity of pluralisms (Adam and Allan, 1995). Gerald Early (1993:221) captures the post-modernity at the heart of critical multiculturalism:

> Its goal is in fact the deprivileging of the ideas of the 'finished' world vision, the singular set of universalist ideals, of the urge to see an end to some sort of salvation history...Multiculturalism's aim is to constantly expose the 'crises of representation', to use a postmodernist's phrase, that underlies any fake or false assumptions of consensus - class-derived, ideologically serviceable assumptions that support a particular power elite.

Central to critical multiculturalism is the relativist assumption that nothing is neutral or impartial because everything/everyone is located in time and space. Critical multiculturalism directly challenges the patterns of power that traditionally bolstered societal definitions of truth, rules of normalcy and standards of legitimacy - many of which were at odds with the lived experiences

of minority women and men (Harris, 1995). Challenging the 'dominant silencing of diversity' (Eisenstein, 1996) fosters a framework by which new identities are (re)formulated, new communities are constructed, knowledge and power are contested and eurocentric universalisms are exposed for what they are: discourses in defence of dominant ideology. Both the politics of difference (Young, 1990) and demand for recognition (Taylor, 1992) demands nothing less than a commitment to politicize, recover, preserve, or promote the differences of a threatened collective identity. Just as earlier social movements had challenged the ideas and structures that once justified oppression, the new identity politics concede that moves to eliminate group differences in favour of individual rights are equally oppressive - in consequence if not necessarily intent - even if acknowledging collective or individual rights is an anathema to free-floating liberal pluralism (Eller, 1997).

## Duelling Discourses

Many have said that Canadians and Americans use the same words but speak a different language. Nowhere is this antimony more evident than in references to multiculturalism. One multiculturalism is directed at transforming the mainstream without straining the social fabric, the other multiculturalisms are concerned with empowering minorities by eroding the monocultural firmament of society. One is officially political, yet seeks to de-politicize diversity for society-building purposes; the other falls outside the policy domain, but politicizes differences as a catalyst for minority empowerment. One seeks to eliminate diversity as a basis for entitlement or engagement; the other privileges differences in shaping who gets what. One is rooted in the modernist quest for unity and universality; the other in embracing a

postmodernist zeal for differences. Of particular note is how the one transforms cultural differences into a discourse about social inequality; the other reformulates social inequalities into a discursive framework of cultural differences and public culture. There is nothing inherently right or wrong in conceding the multiplicity of multicultural discourses. Difficulties arise when varying discourses are employed indiscriminantly or interchangeably, with predictable effects on expectations and communication.

Multiculturalism in Canada is primarily a political programme for pursuit of national interests. This hegemonic discourse in defence of dominant ideology endorses those policies and initiatives that subordinate minority needs to the 'greater good' of 'national interests'. Multicultural principles and practices are inseparable from a neo-assimilationist commitment to consensus and commonality as keys to social harmony. The disruptiveness of diversity is dispelled by homogenizing differences around a singular commonality so that everyone is similarly different, not differently similar (Eisenstein, 1996). The conflating of consensus multiculturalism with the principles of liberal pluralism also confirms how a monocultural multiculturalism marginalizes multi-cultures at the same time their existence is venerated. By contrast the postmodernist discourses that animate America's critical multiculturalism subvert as they resist. Critical multiculturalism transcends the constraints of official policy initiatives; nor is it compromised by the demands of political engineering or electoral pandering. A discourse of resistance is advocated instead that challenges eurocentricity by relativising the white capitalist patriarchy with its exclusionary designs on the

'Other' (Giroux, 1994:338; Eisenstein, 1996). With one multiculturalism espousing conformity and consent, the other resistance and critique, New Zealanders confront a set of perplexing choices in working through differences.

## Rethinking the 'Isms' in Aotearoa

New Zealand has proved a site of contestation in sorting out the politics of 'isms' (Fleras, 1984:52; Pearson, 1996:265). The principle of biculturalism has been widely touted as a preferred framework for government policy and organizational practice. The concept itself attracted attention as far back as the 1960s (see Schwimmer, 1968), but its prominence languished in political limbo until the mid 1980s, at which time the ideals of biculturalism displaced those of multiculturalism at the level of government-speak (Sharp, 1990). Biculturalism assumed the status of de facto government policy in 1986 with passage of the State Owned Enterprises Bill: 'Nothing in the Act shall permit the Crown to act in a manner that is inconsistent with the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi'. The 1987 Court of Appeal ruling involving NZ Maori Council v the Crown concluded that the special relation of the Crown with Maori was one of an ongoing partnership in which each partner was expected to act reasonably and in good faith toward the other. Passage of the State Services Act in 1988 confirmed the 'biculturality' of Aotearoa by instructing state institutions to incorporate the Treaty obligations of partnership, participation, and protection into the delivery of service (Ramsden, 1995; Kelsey, 1996:182).

This institutionalisation of biculturalism is widely acknowledge if not always approved. The re-emergence of multiculturalism as an oppositional discourse for engaging diversity has complicated an already complex balancing act associated with society-building. Inasmuch as multiculturalism is concerned with de-politicising diversity by way of institutional accommodation, New Zealand continues to remain multicultural in practice if not principle. To the extent that Maori demands revolve around politicising biculturalism as grounds for engagement or entitlement, the politics of isms are likely to collide, confuse, and conflict. Failure to find a workable compromise in securing a balance between the 'isms' has prompted the Race Relations Conciliator, Dr Rajen Prasad (1997:A-9), to go on record in pleading for '...another way of thinking about ourselves as a multi-ethnic society with an indigenous culture, and with a founding document that regulates the relationship between iwi and Crown'.

**Contesting the 'Isms'**

Maori have long relied on 'being bicultural' as a personal coping strategy for negotiating different worlds (Ritchie 1992). Most have had little choice except to acknowledge the inevitability of a dual identification and adaptation within the context of an intrusive Pakeha society. The words of Sir Apirana Ngata are especially apt in justifying a bicultural outlook for Maori 'Turn your hand to the tools of the Pakeha for the well-being of your body. Turn your heart to the treasures of your ancestors as a crown for your head. Give your soul to God the author of all things'. Also evident is a macro-level endorsement of biculturalism. Many point to the irrevocability of Aotearoa as a bicultural partnership between Treaty signatories, with its guarantee of

collective rights that supersede the individual rights of recent immigrants. Maori bicultural rights as original occupants must take precedence over the multicultural rights of immigrants; otherwise there is a danger of collapsing Maori concerns with immigrants aspirations, with a corresponding diminuation of Maori foundational status as tangata whenua ('original occupants'), Displacement of biculturalism for multicultural commitments is dismissed by some as irresponsible, by others as controlling. Ranginui Walker (1995:292) argues that multiculturalism (and immigration) represents a polite yet sinister plot to distract or dilute: '...a covert strategy to suppress the counter-hegemonic struggle of the Maori by swamping them with outsiders who are not obligated to the Treaty'. In brief, biculturalism is viewed as logically prior to multiculturalism in the unfolding of an appropriate 'ism'. Only when biculturalism is securely entrenched as the ruling paradigm can multiculturalism assume its rightful place (Fleras, 1984:62).

Not everyone concurs with the concept of New Zealand as bicultural in principle or practice. Advocates of multiculturalism believe it is both unfair and unjust to encourage immigration without a corresponding commitment to multiculturalism (see Greif, 1995:16-17). Demographic shifts justify an endorsement of multiculturalism in allocating rights and responsibilities; for example, the judge who sentenced the Maori activist for attacking the America Cup confirmed New Zealand as a 'multicultural, not a bicultural society' with a common law for everyone (Christchurch Press, 12 September 1997). Others disagree with the reality of multiculturalism - or biculturalism for that matter. According to Donna Awatere (1984:37), New Zealand

remains resolutely monocultural when power is 'dressed up in tapa cloth' because of Pakeha arrogance, ignorance, or hatred of the 'Other'. Its monoculturalism is further secured, in outcome if not in intent, when societal ground rules embrace Eurocentric values as the unmarked norm by which others are judged and criticised (Kelsey, 1991). Prevailing patterns of power and privilege are perpetuated since the grafting of multicultural 'bits' onto a bicultural framework does not substantially alter the balance of 'who gets what'.

**Biculturalism in Aotearoa - a Multiculturalism for Maori**

Biculturalism as an ideal differs from multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is concerned with the institutional accommodation of diversity, whereas biculturalism ideally emphasises power sharing between two groups each of which is autonomous in their own right, yet jointly sharing jurisdictions in areas of mutual concern. But the ideal of biculturalism rarely matches the reality of government actions. It is one thing to enshrine Treaty principles in official mission statements or to hire Maori as advisors or consultants for rubber stamping foregone conclusions. It is quite another thing to acknowledge Maori indigeneity and rangatiratanga rights as an integral part in crafting a post-colonizing Aotearoa. Contemporary biculturalism tends to focus on institutional accommodation by incorporating a Maori dimension into state practices and national symbols (Durie, 1995). Concessions entail the adoption of Maori names for government departments, increasing use of Maori language and protocol for ceremonial occasions, and printing of official reports in the official languages of Maori and English (Spoonley, 1993:64-97; Poata-Smith, 1996:110-116). They also extend to collaborations by Maori and Crown to draft legislation that ostensibly are

protective of Maori interests (Durie, 1998:136-138). Improvements, to be sure, but they fall short of even minimal definitions of biculturalism as public recognition of two cultures with shared and separate institutions under a single polity (Mulgan, 1989).

Put bluntly, biculturalism may mean a lot of things; few, however, resonate with Maori claims to tino rangatiratanga rights as guaranteed in article two of the Treaty (Durie, 1995). Biculturalism as currently employed barely addresses the possibility of Maori models of self-determination over jurisdictions related to land, identity, and political voice (Maaka and Fleras, 1997:35-37). Implied instead is inclusion of Maori values and perspectives within major state institutions by adapting Pakeha institutions to meet Maori requirements. While such accommodation may have been necessary and acceptable in the past, an inability by biculturalism to concede parallel Maori institutions to meet Maori needs has compromised its relevance in advancing Maori political aspirations (Kelsey, 1991; Durie, 1995). In acknowledging that Maori once offered biculturalism to white settlers, but Pakeha refused, Donna Awatere (1984:59-60) writes:

> The kaupapa is Maori sovereignty. It must not be biculturalism. All efforts at biculturalism have only resulted in integration and assimilation, in bitterness and tears

Its marginality is further accentuated by rejecting a rights-based approach to Maori affairs preferring, instead, the time-honoured recourse of solving 'needs' by throwing money at a problem (Parata, 1994; Graham, 1997; Minogue, 1998). Refusal to address power-

sharing on shared sovereign basis has also had the consequence of diminishing biculturalism to little more than a 'kowhaiwhai' multiculturalism for Maori - a concession that is big on symbol but short on substance. This gap between the real and ideal generates much of the social ferment that drives the dynamics of New Zealand society. It also suggests a more appropriate vehicle for conveying the post-bicultural aspirations of Maori for Maori control over Maori resources (Durie, 1995).

## Bi-nationalism: Re-calibrating the Partnership

Debates over Maori-Crown relations may well become articulated around the theme of bi-nationalism (Fleras, 1997). In many ways, bi-nationalism is what biculturalism would have been had the latter not become 'multiculturalised' as little more than a Maori equivalent of institutional accommodation. Maori politics appear increasingly rooted in a bi-national agenda that endorses the unique status of the original occupants as 'nations within' with inherent and collective rights to self-determination over jurisdictions related to land, culture, and political voice (Fleras and Elliott, 1992:220-31). Maori-Crown relations are organised around a bi-national partnership of two founding nations within the framework of a single state, thus reflecting a working definition of bi-nationalism as the formal acknowledgement of fundamentally different peoples as equal and sovereign in their own right yet sharing in the sovereignty of society as a whole (see Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996). Bi-nationalism implies the co-existence of two peoples with joint jurisdiction over matters of mutual concern, in addition to relational yet non-dominating autonomy over

internal jurisdictions (Scott, 1996; Fleras, 1996). Power-sharing is key in crafting a bi-national political arrangement: All internally differenced societies that have attained some degree of stability are associated with a level of governance that accepts the principle of power-sharing (Linden, 1994; Editorial, 1997). Precise arrangements for sharing power will vary from one context to another, but all are predicated on arrangements whereby major segments re-negotiate power by re-defining what is 'mine', what is 'yours' and what is 'ours'.

Bi-nationalism differs from bi/multiculturalism as discourses in engaging with diversity. Multiculturalism targets immigrants or descendants of immigrants such as New Zealanders of Asian origins or Pacific Islanders, most of whom are willing to accept societal rules as a price of admission or settlement. Bi-nationalism reflects the reality of indigenous peoples who did not voluntarily consent to be ruled or colonially dominated. Societal rules are often unacceptable when indigenous peoples struggle for ways to implement indigenous models of self-determination by sharply curtailing state jurisdiction and colonialist practices (Alfred, 1995). The scope of multiculturalism and bi-nationalism varies accordingly. Official multiculturalism is concerned with the creation of an ordered social hierarchy in which minorities are nested into a pre-arranged system of institutional accommodation. By contrast, bi-nationalism focuses on establishing a working partnership between co-sovereign equals, each of whom exercises the right of control and consent. Even the underlying logic differs: The rationale behind multiculturalism is rooted in the principle of universality and liberal pluralism: namely, that what we share in common is more important than

inherited differences that divided or provoke. Bi-nationalism reflects a more fundamental reading of diversity: That is, peoples are substantially different and these largely inherited differences are primary in defining patterns of engagement and entitlement.

To summarise, bi/multiculturalism in Aotearoa is essentially a society-building exercise that seeks to de-politicize differences through institutional accommodation. In that current use is consistent with Canada's consensus multiculturalism, the goal of bi/multiculturalism is to make society safe from diversity, safe for diversity. Compare this with the ideal of bi-nationalism: differences between peoples are politicized by way of multiple yet interlocking jurisdictions involving innovative patterns of belonging and engagement. The challenges posed by bi-nationalism make it comparable to the critical multiculturalisms in the United States, at least in process if not necessarily in outcome. A 'playful' inversion is called for in juxtaposing the two: rather than making society safe from diversity, safe for diversity, the underlying logic of bi-nationalism is aimed at making diversity safe from society as well as safe for society.

## Toward a Multiculturalism within a Bi-National Framework

Aotearoa New Zealand is a multi/bicultural society; it is bi-national as well, at least in theory if not in practice, and the challenge resides in connecting the strands of these 'duelling discourses' into a weave of constructive engagement. Or as David Pearson (1995:25) observes:

> What is required is an admittedly difficult theorisation of different ethnic minority rights -

aboriginal and immigrant, individual and collective - within a polytechnic model that does not demand frequently reductive 'culturalist' labels.

On the surface, an official multiculturalism and bi-nationalism appear to be diametrically opposed and beyond compatibility. At higher levels of abstraction, however, their very divergence may foster the possibility of co-existence since neither competes with the other for the same jurisdictional space. Multiculturalism addresses the concerns of voluntary migrants who are seeking symbolic legitimation of their status and contributions to society. Emphasis is on society-building by disengaging the mainstream from prejudicial mindsets and removal of discriminatory practices at social and cultural levels. Bi-nationalism, by contrast, acknowledges the primacy of the founding peoples as 'first among equals' in establishing agendas and setting priorities. The sharing of power between peoples is proposed in establishing a non-coercive partnership of relative yet relational autonomy (Young, 1990; Scott, 1996). Thus, multiculturalism and bi-nationalism may be mutually exclusive in jurisdiction and logically opposed in agenda, but compatible precisely because of their differences in application. This division of jurisdictions as shared yet separate invites the possibility of 'nesting' an official multiculturalism into a bi-national framework - in the same way that individual rights can coexist with collective rights - in theory if not always tidily in practice.

It is difficult at present to gauge the degree of practicality in establishing multiculturalism within a bi-national framework. Much of what passes for 'managing' diversity rests on a distinctive Maori-Pakeha axis that

has difficulty in accommodating non-Maori, non-Pakeha ethnic groups (Pearson, 1995). Educational institutions, for instance, have struggled for a balance between multiculturalism and bi-nationalism - at least judging by various mission statements: 'The school curriculum will recognise and value the unique position of Maori in New Zealand society...The school curriculum will encourage students to understand and respect the different cultures which make up New Zealand society' (quoted in Donn and Schick, 1995:43). The Federation of Ethnic Councils (a national umbrella forum for ethnic minority organisations) appears equally supportive of Treaty-based bi-nationalism without forsaking a multicultural commitment to (a) promoting and preserving minority language, culture, and identity; (b) securing the rights of minorities to equal opportunity and outcomes; and (c) removing those mono-cultural values and institutions that detract from a multicultural society (Vasil and Yoon, 1996).

Still, hard talk about multiculturalism is overdue if substance is to replace slogan. Without sounding unduly provocative or patronising, what precisely do New Zealanders want from an official multiculturalism, especially in a globalizing, post-modernizing society? Is the preference towards Canada's consensus multiculturalism with its commitment to institutional accommodation or, alternatively, is the preferred option with critical discourses in challenging the distribution of cultural power? Evidence to date points to support for consensus-style multiculturalism as a basis for securing both a material and symbolic place for non-Maori, non-Pakeha minorities (Panney, 1998:8-10). What vision of Aotearoa is anticipated under multiculturalism? Canada's official multiculturalism arose when society-

building endorsed the modernist notions of formal equality and integration of the formerly excluded into a cohesive whole. Can critical multiculturalisms provide a national vision when post-modernist discourses are organized around the fragmentary politics of identity as a basis for belonging (Higham, 1993)? Changes in the nature of the target group also distort the clarity of multicultural discourses. Canada's multiculturalism originated at a time when many ethnic minorities were relatively poor, marginalized from the mainstream, victims of prejudice and discrimination, lacking recourse to human rights violation, and committed to Canada for the long haul. Do multicultural discourses still apply when immigrants and ethnic minorities may be relatively affluent, perfectly capable of securing their rights through legal channels when appropriate, and whose commitment to society in a global economy may be temporary? Are multicultural resources best deployed in removing prejudicial and discriminatory structures or should priorities focus on preserving culture, identity, and language - even if these do not appear to be under threat, either at home or abroad? Finally, how compatible is a critical multicultural discourse with the principles of Maori bi-nationalism, given that both are seeking to create cultural space by challenging public culture? Without thoughtful responses to these and other questions, both consensus and critical multiculturalisms will be a difficult sell in a country where the shedding of social responsibilities and trimming of government expenditures is a preferred course of action.

References to bi-nationalism provide recognition for the descendants of the founding peoples. This recognition is conferred legitimacy at the level of official

languages, national images and symbols, prevailing agendas, and institutional frameworks. Yet a commitment to bi-nationalism should not provide an excuse to diminish the rights of multicultural minorities. Nor should references to bi-nationalism detract from multiculturalism in legitimating the presence of ethnic minorities in New Zealand. Bi-nationalism is not intended to deny the full and equal rights of democratic citizenship to individuals, including the right to be the same as well as different. What is precluded under bi-nationalism is an ethnic minority's right to collective cultural recognition in shaping national agendas or public culture. Neither bi-nationalism nor multiculturalism must logically precede the other. Both can work in tandem to sustain a social and political climate consistent with Treaty principles without reneging on pluralistic commitments. In other words, only a bi-nationalism that acknowledges the recognition of multiculturalism as a key component of the agenda of one of the Treaty partners can hope to unlock the riddle of society-building in a post-colonizing Aotearoa New Zealand.

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# Radical Structuralism in the Sociology of Education: A Realist Critique

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## *Abstract*

This is one of a series of publications in which 'qualitative' data is interrogated in the context of a theoretical conversation. The aim of the project is to further the development of realist approaches in the sociology of education by means of such empirically grounded critique. In this paper radical structuralism, exemplified by the work of Corrigan (1990), is examined with particular concern for its commitment to epistemological relativism and its ambivalent moral politics of choice.

## Theories of Education and Social Reproduction

The central concern of the sociology of education is the generation of inequality/difference which has become the recent focus of a realist approach (Nash, 1993, 1997a). A number of theories have been offered to explain the invariably observed correlation between social origin, educational success, labour market access, and status in the class system. It is this larger economic, cultural, and political relationship between the educational system and the class system that is responsible for the differential allocation of key resources to families and the entities constituted by them. Most sociologists who have contributed to this area,

whatever their theoretical standpoint, have not failed to observe that the education system is functionally involved in the reproduction of the social order. Among the most influential writers, Jencks *et al.* (1972), Boudon (1981), Bourdieu (1976), Bowles and Gintis (1976), and Collins (1979), have each presented models of the educational system as an agent of social reproduction. Although defending different theoretical positions these writers share a perception of the school as a *conservative force*. That phrase is actually Bourdieu's, but the realisation that schools are involved in the reproduction rather than the transformation of the social and economic order is their common theme. In a realist theory, also, social structures, as systems of relations between people, are constructed as entities with causal powers (Bunge, 1979, Archer, 1995). While educational systems have expanded steadily, indeed, exponentially, throughout the twentieth century, supported at least in part by the belief that education was the path, indeed, the high road, to social mobility and a more open society, those who struggled for the realisation of that hope believe they have little to celebrate (Halsey, 1994). So far from realising its capacity to provide opportunities for students from all social classes, and most particularly those able working class students whose reinsertion into their class of origin seemed certain without the intervention of the school, the school has appeared more as a mechanism of reproduction, perhaps one uniquely effective, for the disciplined subordination of the working class and the maintenance of the existing system of class

relations. This critical position has, in fact, many of the attributes of a realist sociology: it constructs a theory in which social structures are the cause of social differences in access to education, and specifies them as those of the school in its relation to the economic, political, and cultural systems. In its most radical forms, as expressed, for example, by Corrigan (1990), this thesis has become so greatly influential as to be regarded as conventional wisdom in New Zealand sociology of education. Nevertheless, as a recent critique has argued (Nash, 1997c), there are, from the standpoint of a realist sociology, issues of theory and substance that require further elaboration and debate.

The central aim of a realist sociology of education is to provide an explanation of social differences in access to education by reference to the causal agency of social structures: we are engaged in the same task as Corrigan, (1990:157-158):

> I am seeking to investigate the procedures and patterns through which some students and pupils come to speak and write effortlessly; how some others do this with difficulty; but how for most, this is not their experience of school at all.

Corrigan's expression of radical structuralism is extremely interesting. The analysis is passionate in its eloquence, uncompromising in its political engagement and persuasive in its professorial authority. Yet the argument it advances, one shared by many writers including, of course, Willis

(1977) whose ethnographic studies of working class schooling continue to have an overwhelming influence, is not without flaw, and in subjecting it to careful examination it may be that a more soundly based realist account can be constructed. Appealing to history and contemporary sociological studies of working class schooling, Corrigan asks us to consider whether schools, far from being intended to educate all students compelled to attend them, actually function to 'regulate into confusion, silence, hesitation, and resentment the majority of those who have been schooled' (1990:158). Organising his critique in the concepts of post-modernist thought, through an examination of textuality and time, Corrigan examines the effects of the schooling system in creating formed mental and bodily practices constituting recognisably schooled social identities.

The curriculum, pedagogy, and modes of evaluation are recognised as arbitrary social forms (Corrigan, 1990:167): '[i]t has been well-argued that there is nothing universal or natural about the bodies of knowledge that come to be taught as school subjects - they are all social constructions with specific histories'. Students socialised into codes of communication derived from class-cultural communities not recognised as legitimate by the school, and incompatible with those that regulate the transmission of knowledge in the middle class school, are confronted with barriers of incomprehension they cannot surmount. Corrigan argues that what is taught, how it is taught, and how it is evaluated (the curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation) are structured by specific historical

forms: in its organisation of time and space, in its imposition of a disciplinary regime, and in its patterning and scheduling of the curriculum, the order of the school attains a concrete facticity that can be located as the product of a particular culture. Students must be prepared to structure their time and their very identity if they are to live successfully within this order: as Corrigan puts it, '[t]he routinized fragmentation of this educational schedule is a crucial fact which most sociologists ignore' (Corrigan, 1990:166). The school actively excludes the majority of students who bring to the school non-acceptable modes of thought and practices which it 'systematically denies, dilutes, downvalues, or distorts' (Corrigan, 1990:160). Above all, education is provided as a commodity. At the heart of schooling is an exchange transaction where the institution offers educational qualifications, and the implicit promise of non-manual employment, to those prepared to accept its terms. Students who reject this bargain, foreseeing other futures, perhaps as skilled manual workers, find the class-cultural modes of thought and practices of their home and community devalued and opposed by the school. Those working class students willing to tolerate a position of subordination and obedience as 'school children', a concept given a specific social identity marked by codes of symbolic practice, in exchange for the possibility of a middle class future can be held up as a demonstration of equality of educational opportunity, the essential neutrality of the school as an institution and, simultaneously as evidence that 'those who do not succeed have only themselves (or their families, their

communities, their gender, their ethnicity, their anything-else-that-comes-to-mind) to blame' (Corrigan, 1990:159). In this account it is those who recognise at some level the oppressive character of the school and resist its distortions of reality, those who, in fact, are not entirely 'taken in' by the school's tacit legitimation of 'chronic unemployment, ... of State-legitimated criminality, and the sheer incoherence of the current crisis' (Corrigan, 1990:159), who bear the brunt of the school's oppressive power. Those few working class students who succeed are, by implication at least, those who have lost their class-derived capacity to reject the official meanings of the school and, at the risk of compromising that class solidarity so central to working class culture, set themselves apart by their pursuit of a trajectory of individual mobility. These young people, in so far as they have not, unlike most of their fellows, refused 'a logic in which their acceptance of subordination or giving obedience now, will yield up superordination and encashable knowledge later' (Corrigan, 1990:159), stand in some ill-defined sense, accused of, at least, individualism and, at worst, class betrayal.

The critique has a compelling, almost overpowering, attraction, and to offer criticism of radical critique is to risk positioning oneself with the forces of oppression, and yet certain specific weakness of the argument, particularly in its relativist epistemology and moral politics, should not go unnoticed. This paper responds to Corrigan's implicit invitation to a dialogue that should be seen as extending beyond the confines

of this article. In a number of publications I have presented extended interviews with young people and attempted to interpret their various educational and employment trajectories from the position of realist sociology. Ripeka, to be introduced here, is no more typical (as a female Maori student) than Rena (Nash, 1997c), Rewia (Nash, 1997a), or several others, including Marisse, Yolanda, and Moana (Nash, 1997b), whose lives have been interrogated in the course of this project, and, of course, these sociological studies of individuals may be read as entirely comparable to a more conventional form of ethnography based on the study of groups. At the very least, therefore, this paper seeks to open a conversation involving at least three participants, for it will introduce in Ripeka a young woman who accepted the offer of the school, at significant cost, who is perfectly capable of defending her decision.

## Commodification

Ripeka - it is not her real name - attended a girls' school as a third form student and entered its Maori bilingual class. The school was included in the *Progress at School* sample whose 1991 third form students were monitored throughout their secondary school career (Nash, 1997b and Nash and Harker, 1998). A number of students were interviewed, often both while they were at school and after they had left, and the interview with Ripeka (conducted by Moya Field) used in this paper was recorded when she was 18-years-old during her first year at university. The school serves a predominantly working class community

(about forty per cent of its students are Maori) but seeks, nevertheless, to maintain an 'academic' tradition and, although at that time organised into non-streamed classes, tested its intake comprehensively and was able to provide the research with class lists ordered by standardised scores of reading comprehension (Reid and Elley, 1981) and reading vocabulary (Reid, *et al.*, 1981). Ripeka's name is near the top of these lists. The bilingual class she entered had mean scores somewhat below the national mean (although not below the mean of the other classes), and expressed as a single score in IQ terms Ripeka's 109 would be regarded as no more than 'good average'. In several more selective schools in the *Progress at School* sample her scores would not have won her a place in the 'A' stream. Yet Ripeka left school in the seventh form as Head Girl with university entrance bursary, satisfactory grades in Sixth Form Certificate subjects, and a better than pass mark in five School Certificate subjects. Only in School Certificate mathematics was she forced to confront relative failure, and although a little disappointed with her bursary marks, it was a university entrance level result that exceeded the expectations set by her third form test scores. In comparison with most of her friends Ripeka had achieved a spectacular success at school and went on to realise a long-standing goal:

> I never had any specific dream, but I always knew that I'd be at varsity. That was like, always, by the time I got to high school, there was no question of whether I was going, I was going. And I was always going

> to from high school, Mum and Dad never said to me, 'You've got to go to varsity, there's just no two ways about it'. They'd never ever put that pressure on me. It's always been my own decision, and if I had have gone to polytech, it would've been fine as well. But for me it kind of like, you know, if you get to seventh form, it was just, you know, you should be at varsity. From when I was in the third form I thought, when I'm five years down the track, yeah I'm at varsity. It never was an issue for me. It was always just I'm going. And probably that's why I did quite well at school because, that was always on my mind, I'm going to varsity, like, I can remember they used to, some people used to come into our classes and say, you know, 'How many of you girls, are thinking of going to varsity?', and this would be like the fourth form. And there'd be like five of us who'd put our hands up. And it just always was I never had any other plans, I didn't want to do anything else. Right through from third form it was the same, within the Maori girls that I started with, it was the same five of us.

Ripeka maintained high aspirations and her decisions have all the appearance of being the product of rational deliberation. An earlier ambition to become a child psychologist was abandoned in the light of her failure to pass School Certificate mathematics but other high aspirations, structured by the school, which had recognised, fostered, and legitimated her verbal capabilities, were soon formed. As she entered the sixth form Ripeka set as her goal a career in politics and law and

followed it through:

> Going into next year I might look at dropping law, and taking up criminology as part of my BA, and doing that as a major instead of politics, 'Cus I think it would be more important to have some Maori people in that kind of field. There's quite a few lawyers, Maori lawyers, coming out now, so I don't know whether I'll be needed, you know. Like it's always good to have heaps of Maori lawyers, but, I think I'd prefer to go into a field where there's not many. Where you've got more chance of getting a good job and you know helping them. So that's probably what I'll do, I'm always thinking about job opportunities, and, yeah and where I'll be needed most, yeah.

Always, Ripeka says, she had wanted to go to university. She recalls being one of four or five other girls in the bilingual class who had also held that ambition as fourth form students. Conscious of herself as a Maori girl, she extends her sense of responsibility to her ethnic community, yet not, it may be worth noting, in such a way that would negate the merit of a decision-making model with all the 'individualist' rational-economic actor assumptions of cost-benefit analysis that supposedly implies. Ripeka manages to construct a sense of the field as one in which she can maximise her usefulness to the community and at the same time minimise the risks of competing in an over-crowded arena.

Can it be argued that Ripeka accepted subordination at school in exchange for encashable knowledge later? It seems from her comments that her efforts were, on the contrary, recognised and rewarded and, although the very fact that she was 'privileged' implies the presence of those not privileged, there is no evidence that this forceful young woman allowed herself to be oppressed by the order of the school. Even as a university student Ripeka is not financially poorer than the majority of her friends, and the suggestion that she has traded subordination for encashable knowledge later is more than doubtful. As a Maori student Ripeka is actually able to attract funded support, leaving her much better off than the majority of her former schoolmates who find themselves in low-paid work or dependent on benefits, and better off also than most other students who will leave university with huge debts. It is not a bad bargain at all - and Ripeka knows it.

## The Sources of Ambition

In fact, the bargain was made not only by Ripeka, but by her family. Ripeka, as we have seen, identifies herself as Maori but her father is of European descent and Ripeka's Maori connections are all on her mother's side of the family. Such ethnically mixed marriages are actually more the norm than otherwise and, in this respect, Ripeka's background is not out of the ordinary. The family is also reasonably prosperous, both her parents are employed, and although corner dairies are anything but a pathway to riches, the household is able to manage. When Ripeka compares her

family with those of many of her friends she regards herself as fortunate. What her parents have provided, in fact, more than wealth, is emotional stability, continuous support, and unfailing encouragement. The sociological term that comes to mind when thinking about Ripeka's family (it makes one embarrassed for the disciple) is 'upward strivers', but perhaps the term captures something. Ripeka's mother has put herself through a costly and lengthy course of extra-mural university study to complete her training as a social worker while working in a canning factory, and her father, perhaps tired at last of the endless hours of work in the shop, has begun to think of a job in the prison service. Their own ambitions, however, have been placed second to those of their three children. Ripeka's elder sister Ema gained a bursary, and is expected to enter university after returning from a period overseas, while her younger brother is reported to be achieving well at a boys' high school. It is more than significant that this boy, his parents' only son, attended private schools for at least part of his primary schooling and during his intermediate years. Nothing could testify more clearly to his parents' concern for his success than this expensive investment: it must have represented a real sacrifice. One would like to know a little more about the privilege afforded to this boy: we may be witnessing a strongly gendered practice, in which sons are favoured over daughters, but there may equally well be a mundane explanation in terms of the amount of discretionary income available as the family consolidated its financial basis. As many girls as boys are educated in private establishments.

Nevertheless, something of the pressure to succeed, a hint that 'upward striving', for all its patronising tone, does not entirely miss the mark, is expressed in Ripeka's account of her relationship with her father:

> The good thing is, our family is really stable. Like Mum and Dad, you know, they've just always been there. They didn't break up or, get back together, and all that kind of stuff that heaps of families go through, I think it was Dad that was always working and Mum that took charge of us kids. Dad's always been there, but never really. Because Dad had to be working in the shop, we've had the dairy full on, you know, 7 till 9 every day, and, he's always had to be there and getting the money. He's more like, 'Here's the money, you go and do it", there to Mum. So it was always Mum would do the special things with us, and that's, why I think we're so close to Mum, like, because he was doing that. And like for me now, if I do something well he will, he won't say to me, 'I'm proud of you. That was really good', but he'll say something like, 'Did you win?', like he always says that, and I think that's his way of saying, 'I'm proud of you', but it's like a little family joke, you know, he always goes, 'Did you win?'. Sometimes it really pisses me off. Because he will never ever say to me, 'That's good, that's really awesome', you know, 'I'm so proud of you', he never ever says that. But I can be sitting in the sitting room, and I can hear him blabbing on to someone in the shop, 'My daughter did this, and she did that', and that's what he's like. But you know, you can

> hear him not nuttering on, about how wonderful we've done, when really he should just say it to us, but no.

This portrait of her father's behaviour is so characteristic, in a sense so stereotypical, of male-gendered practices in New Zealand that it is impossible to suppress a start of recognition. It is clear that Ripeka's relationship with her mother and father are fundamentally different, but it is more important to comprehend than to criticise family practices within the range of the culturally acceptable. Ripeka understands her father and it is for her to offer what criticism she will. She is able to recognise, of course, the pride her father takes in the achievements of his family, even if the structure of feeling that must be so deeply a part of his socialised personality will allow him to express them only in his own way. But the competitive element in his responses are impossible to miss: 'Did you win?' he asks. This question, even in its forms, is not unmotivated because the children's activities in sport, debating, and even in music, are more often than not performed in the context of a competitive structure. The school, too, structures activities in this way and Ripeka responded to it, 'I was just taking this award and that award', she says, and although the consequences of that success for her position in the bilingual unit were, as we shall see, uncomfortable, the pleasures of victory were too exhilarating to relinquish.

## The Scheduling of Time

Corrigan challenges us to take seriously the

'crucial fact' of educational scheduling as a major element in the ordering of the school. That order, making necessary forms of time scheduling at every level, integrating the five or six fifty-minute period, six-day timetable, to the long-term biographical planning demanded of those intending to enter higher education, is a dominant theme in Ripeka's discourse. Her discussion of 'time-management' does indeed enable us to trace intrinsic connections between the organisation of educational time, the tools of self-management, the structures of motivation and of success and failure. In the course of our ethnographic research we discovered that it was all but impracticable to talk to the most successful students at school, particularly the girls, because, with their 'jam-packed' diaries, they simply did not have an unscheduled moment in the day:

> All through school I'd just had so many things going on, that you became really wickedly organised and, you know, everything had a time. You had your diary jam-packed and, you were just really organised.

There were students one could talk to during breaks, or in study periods (generally interpreted as 'free' periods), but those who, 'had so many things going on' that they were forced to become highly organised, sometimes actually had to be interviewed 'on the run' as they moved from one scheduled activity to another. This rigorous, and rigid, time-scheduling demands specific personal skills, and Ripeka had become proud of them: being 'wickedly organised' had become integrated

into her self-identity, and the 'jam-packed' diary stood as a documentary testament to her self-worth, if not her self-importance. Yet, for all that this seems to suggest high levels of self-management, the response is, in fact, to a structure imposed by the institution, the self-pacing is one designed to match the pacing of the school, and thus the mere act of following the schedule provides a source of 'motivation'. At university, with a very different institutional schedule, Ripeka confessed that she found it hard to re-adjust, to 'motivate' herself, and assume a responsibility for her learning without the support of the ready-made programme that had so tightly regulated her life at secondary school. Moreover, because the scheduling at school is one that brings contact with teachers, and as Ripeka accepted offers of additional tuition and involved herself in out-of-school activities her opportunities for interactions with teachers not bounded by the constraints of ordinary classroom communication were many, it provides a context in which, for some students at least, they can obtain a continual reaffirmation of the school's interest in and commitment to their success. Perhaps for others it provides contexts in which they experience the school's disapproval in no less insistent a form, but Ripeka had learned that the school desired her success, and that there were teachers who cared for her who would have been affected by her failure. Yet, if Ripeka had been able to master the skills necessary to cope with the time-scheduling of the school there were those who could not and had no desire to. The school will, of course, move students around from room to room whether they master the skills or not,

but those who, like Ripeka, were willing to internalise the habits of time-scheduling and construct their identity in part around that domain of practice, are certain to be more successful than others.

In this context of self-management it is relevant to examine Ripeka's account of her mother's regard for what could have been a difficult year in her adolescence. With Ema, Ripeka's elder sister, 'going out and doing everything I wanted to do', her mother took her youngest daughter out, if only once or twice, to a nightclub, allowed her to drink under supervision in the home, and protected her without generating any feelings of alienation:

> A lot of my mates weren't allowed to drink, or otherwise the total opposite, they would just riot, they just did whatever they liked. But Mum was really good, she. At the end of the sixth form, that's when Ema would have been second year seventh, so like Ema was going out and doing everything and I wanted to do it too, but I was a bit young. But Mum was really good, 'cus she'd take me out. She'd take me to a nightclub, with a. Like once in the year, and that would be enough to, you know, keep me going till the next year. But it was really good the way she did it. And like when we hit seventh form. In seventh form, she'd like, let me drink but, it was only at home, which was really cool. Because she always said to me, 'I'd rather you drink in the safety of, our home', and, going out, you know, you don't know where you're going to be. So, by the time I got

> here, you know, to varsity, it wasn't, an issue, whether we should go out and get pissed every night. If I want a drink, I have a drink, but, you know. You know your own limits and, so yeah, I thought that was really good how she did it, I thought it was really well done.

Knowing how easy it would have been for Ripeka to gain access to alcohol her mother's strategy has all the hallmarks of a carefully considered decision. It seems to have been successful, too, and with this background of learned self-discipline Ripeka is able to use alcohol with a great deal more wisdom than many of the university students she lives with. Ripeka intends to remember this lesson, and others provided by her mother, when her own time comes to be a parent, and no doubt she will, reminding us that practices within the family have both short term and long term consequences, but here it will stand as evidence that self-management is the practice of skills acquired in specific social contexts.

The 'crucial fact', then, may be taken seriously and the connections drawn between the time-scheduling of the school, with its constant bells and relentless shifting of students from place to place, and the forms of disciplinary technology, designed as much as anything to remodel the dispositions of the body itself, revealed by historical investigation to have been fashioned to meet the needs of total institutions, monasteries, military institutions, hospitals, and, above all in the history of attempts to subordinate the working

class, the factory, concerned with the creation of model identities. More than one writer (see Payne, 1907) has noted the origin of elementary education itself in the unification of the pre-industrial, autocratic, nation-state, and the Protestant churches in the project to impose social control on a grand scale. The Foucaultian echoes - arms folded, backs straight, legs together - reverberate to this day in our classrooms, and are recognised by many students for what they are, as a barely legitimate extension of the power of the school into areas of personal autonomy, and as such often resisted strenuously (Foucault, 1980). Once again, however, the excitement of recognition, that schools *are* like this, and like this for the purposes of surveillance and control linked to a wider scheme of things, needs to be tempered by other observations. In truth, self-management through the inculcation of disciplined habits, whether taught in this manner or not, is a crucial tool for success at school, and perhaps for any endeavour where persistence and application are required. The techniques of self-control, easily related to the Foucaultian project, are not transmitted only, or perhaps even mainly, within the school, but are developed within the family. Social control in the school has actually moved in recent years far more closely towards the approach depicted in Ripeka's account of her mother's practices, who thus shows, incidentally, a better grasp of the 'ruling ecology' than is allowed by the emphasis given by Corrigan to what is, in fact, an increasingly residual concern of the school with discipline and punishment in its classical forms. The mode of identification with the school, which, as Mercurio

(1975) attempted to show was, in boys' schools at least, once even literally inscribed on the body, through the ritual infliction of corporal punishment, has been progressively replaced with one in which a deeper form of personal commitment is required.

## Knowledge

Corrigan's analysis of knowledge and teaching in the school is expressed in so condensed a form as to defy even the most scrupulous efforts at paraphrase. 'Doing well' in the school system, he declares, is to know the 'ruling ecology' (Corrigan, 1990:158):

> Now what is interesting here is that this determination of correct content by the forms of behaviour (writing, speaking, reading, bodily posture, and so on) that are real, if tacit, rules of assessment and grading, matches perfectly what new teachers have to learn. What counts as good teaching appears to be about the correct transmission of knowledge (and, of course, paying attention to the fact that any 'class' consists of 'individuals') but turns out to be about controlling behaviour, being a good 'class manager', 'retaining discipline', notoriously including surveillance outside the classroom. In both cases forms of the presentation of a certain kind of self, a social identity, appear to in-form and structure the content of what is actually said.

*Succeeding Generations* (Nash, 1993)

analysed the relationship between class-located families and the adoption of literate practices of socialisation in the context of an empirical study of family resources and access to education. The practices Ripeka describes are not uncommon in working class families, but they are even more common in middle class families. In any event, it is fascinating to learn how Ripeka was introduced to this 'ruling ecology' by well-supported literate practices of socialisation in her family:

> I can remember Mum used to take us. I went to Playcentre. I must have been about three. I don't know, three or four, and I remember going there. And I remember going to kindergarten, but I don't remember much, I can always remember her reading to us, like she'd. Every night she'd read to us, and I remember we used to put on little plays [*laughs*], but us kids, because there were the three of us. We used to get the *School Journals,* like Ema would be at school so she'd get a *Journal* and she'd bring it home, and then the rest of us, we'd all get little parts and we'd put on plays. But I always remember her reading, and she used to sing to us a lot, and, like we used to watch *Playschool* and all that kind of stuff. But she always put us in front of the TV to watch that.

Ripeka was less than convinced that good teaching is only or fundamentally about controlling behaviour and being a good manager. She spoke at some length about many of her teachers, including those who taught her social studies and science. These teachers were, in fact, able to

create a classroom environment in which their students were able to learn effectively and, indeed, we know that students in their classes achieved significantly higher in School Certificate than those in other classes. Yet the means by which this exceptional performance was achieved is not captured by Corrigan's analysis. 'Good teaching' is actually a negotiated practice, not of teachers alone, but of teachers and students together: good teachers are good teachers if students are willing to constitute them as such:

> We had some really really good teachers that were awesome to us there. Our social studies teacher Mrs Butson, she was amazing, she was. It was like she cared for us, and that was awesome because she used to give us like [*tape turnover break*]. And in social studies we got really good marks, and yet in other subjects when the teachers were suckfull, you know. It was like they didn't do so well. And Mr Norton. Like when he said something we did it all right, and that was just the respect we had for him. Whereas, you know, if some teacher who said to us, 'Oh will you fellows shut up', you know, we'd say 'Oh get real', you know. It's just a whole different respect thing, and he had it. We just felt, far, we are important. And a lot of us did really well in science too, in our fourth form.

Corrigan defines knowledge, in accordance with the epistemological relativism of his theoretical commitments, as a product of the *class arbitrary*.

Yet Ripeka was able to make clear links between the school's recognition of her debating skills and her aspiration to study law that cannot be dismissed without reflection. Like many of the students and parents whose views were expressed in the course of our research Ripeka perceives an intrinsic and necessary connection between the 'ruling ecology' expressed through the literate socialisation of her family and the curriculum and pedagogy of the school:

> I was into debating. And like really full on, debating in the last two years. And especially with the speeches and getting through to the nationals, both years. Because kinda like, I thought I should be doing something speaking and, one of my teachers she always said, 'You should be in parliament, you've got a big mouth', okay. So from about the beginning of seventh form I've kinda like, you know, worked out that I'd like to do law and politics. So I kinda followed that through, and now I'm here, doing it. So that sounds strange. But I don't actually, I never wanted to be a lawyer, I just wanted a law degree. I just think a law degree's awesome, you know. It's such a wide thing that can, give you so many opportunities.

It is impossible to overlook the social formula, as specific a social product as the rules for judging the presentation of poodles at a dog show, that regulate the assessment of competitive debating as a class of performance art. And yet, is it for all that possible to deny the intrinsic and necessary

connection between this actual and non-trivial competence in language and the forms of thought and speech actually required in the practice of law?

## Social Identity and the School

The processes by which Ripeka became identified as a 'good' student, one with a 'certain kind of self, a social identity', occurred in her memory gradually and almost inexplicably:

> I can remember at primary school. Oh oh! I was like nowhere near a good student. But I don't even know why that happened eh? Like if you look back on my report you'd think I was two different people. It's really quite strange. Like my primary report I'm always like below good, or on good, but then in the comments it always said, 'But she has a lovely nature and is very helpful'. But then, as soon as I hit like high school, it just, all my marks were really really good. Sometimes I think, was I really that bad? But once I kind of got, into the flow of [secondary] school, it was like I just kept on doing really good things, and then I'd win things, and then it would just buzz me up. And so I got on this hypo of like, 'Oh my God I can do it' [*laughs*]. And once I got over that first thing, like the first hurdle, there was no stopping me. I was just taking this award and that award, and I was 'yeee!'

Even now Ripeka remains puzzled about the causes of her trajectory at school. Should one let it

go without comment, that observation, one can assume that is recalled verbatim from a primary school report, on her 'lovely' and 'helpful' nature? Are the forms of conduct recognised by teachers as evidence of a 'lovely nature' so taken-for-granted that we can treat them as unproblematic? They are, in fact, gendered, so that girls are more favourably perceived than boys, and middle class children are more favourably perceived than working class children (Fergusson and Horwood, 1997). Always one finds this evidence that teachers' perceptions and 'expectations' extend far beyond the 'official' concerns of the school with academic learning and well into the domain of the personal (Nash, 1973). For one reason or another, at secondary school Ripeka suddenly 'took off' and success built on success as she learned how to live within the 'ruling ecology'. She laughs in reminiscence at how she identified so strongly with the school that she began to act as if she were a teacher rather than a student:

> I like to help people, like I get a buzz 'I can do this, I can help you', that kind of thing. And honestly I really tried to help all those girls. I'd spend hours like, you know, trying to do homework, and reading and stuff. I don't know, they must have thought I was another teacher or something! [*laughs*] I did, honestly I did. Like from third to seventh form in a class situation I'd always, take charge because, I don't know why I did that actually, but, I always did. It's quite strange, yeah I did too. I always thought, 'Oh stuff you. You fellows

> weren't doing anything'. So I always used to, get up and say, 'Right that is it', da da da, and get them racked up. And if someone did it they were fine, you know.

This concept of self-identity, nurtured at home but shaped at school, and fundamentally a *schooled self*, was crucial to Ripeka's success. When she became Head Girl it was the almost inevitable culmination of her secondary school career, and she revealed herself to be aware of the fact:

> Even from third form I'd been building up. All through the years, to, you know, Head Girl was the ultimate, of where I wanted to be. I didn't actually join heaps of things to be Head Girl, but by the time I got to sixth form it seemed like that, I had just been in all these things and, Head Girl was naturally the next thing, to have. I've always been involved in school things and, getting into the spirit of, you know, house choirs and all that kind of stuff, and, yeah. So when the job came up and I got Head Girl, it was like, you know, that was normal. It didn't seem like it was out of the ordinary so. Like when I had to give speeches and all that kind of stuff, it was like, yeah. That was me.

'That was me'. But most of her friends had adopted other forms of identity in their mode of adaptation to school. For Ripeka's career was not

that of the majority of those who entered the school with her, and she was able to recognise that the exclusion of most of the Maori students from Girls' High occurred as the result of a process in which the school was actively involved. It is important for a realist sociology of education, dedicated to recognising all the effective structures involved in generating differential attainment, not to overlook the truth of Corrigan's analysis in this respect. As the teachers began to recognise her commitment to the school and to the development of her own talents Ripeka became aware that she was often singled out in an experience that proved to have a sharp double-edge:

> Some of the teachers they used to, like take me aside and, you know, help me, through, different, subjects and all that. And like I always wanted my mates to be doing it as well, but they were just never, given the opportunity. And I don't know whether, that they saw potential in me, or whether they just saw nothing in them. And that was the strange thing about me. And that's what made it even worse was because, because I was getting attention, within the Maori girls' class, it was that that made it even harder for me to stay friends with my, peers. Because they just saw me as a person who was, you know, up here, up really high, with teachers helping me and why weren't they getting that. And I don't know why, I don't know, strange. Sometimes I felt like they wanted to say to me, 'What are you doing in there?' you know, 'Becky why are you in the bilingual unit class?'

Ripeka cannot quite work out why things happened as they did. She was not uncritical of the school: the students were particularly visible as Maori, which made it easy for teachers, those so minded, to treat the whole class as one, and she reported with some feeling her observation that:

> They just so badly stereotype you, it's out of it. When they were in the vertical form, like I can remember, like if someone did wrong the whole lot of them were on report, or something like that, you know. Just little things that, you don't think really matter, but they do.

These views command respect, and even if our statistical analysis shows that Maori students were no more likely to be excluded than any others who adopted the characteristic practices of those who leave school with few qualifications, these observations testify to an important perception. But the problem for Ripeka was precisely that she was *not* stereotyped as one of the group, but singled out as *different*, and her account of how some teachers responded to her, as someone worthy of being 'saved' and separated from the rest of the class in order to succeed, are of crucial significance. A number of teachers took her aside to give her assistance and additional tuition in a form of opportunity not extended to her friends, and Ripeka was unsure whether 'they saw potential in me/ or whether they just saw nothing in them' - perhaps only the teachers concerned might be able to answer that question, but this is certainly an area where further research would be

invaluable. In any event, this attention given to Ripeka - it must have been interpreted by her friends as an expression of favouritism on the part of the teachers and 'goody goodism' on the part of Ripeka - effectively separated her from the group:

> I can remember being so picked on because that I've, I always did my homework. I always did, you know, what was required at class and all that kind of stuff, but then when it came down to it. Like now, when I see the girls, in the street, they're just blown away, that I'm still, at, you know, in a learning environment, but. In third form, they were just little bitches man, they were just so mean to me. It was like, because in fourth form I just about got every, award that anyone can get, and out of the pakehas as well, and so. And they really shat on me man, they just, 'Nah! get away from us', and that sort of thing. And, that really, that made me even sadder that, you know, your own people, because you're doing well, they put you out, and that made me sick.

The 'stereotypical' perception of those forms of practice the school opposes in its students do, of course, have some basis in reality. Ripeka's own parents, she says, were less than enthusiastic about her entering the bilingual unit: 'because of, you know, stereotypes of Maori students, drink/drugs, don't do very well, that kind of stuff'. Moreover, Ripeka herself describes how many in her class in the fourth form, 'just, started, hanging around, like town, and getting into mischief, and

started drugs, and drinking, and smoking, and stuff'. It was at this time, too, that Ripeka admits, 'I started smoking because, I felt 'My God, these people are smoking', you know, I've got to do that too'. It still comes down to yourself, she says, but the 'peer pressure' was real. Is it necessary to insist that the school cannot accept these forms of behaviour? 'Hanging around' town, is truancy, 'getting into mischief' is shoplifting, starting drugs (cannabis) is illegal, purchasing alcohol is illegal, purchasing cigarettes is illegal... The school is fully aware that these behaviours form a cluster of associated practices, are the assertion of an ethnicised class identity, and as such are expressed unmistakably in forms of self-presentation by students staking a claim to a conception of adult status; as Ripeka puts it, 'they were going through a really rough guts stage' and, the reaction of the school staff struck Ripeka as entirely understandable, 'the teachers thought, "No, can't be bothered with it"'.

And thus Ripeka's account of educational failure among Maori students is not, as in Corrigan's account, placed squarely on the agency of the school. When she was asked to explain her success in the school system where so many other Maori students failed, for the interviewer put this question to her directly, her response acknowledged the crucial importance of family support and her mother's practices:

> Family, honestly I do think it's family, eh? But also, it's kinda like, because my family was strong. And like Mum, she raised us

> girls to be really dominant, and not that that's good too, raised us to be really dominant and proud of what you are, and what you believe in, and stand up for anything, you know, that you feel strongly about. And because we were raised like that, like, I think it's just a part of us, to do so well. I mean we're not the perfect family and we've had shit going down, big time, but when it comes down to it I know they're there, always, for me.

Ripeka's account of the trajectory taken by many of the girls with whom she entered school has already been touched on and will be given further elaboration. It is an explanation with all the hallmarks of 'deficit theory' for, although characteristically reluctant to generalise, it is the heavy involvement of the girls in domestic duties, their willingness to insert themselves into the culture of unskilled work, drinking, smoking, drug use, and sexual activity that are recognised as the main threat to their achievement at school. 'Once you get in that', Ripeka said, 'it's hard to get out. And they started doing that like in fourth form. And by the fifth form half of them had gone'. Our records show (Nash and Harker, 1997) that this last observation is accurate, although as true, if not more so, for non-Maori as Maori children whose patterns of behaviour are formed in this mould.

All of this is particularly difficult to accept and theorise in our contemporary and local social science because it seems clear enough, after all, that the girls' adoption of a certain social identity (it becomes relatively settled at the age of 15 as they

go through fourth form), is modelled on patterns readily available within the community. They need look no further than their own homes, to their mothers, aunts, cousins, elder sisters, and workmates (many are engaged in part-time employment), for models about how to live as an adult within the class-cultural repertoire of their own society. The significations of that adult life, the forms of speech, styles of dress, sexual activity, patterns of consumption (including smoking, alcohol, and cannabis), and sources on income, are hardly invisible. It was just these models of life that Ripeka described:

> A lot of the girls that I started school with, I don't think they had that family support. Like in quite a lot of the families they were big families and, a lot of the girls, would end up looking after their younger brothers and sisters, and the school was never a priority. And I. But I don't really want to generalise and say for all of them but, you know, some of the girls I talked to it was just like, you know, they had to go home to do the cleaning and, cook the meals and look after the kids, and get the washing done, and school just was at the bottom of the pile. And by the time they actually got round to looking at, you know, our homework or whatever it was we had that day, you know, you're too tired. And I think, you know, family has got a lot to do with how well you do and how well you're motivated, and to doing your school work. And I think that a lot of them got into the wrong group of friends, they just, started,

> hanging around, like town, and getting into mischief, and started drugs, and drinking, and smoking, and stuff and. Once you get in that it's hard to get out. And they started doing that like in fourth form. And by the fifth form half of them had gone, so yeah.

Do these forms of 'cultural production' have their origin in a deeply embedded class-culture developed in response to its position as an economically exploited class? Are they, in another formulation, grounded in the oppression of the Maori as a community subjected to colonisation with all the economic, political, and cultural domination that system brought? These are not simple questions to resolve. They are, perhaps, responses that could only emerge strongly in class divided societies where inequality is an ineradicable feature of the economic system, that is to say, as responses, they have the forms of a 'culture of poverty' in the context of a system where others are rich. It is possible, moreover, that a certain structure of feeling, a discourse characterised by a sense of self-inadequacy and self-defeat, may have gained a hold, particularly within the Anglo-Maori working class. It does seem important, but extremely complicated, to interrogate cultural forms as carefully as might be done (and it may be worth mentioning again that this paper is but one of a series in which these issues are discussed), in order to grasp the status and strength of different discursive patterns within this community.

Ripeka's account is reliable as ethnographic

observation. But is it *these* cultural forms and practices that Corrigan sees as produced within a context of 'State-legitimated criminality, and the sheer incoherence of the current crisis'? This *intellectualist* reading of the Corrigan thesis is, of course, to distort the argument, but only to a partial extent, because, even though the students who produce a culture of resistance to the school have little awareness of the origins of their patterns of thought in the repertoire of lived working class opposition to the forms of capitalism that structure their lives, that culture is treated, in the tradition of anthropological fieldwork, as a legitimate and fully viable form of life and, notwithstanding certain principled criticisms of its inherent racism, sexism, and habitual violence, one that is, at least, fundamentally grounded in a materialist conception of the role of labour and not 'taken in' by bourgeois forms of thought. The more than implicit suggestion that students who do not position themselves within this so-called culture of *resistance* have chosen, in a more or less deliberate fashion, the path of *collaborators* who merit the dismissive contempt given to all such people must be considered and reconsidered in relation to, and with respect for, the choices made by Ripeka.

## Perceived Futures

Ripeka has realised that she is on a trajectory that must mean leaving many of her old school friends behind. It is a trajectory she began deliberately and strategically some time ago, but the class-cultural distance between them and herself, some

of them gaining polytechnic qualifications but many unemployed, often with children, and dependent on benefits, has become all but impassable. When the interviewer asked Ripeka what her friends were doing she replied:

> The dole! [*laughs*] Oh well, my best friend, she's at Polytechnic, doing a nanny course, but, probably, oh another one's at Polytechnic doing an art course, and the rest are on the dole. That's about three or four of them on the dole. It's scary now, like, you know, most of them have got kids, and married, and jail, and it's really weird, to think that, you know. I made it.

Although it will be some time before she will be earning her living it is a future that occupies her mind:

> In five years time I would have just graduated. I'm here for, well depending on what degree I decide to follow through, I'll probably be here for four to five years. Once I get my degree, I think I'll work, for a couple of years. Try and get a job and get, established. Just a few years, and then I can see myself having a family, and then going back to work. Got it all worked out! Nah! I think that's probably. Well you can never plan these things. You never know what's going to happen. But probably I can see that happening. A couple of years getting established. Yeah it is up to me, I mean, yeah it is, if I want to do something I'll do it. I don't care what anyone else says, I've always been like

> that, if I want something done, I'll do it myself, so I know it's done, yeah.

Ripeka intends to pattern the course of her own life, in a trajectory shaped by her own generation, and although her mother has provided models of practice which will remain potent this is a young woman with active plans of her own:

> My mother I think she's wonderful, but for me I don't think I'll wait as long to do something for myself like she did. Because she had such a hard childhood, her life, herself. She had to wait for us kids to get to teenage before she started doing her own thing, like her own degree. Whereas for me, you know, I want to get my own things done. With our family now, it's just normal and natural that, we're, carrying on, getting our higher education and, looking after ourselves, before we think of having children, like, like you know. In Mum's generation, it was like hit 20 have kids, get married and then that's it [*laughs*] Hello! But now it's all changing, like, you know. You have kids when you want to. Start your family when you've finished travelling, and when you want to. So I think it will be a lot different.

There is a disingenuous quality in Ripeka's conversation: she is, of course, but 18 years old; yet the sense of excitement and *liberation* that leaps from the text, and is present in her voice, is one expressed by many young women (more so

than young men), and one senses that, barring unforeseen accidents, she will, indeed, get her 'own things done'. All Ripeka's intellectual training persuades her to associate 'culture' with ethnic origin, but it is actually class culture that she is most conscious of as a force threatening to insert her into new social and economic relations and thus transform her life:

> Sometimes I think to what it'll be like when I'm working, but it's quite far off, you know. But I do think, and you know, oh well you know, how you're going to get your money and go out shopping all the time, you know, just to become something totally that I'm not. I quite often think of that actually, you know, whether I'm going to come home, have a few wines [*laughs*], that kind of stuff. Whether you move into another life, another stage of your life, or whether you're going to stay the person that you've always been, 'Cus I mean, that's another big thing. Like I go home, and just find it so hard to communicate to, all the people that I left at home, all the friends. Mum's okay, 'cus she knows what, what's expected and how varsity works but, man, my mates eh? They just have no idea.

Again one notes the crucial reference to identity: 'something totally that I'm not', and Ripeka will find the transformation she here anticipates, interestingly enough signified by consumption patterns, more thoroughgoing than she imagines. It is in this context that one may mention the significance of ethnic identity as a countervailing

impulse of solidarity, for although Ripeka must inevitably see herself distanced from her former classmates by the practices of social class, grounded in their specific material and symbolic resources, there remains open the possibility of forging, one should say of retaining, the connection given by her identification with the Maori community. In so far as this is probably the only organic association upwardly mobile working class Maori students are likely to be able to sustain with their wider origins it might be expected that, for this group, the symbolic practices of Maori culture, as signs of identification, will gain in relative importance.

## Conclusion

A realist sociology seeks to explain social events, processes, and phenomena, by describing how specific social structures, conceptualised as sets of relations between people, are causally involved in their generation. Socially differentiated education attainment and access to post-compulsory education is a complex phenomenon produced by so great a number of social structures that they might as well be regarded as infinite, but the framework in which class-located families (possessing key resources of wealth, education, and social connections), act in the perceived best interests of their offspring, in order to compete for positions in a skill-segmented labour market, within an educational system constrained to allocate a more or less given distribution of credentials, seems to be constructed on secure foundations. In this account social structures are not deterministic

and people are what they are - people who act as they do, generally by cause of socialised habit, acquired in class-located families, but not uncommonly for considered and rational reasons. To a great extent it is the possession of certain habits, habits of self-discipline, for example, that make particular deliberated choices of action possible: in reality habit and choice are not opposed sources of action. Social structures affect social practices in any event. It is their class-location that gives middle class families their superior ability to offer their children forms of pre-school socialisation that match the 'ruling ecology' of the educational system with the general effect of inculcating a powerful intellectual configuration structured by the forms of literacy. In accepting the openness of social structures, in recognising that human actions are not determined until they have been performed, are always structured but never determined, this realism represents an advance on positions, which for all the insistence on resistance and the 'rejection of textuality' as forms of agency, are unable to acknowledge agency in its full range. It is as if those who do not resist but accept the bargain of the school lack the capacity to make that choice in the conditions of full freedom. The association between class-location and educational attainment is not a mystery, indeed, so taken-for-granted until relatively recent times was the causal link between social class and cultural practice, that the sociology of education left almost unexamined the real practices of family socialisation into literate culture. Corrigan's structuralism with its ambivalent elements of determinism need not be retained within a realist

sociology of education. In an educational system so structured families able to adopt the practices Ripeka describes are just more likely than not to see their efforts rewarded.

But, of course, it is precisely Corrigan's challenge that this structuring of the educational system is one formed as a direct consequence of its necessary function to effect economic and social reproduction. Those families and communities relatively poorly endowed with the resources of wealth, education, and social connections, to enter the competition for educational credentials with any hope of success, may be relied upon, as a matter of large statistical fact, to exclude themselves. Is there a response to this position? If there is, it is not that there is and can be no alternative. It is always possible to imagine other forms of education, other bases for the construction of the curriculum, other principles for the generation of pedagogic practices, and other modes for evaluating the results of learning. The history of pedagogy runs before one's eyes. The bilingual unit Repeka entered was actually designed as an alternative mode - and there must be some irony there for those who can appreciate it. But this objection is not sufficient: it is not lack of imagination that underpins a realist response, but a principled concern with ontological and epistemological issues. Corrigan's epistemological commitments are roundly declared: the knowledge of the school, its modes of transmission, and its forms of evaluation are all products of an arbitrary class culture, and, furthermore, the cognitive structures effective to its mastery are no less a part

of the 'ruling ecology', sustained in this case by a dubious testing and measurement technology (if, indeed, IQ theory is not to be included as a plain instance of 'State-legitimated criminality'): yet for all its radicalism this approach, which deserves to be called a 'perspective', is all too easy. Such simplistic views are an indulgence that Ripeka's family, with little option but to accept the structures they encounter or participate in the celebration of a 'culture of resistance' that it is not in fact their own with its inevitable reproductive consequences of failure, cannot afford. A realist ontology is not limited to a declaration of the real existence of social structures but, it should go without saying, to the actuality of the concrete and material world. Moreover, a realist ontology (for ontology is prior) requires a realist epistemology, and that means a correspondence theory of truth in one form or another, which has implications, both for the scientific and humanities curriculum, that have yet to be treated with the seriousness they merit. These are philosophical matters that would benefit from further discussion, but it must suffice here to identify this position on realism (Bunge, 1998), as both rigorous and sophisticated. It is in the domain of cognitive development that the anti-realist position asserted by Corrigan has its most telling effects.

The fact is that the complex relationships between 'intelligence' and school attainment and the origin of social differences in the distribution of 'intelligence' are ignored in Corrigan's thesis, and all differences between social groups, whether in 'intelligence' or attainment, are regarded as

culturally arbitrary artefacts of the educational system. Yet it remains the case that class differences in the cognitive skills seen as demonstrations of functional intelligence can be identified in children before they attend school (McGee and Silva, 1982, Wylie, *et al.*, 1996). Among the strongest arguments against the hypothesis that social differences in the distribution of intelligence have a genetic basis is the evidence that working class children adopted into middle class homes develop levels of intelligence more similar to those of their adoptive class than their class of birth (Schiff and Lewontin, 1986). But the corollary of this is that there are substantial differences in the class distribution of cognitive skills necessary to educational attainment and they arise, almost certainly as a result of differential forms of cognitive socialisation in early childhood, before the school has begun to have a direct effect.

Finally, there are other aspects to be considered. What if institutional exclusion and individual withdrawal from school are not incompatible models but, in so far as one is privileged over another, inadequate in failing to recognise the truth of the matter - that exclusion/ withdrawal is a negotiated process in which the school and its students are, with various degrees of self-awareness, mutually involved? Corrigan's model situates the school as the principal agent of determination, which marginalises, inferiorises, and excludes working class students by processes that involve the generation of self-identities by those groups, and by this cultural production ensures, in

effect, that the reproductive function of the school is accomplished in a way that might be interpreted as evidence for this thesis. Ripeka describes how, with the encouragement of her parents, she accepted the exchange transaction of the school, collaborated with teachers who singled her out as 'educable', separated herself from her friends, and pursued with single-mindedness a trajectory leading to higher education and a professional occupation. Although Ripeka believes that many of the teachers 'stereotyped' the Maori girls in the bilingual class, expected them to fail in the core subjects, made little attempt to meet the minimal protocols supposed to structure their education in that class, and took the least signs of non-compliance with the arbitrary class values inscribed in its institutional forms as tantamount to a rejection of the exchange bargain extended by the school, she is, nevertheless, inclined to attribute the under-achievement of the girls more to the practices of their home and community than to those of the school. None of this is inconsistent with Corrigan's assertion that the experiences of students who succeed at school gain significance only as evidence that an imperfect mechanism of class reproduction has the ideological function of 'demonstrating' the 'fairness' of the system as a whole.

Is it, after all, a matter of perspective? Should Ripeka's experiences be interpreted as a counterpoint to Corrigan's thesis, or should we see in the structures of the school a power to 'colonise' her forms of mentality? The whole thrust of Corrigan's rhetoric carries the implication that

Ripeka's ambitions and her effective determination to succeed at school were the product of a colonised mind willing to accept an illegitimate form of individual mobility at the cost of abandoning all sentiment and solidarity with her class of origin. One might have thought academics, whose own offspring do extremely well out of this competitive system, to be among the last people to deliver a moral argument of this sort without blushing for shame, but the conclusion that such advancement, such a struggle for success by working class young people, is barely excusable cannot be mistaken. Even the functionalist thesis that a certain degree of working class success is necessary to ensure acceptance of the 'myth' of equal opportunity of education carries a dismissive tone. It seems that the issue must be pressed: is it really helpful, educationally or politically, to adopt this stance? How, to insist on this point, should a teacher who has fully accepted the Corrigan thesis (and they number not a few) be expected to respond when faced with a student who has made the cultural choices made by Ripeka? This young woman's decision to accept the bargain extended by the school was rationally and honestly formed, within social structures not of her making, and the ambivalent rhetoric of class betrayal detectable in Corrigan's thesis should be recognised and rejected. And all this can be said in defence of realism (and Ripeka) without denying that schools are, indeed, informed by a 'ruling ecology', the more so in the current context of competition, which would stand no little modification.

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# Youth Control: Young People and the Politics of Hip Hop Graffiti in Aotearoa/New Zealand

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***Abstract***

A number of youth cultures struggle to negotiate the...of contemporary capitalist societies, struggles which highlight the vulnerable positions which various youth identities hold in societies such as Aotearoa. This paper examines the case of youth who are members of Aotearoa's hip hop graffiti subculture and explores the various techniques which the state uses both to eradicate hip hop graffiti texts and to punish and reform the producers of these texts. The involvement of moral entrepreneurs, the media and city councils, is discussed to reveal how hip hop graffiti writers are being subjected to forms of governmentality which are being employed in other social settings.

## Introduction: youth in trouble again

'The denunciation of the young is a necessary part of the hygiene of older people and greatly assists the circulation of the blood'. So commented Logan Pearsall Smith in his essay *Last Words* (1933). The media in Aotearoa/New Zealand seem to hold such a view regarding youth. It appears that youth can do nothing right. They smoke to excess, drink to excess, drag race cars (Taylor, 1997:C3) and write hip hop graffiti everywhere. Surveys, reports and research studies all

seem to have come to similar conclusions - our youth are losing control of themselves. Examining such claims more critically, however, poses the question of how much of such evidence is actually an indication of youth problems, or a demonising of youth activity (Giroux, 1996:72). Such speculation has led one Australian cultural theorist to begin a recent book with the question: 'Is there a backlash against young people and the way they think?' (Davis, 1997:vii).

High rates of youth suicide in Aotearoa/New Zealand are a clear indication that young people are today under considerable pressure and stress. Likewise, high rates of depression among young people around the world highlight the point that many youth are struggling to negotiate daily life (Wurtzel, 1994:299). The question remains, however, of how much media coverage concerned with youth deviance such as drinking and smoking (as well as tagging, which will soon be discussed), is an accurate indication of youth problems, or is in fact a means by which some of the activities of youth are socially constructed as being deviant because they are antithetical to perceived social norms.

In this paper I shall examine the case of tagging, the production of hip hop graffiti texts in the cities and towns of Aotearoa/New Zealand and the response to this predominantly youthful activity by the state. Mortification over the sight of graffitied surfaces in Aotearoa/New Zealand is not recent. In the 1880s the visitor James Inglis wrote home about the spectacular sights of the Pink and White Terraces before they were destroyed, but raged at the presence of graffiti on them (Bell, 1996:37). In this paper I shall outline the ways in which the Manukau City Council seeks to deal with tagging,

and evaluate its success in these endeavours. I will examine how the methods which this organisation uses can be mapped against theory which explores recent modes of social organisation which focus at the level of the community. How the media is implicated as a further factor in tagging and its control will also be examined. As we shall see, the media can both aid and hinder the work which city councils do in their attempts to eradicate tag texts from the cityscape.


*Figure 1:*
*Tags from Mt. Albert, Auckland.*
*This group of tags includes the well known*
*Auckland taggers TUFAT and SMACK*
Photograph by Andrew P. Lynch

## Hip hop graffiti

Hip hop graffiti and tagging are subgenres of graffiti which originated in the urban centres of New York and Philadelphia in the 1970s (Castleman, 1982; Atlanta and Alexander, 1989:157; Ferrell, 1996:6-11). It was originally produced on the sides of railway carriages in the subways of these cities but was soon appearing on walls throughout them (Feiner and Klein, 1982:47; Cooper and Sciorra, 1996:9). Hip hop graffiti is linked with hip hop culture, a set of counter-cultural practices including rap music, breakdancing and graffiti which emerged from American cities such as New York in the early 1970s, fuelled by rising degrees of inner city decay, poverty and unemployment (Hager, 1984:1-11). Hip hop culture is also heavily imbued with Afro-American consciousness and political struggle in the face of a history of racial discrimination and an acute lack of opportunities for Afro-Americans in the United States (Miller, 1993:33; Potter, 1995:7). Via a series of media channels such as music, magazines, music videos, film and art, both hip hop culture and hip hop graffiti were spread around the world and into disparate parts of the globe in the 1980s, eventually taking root throughout North America, Europe, and in Australia and New Zealand (Chalfant and Prigoff, 1987:7-12; Lynch, 1997a:38-42).

Hip hop graffiti involves the creation of three styles of graffiti texts, including pieces (short for masterpieces), throw-ups and tags (Cooper and Chalfant, 1984:66- 69). All forms of hip hop graffiti are renditions of the creators street name. All hip hop graffiti practitioners, who call themselves writers, select a name or 'tag' for themselves before they begin painting and all of their hip hop graffiti

texts will centre around the (re)production of this name (Smith, 1985:85; Ong, 1990:401). Pieces are large mural-style paintings which are produced in a variety of colours and which are often painted in a particular style. These often take many hours to produce and are considered a contribution to the appearance of the city by resident members of the hip hop graffiti subculture. Throw-ups are less complex texts which consist of an outline being painted onto a wall, the letters sometimes coloured in. Tags are single lined texts, produced within seconds and created in one colour only. Tags are the most numerous form of hip hop graffiti due to the speed with which they can be produced. The goal for hip hop graffiti writers is to spread their name around their city as often as is possible, so that their name 'sings', or stands out among the multitude of other names of fellow writers.

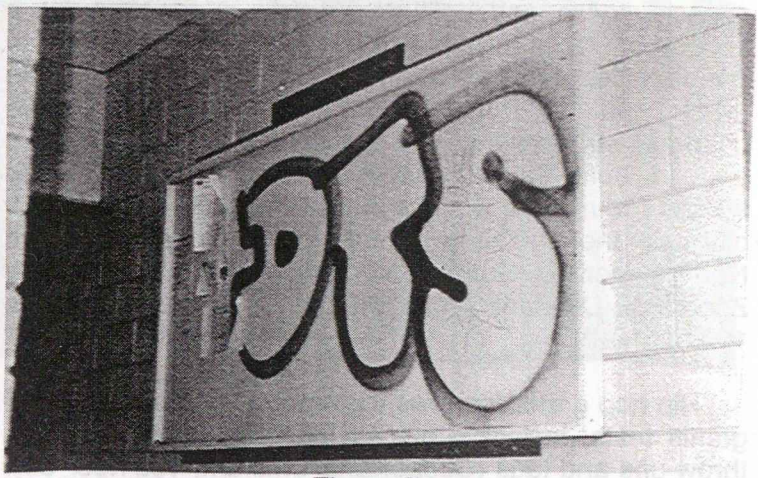

*Figure 2:*
*A throw-up by a member of the DTS crew, found in a now demolished factor in Newmarket, Auckland*
Photograph by Andrew P. Lynch

The writer who produces the most tags, or the most elaborate pieces, gains respect from others in the hip hop graffiti subculture and hence enjoys a high degree of status (Cf. Lachmann, 1988:236-237; Ferrell, 1995a:79).

## Governmentality and the politics of hip hop graffiti

Official responses to tagging reveal specific themes and practices in their attempts to deal with tagging as a social problem. These common themes include the focus on the community as the site at which tagging as a social issue is dealt with; a specific concept of the individual and the self, in this instance the 'tagger' and a focus on particular social groups and groups of individuals, referred to as 'at risk' groups (see Pavlich, 1996b). Recent literature on deviance and social control highlights an important shift in the mode by which governments in Western capitalist (and, one may add, patriarchal) societies are dealing with crime prevention and punishment. With the move away from a welfare state, countries such as Aotearoa/New Zealand have reconceptualised their approaches to crime and law and order, seeing these areas as being more cost effective and efficient if carried out at the level of the 'community':

> Community policing, community psychology, community justice, community corrections, community work, and so on, soon became entrenched 'realities' of everyday social relations. Advocates heralded an amorphous concept of 'community' as an arena where stability could be achieved and individual freedom enhanced (Pavlich, 1997:2).

As Pavlich, (1997:15) points out, an important aspect of new forms of government policy on law and order is to

encourage communities to 'own' their social problems (see also Pavlich, 1996a; 1996b). In this way communities will see themselves as having a direct relation to these issues, will be able to identify with them and will therefore feel more justified in their wish to act upon them. This is a factor which we see emerging clearly in city council policy documents and reports on graffiti and tagging control (see AJ Associates, 1997; *Graffiti Control Plan*, 1995; Robertson, 1995; *Waitakere Tag Free Zone,* 1996). Council policy on tagging strongly encourages members of respective communities to be actively involved in the cleaning up and prevention of tagging. This is achieved by providing tollfree hotlines so that people can report the occurrence of tag texts, and possibly even taggers in the process of writing, and the setting up of paint supplies so that people have the means to clean and paint their own property if it is tagged. City councils also encourage their residents to provide feedback regarding how effective the council's strategies against tagging are. As Pavlich points out, governance which focuses on the community seeks to implicate victims as 'governors' who have some responsibility in preventing and dealing with crime:

> the victim is charged with assuming a dual responsibility: that of reporting criminal activities (to amass reliable information for community crime profiles); and, for governing environments (including their homes, themselves, etc.) to reduce the number of 'situational' factors promoting crime (Pavlich, 1997:17).

Youth who are caught tagging are made to complete a set number of hours of 'community' work and service as part of their punishment (Cf. Ferrell, 1994:168). Here

we see deviance being situated at the level of the community. Taggers are viewed as members of communities, but are persons who have harmed their community by vandalising it. To reform them, they are given community work, where they help restore the community to what it was before they wrote transgressive texts onto its surfaces. In situating the crime and its punishment at the community level the state can reduce the costs of punishing and/or rehabilitating the offender:

> Such is the logic of back to basics, the level playing field and privatisation. Communities would thereby be rebuilt and the role of the state reduced, welfare cut and the community reasserted as the locus of nurture, reciprocity and care (Harington, 1997:21).

The community focus of tagging control strategies also employs methods which are used in other settings to augment communities and enhance their presentation. Murals produced by both taggers and paid artists are a popular and successful tactic in the control of tagging.[1] Murals, however, have been used in other ways by communities, for establishing tourist attractions in small towns (see Bell and Lyall, 1995), and for enhancing the appearance of neighbourhoods. 'In Katikati, for instance, murals depicting local settler history have been used to

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[1] Using murals to abate tagging and hip hop graffiti has been critiqued as a form of 'anti-graffiti graffiti'. (Kim, 1995). What is interesting about the use of murals and street art to control tagging is the way in which such texts have similarities with hip hop graffiti, such as being displayed in public spaces, yet are forms of 'official' text.

highlight the unique qualities of the town and draw tourists:

> The project is not so much about art, as about local identity. Most of the murals are copied from old photographs and show actual named people and places from the town's history (Bell, 1996:112).

Overall, placing the control of tagging at the community level is another example of how the state is proceeding down the road of a New Right agenda which seeks to cut spending, lower the rate of so-called dependency on welfare, and transform state bureaucracies into profit making and possibly saleable corporations. These policies are supported by ideologies of market freedom and individual choice (Carter, 1997:7; Pavlich, 1996:12).

## International graffiti control and the global war on hip hop graffiti

Anti-tagging strategies do not occur in Aotearoa/New Zealand alone. Like graffiti itself, graffiti control methods have a historical and contemporary context of their own. Tagging control agencies often conceptualise their approach to tagging using a military metaphor, and see the work they do as a 'war on tagging' (and unofficial texts more generally) (see also Ferrell, 1995b:280). Not surprisingly, this military metaphor for tagging control can be traced to New York in the 1970s. When Mayor Lindsay of New York targeted hip hop graffiti as a social problem in the mid-1970s, he did so claiming that he was

engaging in a war on graffiti.[2] New York officials employed a range of methods to deal with the problem, including heavier policing, advanced cleaning technology and workshops for writers. As tagging and graffiti art spread around the world, so did these methods for dealing with the texts. As we shall see by examining the Manukau City Council's response to tagging, these methods and strategies, sometimes in varied form, are still used today.

Like taggers, graffiti control personnel make good use of the internet to stay up to date with the latest information concerning how best to deal with tagging (eg, Scanes, 1997; *Anti-Graffiti Page*, 1997; Philadelphia Anti-Graffiti Network, Inc, 1997). In Australia, conferences have been held to explore how tagging can be better controlled at a national level (*Dealing With Graffiti*, 1997), and some councils in Aotearoa/New Zealand have drawn on plans and methods fine tuned by Perth's local government (*Report of the Working Party on Graffiti*, 1993). Staff at the Sydney City Council have informed me that they are in the process of revitalising their approach to the control of tagging. That Sydney will host the Olympic Games in 2000 may have had some influence on this decision. Furthermore, anti-tagging

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[2] It is interesting to note that Lindsay began his anti-graffiti campaign after losing the nomination for the Presidential elections in 1971 and 1972. As Mailer (1974) points out, his loss was partly caused by the sudden eruption of graffiti onto New York's subways, and fears that the phenomenon would become a nationwide social problem. Lindsay would never become President, but graffiti art and tagging did eventually spread from coast to coast. See Mailer, *et al.* (1974).

personnel make use of research publications which outline effective methods for the removal and prevention of tagging and related acts of vandalism (see Geason and Wilson, 1990; Whitford, 1992).

Ferrell (1996) and Brewer and Miller (1990) have explored anti-tagging campaigns in Denver and Seattle respectively. Their findings mirror the situation found with Auckland's control of tagging, with the priviso that in these American cities tagging is controlled throughout the entire city by one central council, rather than by different councils in disparate parts of the city, as is the case with Auckland. Like Auckland city councils the councils of Denver and Seattle also see tagging as an indicator of the unravelling of society's moral fibre, and network with other cities to achieve its eradication. Overall, this characteristic of information sharing and a common consciousness of tagging as a social problem constitutes an international response to a global subculture and textual strategy.

## The frontlines: the Manukau City Council and the war on hip hop graffiti

Four city councils in Auckland, including Auckland City Council, Waitakere City Council, Manukau City Council and North Shore City Council, have graffiti control strategies for the control of tagging and each of these organisations has allocated a specific amount of money to aid them in reducing the amount of tagging in their respective regions. Three of them hire full time or half time staff and one, Auckland City, is in the process of revising its graffiti control strategies. These organisations assist one another in their anti-tagging campaigns and meet regularly to strategise and evaluate their work.

Each of them also works with their local police centres, with whom they swap information and seek assistance.[3] Below I will outline how one of these organisations, Manukau City Council, seeks to control and prevent tagging, and briefly evaluate the success which it has had.

The Manukau City Council employs a full time Graffiti Control Co-ordinator, as well as an education officer, to help reduce the instances of tagging in the region and to prevent youth becoming involved in tagging by intercepting them at schools. Taggers who are caught writing their names in the region are often given diversion work to do and this, also known as community service work, is carried out daily and supervised by staff of the Manukau City Council and private sector contractors. The main strategy used by the Manukau

[3] It is the responsibility of the police to apprehend youth who are reported tagging. For the police, tagging constitutes something of a paradox, for the way in which it is a highly visual, but overall low priority crime. Tagging will most often come under the charge of wilful damage to property. Several problems arise, however, in the apprehending of taggers. First, a tagger can only be charged when he or she is seen tagging by a police officer, or confesses to tagging. Youth who are suspected of tagging cannot be charged with the offence merely because they *might* have been tagging. Secondly, police in large, metropolitan centres such as Auckland often find themselves increasingly over worked and under resourced, meaning that a less violent crime such as tagging may not merit great attention. Finally, Youth Aid police officers are kept busy dealing with more serious youth concerns such as suicide and violent offending, making tagging less of a priority over such issues.

City Council, a strategy which works in tandem with diversion work, is painting out tags as soon as they appear. This tactic is based on the theory that painting out a tagger's name will take away the writer's satisfaction of seeing his or her tag up around the city and therefore make tagging a pointless exercise (Wakefield, 1997:A14). A 24 hour telephone hotline has been set up so that members of the public can inform contractors and council maintenance staff of new instances of tagging. This war of attrition between the council and taggers is being played out on a stretch of the southern motorway which the council has won the contract of keeping tag free (Manukia, 1997:A7; *Manurewa Week*, 1997:4).

The Manukau City Council does not run creative art courses for prolific taggers, as does the Waitakere City Council in West Auckland. They have, however, spent over $25,000 on educating youth about the negative aspects of tagging, including a school resource kit with a video, which helps teachers steer their students away from tagging and into other avenues of expression. Graffiti control in the Manukau region has also focused on the painting of murals on buildings and structures which have been heavily and repeatedly tagged and this has proved to be a successful tactic according to staff. Murals are painted by artists employed to do the work, rather than having it done by taggers themselves, due to the belief that having taggers paint the murals might encourage them to continue creating graffiti. The Manukau City Council's campaign against tagging is a part of the council's beautification programme for the region. Staff informed me that this served a dual purpose in terms of tagging control, in that it involved the community in the cleaning up of tagging, and also

convinced taggers that it was not them specifically who were being targeted, but rather that tags were to be cleaned away and prohibited in the interests of the appearance and presentation of the region. As well as community service, the Manukau City Council has also provided job opportunities for some youths involved in diversion schemes, and is currently assessing the viability of graffiti art mural projects for taggers.

The paint out policy of the Manukau City Council appears to be very successful, especially on the stretch of southern motorway which they have been focusing on. However, it should be mentioned that south Auckland retains many heavily tagged areas, and it could be argued that eradicating tags from a few specific sites has moved the production of tags to other parts of the region. The Manukau City Council, however, has recently begun a restructuring programme which aims to shed staff and lower its financial costs. How such restructuring will effect the council's graffiti programme remains to be seen. Furthermore, the Manukau City Council does not carry out its anti-graffiti campaign in isolation from the influences of other social agencies which are also seeking to eradicate hip hop graffiti. Below I will outline how moral entrepreneurs and the media attempt to give credence to the work of anti-graffiti campaigns run by city councils.

## Moral entrepreneurs

As the Waitakere City Council's *Graffiti Control Plan* (1995) makes clear, tagging is perceived as being a social problem not only because it transgresses laws, but because it defaces the environment and conveys the

impression of social decay and insecurity.[4] This would then lead one to conclude that tagging does not upset people because a law has been broken, but rather because certain beliefs about how people should behave in society have been challenged. To get a better theoretical handle on this proposition, the work of Becker (1963) is useful. In *Outsiders*, Becker explores how laws and norms are created by institutions within a social context. He postulates that laws are put in place because certain individuals have a vested interest in their establishment. Becker outlines how certain individuals campaign in various ways to put laws in place so that behaviour which they perceive as being contrary to their interests or values may be curtailed, and refers to these people as moral entrepreneurs:

> A person with an interest to be served publicizes [*sic*] an infraction and action is taken; if no enterprising person appears, no action is taken (Becker, 1963:128).

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[4] The production of all forms of graffiti in Aoatearoa/New Zealand is an illegal activity, and is rendered illegal by a range of Acts and bylaws which seek to keep these unofficial texts from appearing on walls and buildings throughout the country. As tagging is a form of graffiti, these laws are also applicable to it, and city councils use these legal statutes as the foundations on which to develop and implement their graffiti and tagging control polices and strategies. Laws illegalising tagging include the Crimes Act (1961) and the Summary Offences Act (1981). The Crimes Act is usually enforced only when 'a more serious offence has been committed that endangers life and property' (Robertson, 1995:9).

Becker's point here is that laws are drafted and established only when a member of the public, or an interest group, pushes for legislation of a specific type to be put in place. Becker uses the example of the Marihuana Tax Act of 1937 in the United States as a case study of how laws are created in this way (see Becker, 1963:135-146).

Becker also explores how rules are created in the form of laws. According to him most rules are created so that certain values which people in a society may share can be protected and upheld. For example, laws regarding freedom of speech may be put in place because freedom of speech is a value which many people share. Similarly, laws are put in place to protect the freedom of the individual, another human value. However, as Becker goes on to illustrate, some values may conflict with other values, for instance when the freedom of the individual conflicts with the rights of other members of the society. In this case, laws will be put in place which attempt to work a compromise between both sets of values and the public good will usually be protected.

A number of moral entrepreneurs have presented themselves to call for the eradication of tag texts from Auckland's urban environment. These include bureaucrats who have a vested interest in keeping voters and business consortiums happy; companies which find themselves spending money on cleaning and removing tagging and members of the public who keep themselves busy by campaigning against this perceived legal and moral infraction. Members of national and regional bureaucracies have made public statements emphasising the need to place more resources into the

hands of those whose brief it is to control tagging:

> Graffiti-plagued towns and cities will remain under siege until taggers are made to clean up their own mess, says the Minister of Police, Jack Elder. ... The Mayor of Waitakere City, Bob Harvey, said his council was looking for new ways to eliminate the tags (Bingham, 1997a:A1).

Transit NZ is reported to be spending $100,000 dollars per year to remove tagging from street signs (*Manukau Courier*, 1997a:4). Auckland resident Ray Cody, founder of Grey Power, has launched a campaign to eradicate graffiti and has encouraged members of the public to contact the government about the issue (*Manukau Courier*, 1997c:10):

> [Ray] says surveillance needs to be stepped up to catch taggers; legislation needs to be introduced to make youths aged under 17 legally accountable for their actions, and authorities should impose an appropriate punishment such as cleaning toilets. Ray says taggers are a social menace costing companies such as Telecom and the Yellow Bus Company millions of dollars (Smith, 1997:A3).

The work of these moral entrepreneurs reflects the activities of their counterparts in other cities which have launched anti-graffiti campaigns, and reveal an agenda to push capitalist and conservative ideology in an effort to control a series of texts which threaten both financial profits and conservative moral beliefs.

As part of their campaigns, moral entrepreneurs are attempting to transform the rules, which they see transgressed into laws. A number of legal avenues have

been explored by such people to bring harsher legal penalties down on not only youth who tag, but also their families (Ebbett, 1996:1; Mulu, 1997a:1; Mulu, 1997b:1). These include stiffer fines, possible jail terms, and involving the parents of taggers in both clean ups and further financial costs:

> The parents of young taggers will be out on the streets painting over the graffiti left behind by their children if a Manukau City councillor has his way (Burge, 1996:A9).

As yet such legislation has remained unpopular and is considered over the top for those responsible for implementing it.

## The media

In 1997 the media had considerable input into discussions about tagging in Aotearoa/New Zealand. As we shall see below, these contributions have been on the whole superficial discussions which rework well entrenched thinking/ideas on tagging as an act of vandalism. In terms of tagging control, media articles have a two pronged effect. On the one hand, media coverage of tagging as a social problem aids tagging control organisations by legitimating their cause and advertising their 'good works'.[5] On the other hand, publishing images of tags and referring to some taggers

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[5] This is a factor that Ferrell (1996) finds in anti-graffiti campaigns in Denver, USA: 'anti-graffiti campaigners and the local media create moral panic by publicizing [*sic*] their concerns as concerns of the community as a whole' (Ferrell, 1996:134).

by name in articles can introduce more youth to tagging, and improve the status of a particular tagger.

## Creating an urban scourge: Newspapers and public opinion

In 1997 'graffiti' was the focus of a number of newspaper articles and editorials which sought to convince readers that tagging was a social problem which indicated a society slipping into chaos (for a selection of such articles see Bingham, 1997a; Bingham, 1997b; Brooker, 1997; Horwood, 1997b; Johnston, 1997; Manukia, 1997; Moore, 1997; *New Zealand Herald*, 1997a; Persson, 1997; Rae, 1997; Smith, 1997; Wakefield, 1997). Many of the articles where placed under the heading of 'Graffiti: the urban scourge', which revealed a naivety about the historical and contemporary contexts within which various subgenera of graffiti are located. The articles, mainly appearing in the *New Zealand Herald*, constituted a knee-jerk reaction to tagging and many focused on the aesthetic condemnation of tagging and its relation to other social problems associated with youth, deviance and crime (Alexander, 1997; Horwood, 1997a; Masters, 1997). The articles sparked a series of letters to the editor which picked up on many of the themes of the articles, some letters advocating harsh penalties for taggers while others denied that any tagging subculture existed (e.g. *New Zealand Herald*, 1997b; 1997c).

Reading these articles reveals their attempt to frame tagging as a deviant activity with little or no exploration of the people who produce these texts, or how the texts fit into a wider historical and contemporary context:

> Auckland is a pleasant place because it has many such visually pleasing aspects, panoramic and vignette. Sadly, it becomes increasingly stained by the nauseating ugliness of a massive outbreak of urban graffiti (*New Zealand Herald*, 1997a:A14).

The history of hip hop graffiti is altogether ignored, and the point that tags produced in Aotearoa/New Zealand are similar in style to those produced in other parts of the world is overlooked as a possible indicator that more may be responsible for the creation of tags than merely the destructive tendencies of misled youth:

> Catching the culprits, who usually work in the early hours of the morning, is not as easy as the nature of their crime - a mark as individual as a fingerprint - might indicate (Rae, 1997:A13).

Articles peppered with words such as 'culprits', 'crime' and even 'fingerprint' make no attempt to understand the nature of tagging, but instead reiterate gut level responses to the phenomenon.

As Hall *et al.* (1978) explain, media such as newspapers seek to frame events (such as tagging) in a way that does not conflict with how newspaper publishers presume their readers, the public, think and feel about specific social issues:

> in the formation of opinion, as in politics and economic life, it is conceded that there will be differences of outlook, disagreement, argument and opposition; but these are understood as taking place within a broader basic framework of agreement - 'the consensus' - to which everyone subscribes (Hall, *et al.* 1978:56).

Moreover, Hall *et al.* point out how newspapers not only locate their articles within this consensual field, but how they also present to readers what the issues of the day are, and how those issues are to be understood:

> the media's mapping of problematic events within the conventional understandings of the society is crucial in two ways. The media define for the majority of the population *what* significant events are taking place, but, also, they offer powerful interpretations of *how* to understand these events (Hall, *et al.* 1978:57).

The newspaper campaign against tagging can be read as such an effort to influence public opinion in the direction that tagging is nothing more than meaningless vandalism. By failing to look past the tag texts on the walls of cities and towns around Aotearoa/New Zealand, the articles merely reproduce the same tired explanations of who tags and why and offer no contextual knowledge or new perspectives which may help to explain tagging in more depth.

The influence of moral entrepreneurs in law and policy formation, alongside the media's attempt to incite a public outrage against tagging, has consequences at the community level where tagging is being dealt with by state organisations. In what follows I will outline two case studies, the first of which can be read as a trial by media where a 'tagger' subjectivity is created so that it may be punished, and the second of which reveals how state mechanisms seek to transform the tagger back into a law abiding member of the community.

## 1. Constructing the tagger as public enemy: the case of *Ratz*

In May of 1997 one of Auckland's highest profile writers, RATZ, was apprehended by police and charged with wilful damage (*Manukau Courier*, 1997b:5). RATZ's actual identity was revealed and the young man behind the name, Carl Allport, was sentenced to 200 hours of community service, time which was to be spent in the cleaning up of tags, many of which were his own (Boland, 1997:A1). More importantly, Allport was warned by Judge Simon Kockhart that if he was charged with tagging once again he would face a prison sentence. Allport, a 21 year old Pakeha male was reported as stating that tagging was for him an addiction and he made no promises to the court that he would not tag again (Boland and Smith, 1997:A1).

*Figure 3:*
*Tags by RATZ, EVOL and others near railway lines*
Photograph by Andrew P. Lynch

In July of 1997, the television programme *60 Minutes* (1997) screened a documentary entitled 'Ratz' which focused on Allport, his work as a tagger and writer and his sentence. Also included in the programme were the views of various individuals regarding Allport's acts of

tagging and tagging in general. What is of interest about this television text is the discursive themes which run through it concerning tagging as it is seen by the general public and the state. The segment was well rounded in regards to what it revealed about tagging and graffiti art, giving due space to the views of experienced writers on the possible causes of tagging in Auckland and Aotearoa/New Zealand. However, the segment was also heavily biased against taggers and writers and failed to express an adequate understanding of the issues at hand.[6]

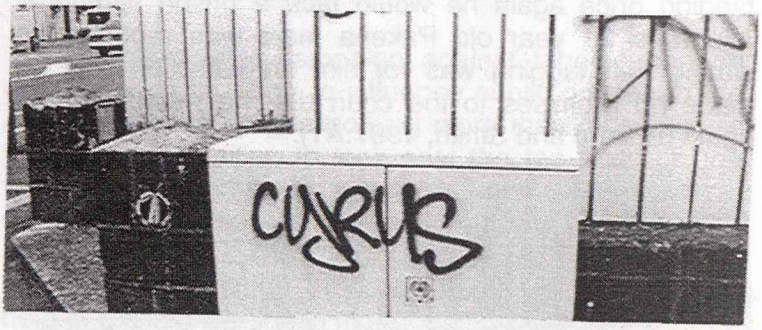


*Figure 4:*
*CYRUS. This tag has been placed on a recently repainted power box.*
Photograph by Andrew P. Lynch

[6] The bias which the *60 Minutes* segment exhibits is largely engendered into the text by its presenter, using an authoritative voice when speaking to Allport and framing tagging within the context of crime and deviance. The speakers which the presenter interviews throughout the segment retain objective positions on tagging, or are at least consistent with their views about tagging and other related social issues.

In the early sections of the programme a police officer outlines some of the possible strategies which can be used to rectify the behaviour of writers such as Allport. The officer claims that people such as Allport can be killed, jailed or educated in an attempt to redirect creative energies which have previously been used to tag. Obviously the police officer recommends the third tactic, that is, education as an act of prevention. It is interesting to note, however, that the idea of killing the likes of Allport is claimed to 'probably' not work, although many viewers would hopefully read this as a facetious statement. Later in the programme, a member of the public whose property Allport has tagged is introduced to Allport by the presenter of the documentary. The gentleman in question states on the programme that he would commit acts of violence against someone like Allport if he were to catch such a person tagging his property. These allusions to violence highlight interesting issues. Here we can see violence being proposed as an act of retribution against the tagger. First, the police officer and then the property owner claim that acts of violence committed against taggers will both punish them for their deeds and will also deter them from committing such acts of crime (textual violence) in the future. As a cross comparison we might note the store owner who says on the front page of the *New Zealand Herald* that 'I think they should cut his hands off' (Boland and Smith, 1997:A1), referring to Carl Allport.

## 2. Reforming the tagger: a case study of a convicted tagger

In this case study I will explore exactly how the range of measures examined earlier in this paper are applied in a study of how a prolific south Auckland tagger, ZAPA, was apprehended and exposed to the full measures

which the state could muster in its attempts to punish and reform a tagger.[7] As we have already seen above in regards to RATZ, cases such as these receive media attention so that they may serve as warnings to other would be taggers. Conversely, this media attention raises the profile of the tagger in question, making fame from tagging seem more idealistic than it may actually be.

According to ZAPA, he and other members of his 'crew' were apprehended one night by police when they were caught tagging in Onehunga. He claimed that their apprehension was the culmination of a series of unfortunate factors which led to their arrest. First, the crew were tagging in an area which they did not usually go to when tagging. Second, they had taken along a couple of acquaintances who were unaccustomed to tagging and who told the police what the boys where doing when questioned.

ZAPA admitted to being the author of his name and was charged with vandalism to the cost of $3000. For this he was given 200 hours of community service work to complete (Mulu, 1997a:1). A year later ZAPA was again apprehended for tagging, as well as petty theft, and appeared before the courts for his actions (Mulu, 1997b:1). Although police and other parties thought he should be given a short jail term for these offences, he was remanded on bail after intercessions from his lawyer

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[7] As well as utilising relevant articles, this section is based on interviews with ZAPA and staff at the Manukau City Council, and informal discussions with one of ZAPA's workmates and his employer. 'ZAPA's tag name, as well as his real name, have been changed to protect his identity.

and employer (*New Zealand Herald*, 1997d). ZAPA was told to complete his 200 hours of community service and was also enrolled in a youth camp which he had to attend every second weekend. ZAPA was told that if he appeared before the courts again on these charges he would be jailed. That he was not jailed on this occasion drew letters to the editor of south Auckland's local paper within a few days, claiming that the law was too soft on taggers (Taylor, 1997:6).

What this case study reveals is the use of a multifaceted range of measures to punish a tagger for an action which is defined as a crime. The tagger, who has been charged with writing texts in public spaces and on private property, is sent to court and threatened with a jail term, although in actual fact given a community service sentence. This threat of jail is used as a device which amplifies the gravity of the infraction in the mind of the tagger and others, so that tagging a wall carries similar repercussions as would assault or murder. Other taggers I have spoken to see through this device and maintain that tagging is a highly visual but harmless activity when compared with other acts of deviance. 'EDEN's friend CARP explains this to him one day when they are seen tagging and witnesses to their actions call the police:

> these guys were on the cellphone and I go 'They're on the cellphone', and he goes 'Look, man, seriously. It's Sunday evening, nobody's busy at this time, you know, there's rapes, there's murders, domestic violence. Who gives a shit man. I'm writing on a fucking freight canister' (EDEN)

Being sent to a youth camp is the state's attempt to

reform the tagger, and the community service work is designed to punish the tagger while making him or her reflect on the damage they have done. Getting taggers to paint out tags on the weekend constitutes an attempt to make tagging an unprofitable practice, where the penalty outweighs any pleasure derived from the act of writing. A possible jail sentence is a more radical step in this direction.

ZAPA no longer tags and has gone back to other interests such as sport and friends. He has a full time job and has completed his community service work. He says that his contact with staff at the Manukau City Council has been beneficial and now regards tagging as a juvenile activity carried out by people younger than he. To what degree the state has changed ZAPA's attitudes, or whether his new ideas about tagging are the result of his maturation, is difficult to gauge. What is evident, however, is that he was the subject of a range of punitive devices to make him cease writing the texts that he was writing.

## Conclusion

My father delights in telling me of his youth in the sixties, a time when he and his peers broke the rules. Although Aotearoa/New Zealand was a long way from the centres of the sixties youth revolution in Britain and the USA, music and film spread the essential ingredients of the movement so that young people from around the globe could join in. But as the film *Easy Rider* (1969) depicts, the response to the sixties youth revolution by the rest of society was one of confusion and fear, manifesting in violence. As can be seen by the state's response to hip hop graffiti in Aotearoa/New Zealand, a similar backlash

is evident with regard to the activities of youth in contemporary times. As I have articulated elsewhere, tagging is defined as an act of deviance due to the way in which it is perceived as being an act of semiotic violence (Lynch, 1997b). Apart from placing texts and signs on private property, tagging does not do any permanent damage to physical structures.

It could be said that many youth create texts such as hip hop graffiti not to be deviant, but rather to contribute to the production of signs in society, a production which many older members of society (e.g. writers, reporters, producers, directors, researchers, and so on) have ready access to. The political economy of text production, which reserves access to resources such as education and publishing for those who have the means or connections to use them, means that many youth feel powerless to contribute successfully to artistic and/or creative channels of communication. As Fornas, Lindberg and Sernhede (1995) point out with regard to rock music and youth:

> The more rapidly the world changes, the more the young feel unproductive and anonymous in their own modern environment and hence the stronger are the needs for creative pleasure. The creative, expressive and reflexive aspects of self-expansion respond to the increasing late modern needs for self-reflection and self-appreciation caused by changes in socialisation and in everyday life (Fornas *et al.*, 1995:254).

Such needs, along with limited access to the means of creative expression, may lead for many youth to 'an insecurity that has to be countered by ephemeral self-confirming experiences' (Fornas *et al.*, 1995:254), of

which tagging is a good example.

Furthermore, as Coupland (1995:11) and Davis (1997) highlight, many youth often find themselves caught up in situations where they are the subject of social mechanisms which seek to control their behaviour and/or demonise their leisure/pleasure activities:

> Younger people lack control over the way they appear in the media; they are represented, but aren't allowed to represent themselves. Similarly, at the level of policy-making, they are isolated from the machinery, acted on, but not allowed to act or set priorities. Reports on youth drug abuse, truancy and crime tend to obscure the fact of policy neglect, representing the problem as something to do with the internal machinations of youth culture (Davis, 1997:224-245).

With multifarious processes attempting to influence the behaviour of youth, including those outlined in this paper, it is no wonder that many youth will seek alternative, grass roots outlets through which to assert their own social space. As hip hop graffiti writers and taggers illustrate, the name and the tag seek to signify not deviance, but the presence of youth who are mature enough to decide for themselves that they wish to speak out with whatever means are available to them (Cf. Giroux, 1996:74-75).

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## REVIEWS

Ellen J. Dannin, 1997 **Working Free: the origins and impact of New Zealand's Employment Contracts Act.** Auckland University Press, Auckland

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One of the most important trade union struggles in New Zealand was over union opposition to the Employment Contracts Bill in 1991. Founded on free market principles, the Bill provided for a change from state regulated industrial relations to a voluntarist system of bargaining calculated to undermine unions, although unions were not mentioned in it! Once it became law the Employment Contracts Act 1991 (ECA) gave more power to employers and less to workers. Workers became largely unprotected with the number covered by unions halved in the new deregulated labour market. This has proved an attractive model internationally to many governments so the New Zealand experiment has had far reaching consequences.

Ellen Bannin's book on the passage of this momentous legislation is the most comprehensive account to date. She documents what the subtitle claims — the origins and impact of the ECA — in meticulous detail, drawing on a wide range of sources many of them previously unpublished. Her thorough research is evident in the number of endnotes to chapters, which run to over a hundred in some chapters. The book is the key resource book on the topic of the ECA on the basis of this information alone. However, the reader is not submerged under the minutiae of detail because Dannin attempts to

balance this with a continuing sense of the wider social significance of events. She reviews the different groups active around the issue of individual contracts, the impact of the Act on them and broader society, including its influence overseas. She covers the history of New Zealand's labour law, with the emphasis on recent changes and the role of the juridical labour institutions in interpreting the new legislation.

The ECA was part of a package of other social legislation. Dannin points to how the new National government was quick to lower benefits which they saw as too high in relation to wages. Welfare Minister Jenny Shipley said this reduction would encourage workers to 'compete for work opportunities'. What the government did not admit was that the conditions of high unemployment and increased competition for work that the benefit cuts were calculated to encourage 'would give most employers more power in bargaining with individual workers' (Dannin, 1997:245).

Dannin is professor at the California Western School of Law and one of the strengths of the book may be her outsider's perspective — her succinct yet lucid explanations of the background to protagonists and events that may be assumed by a New Zealand writer not to need elaboration. She investigates the role of the Business Roundtable (BRT) and the Employers' Federation in promoting the legislation, extending and updating the policies and activities of these key business groups and government officials, brought out in Pat Walsh's (Walsh, 1992) earlier essay. I thought her potted history of the BRT as an integral part of this explanation was particularly useful and not just for readers unfamiliar with this organisation. She does the same with her coverage of

some key unions. The brief accounts of their histories and structures made their activities comprehensible, particularly when she contrasts the different unions' policies and tactics in opposing the Bill. Again, when she examines the parliamentary stages of the bill, she draws on Margaret Wilson's (Wilson, 1992) clear description of the nature of New Zealand unicameral parliamentary system with the concentration of power in the executive, to provide the necessary understanding of the Parliamentary context.

She notes the way individuals like Rob Campbell and Francis Wevers used their union backgrounds to press the employers' advantages and refers to the fact that BRT leader Roger Kerr was former deputy head of Treasury. This information contributes to the overview of supporters of the legislation.

She is critical of the ECA and its interpretation by the specialist courts. The early decisions of the Employment Court and the Employment Tribunal, particularly those over choice of bargaining representatives and lockouts, entrenched employer power. More recent decisions have moved away from this position, reducing what Dannin sees as absolute control by employers. However, the reaction from the BRT and the government to this shift has been propose amendments to the ECA which would abolish the specialist institutions and enact what Gordon Anderson terms an 'employment at will' regime. This would effectively destroy whatever bargaining power and employment security workers have continued to enjoy since 1991 (Anderson, 1996). Dannin argues against this proposal and for legal protection for unions, suggesting shrewdly that the law should protect workers just as there is legal protection for corporations. She makes some nice points on how employers undermine their own principles.

The Employers' Federation proclaimed 'sanctity of contract' yet were among ECA supporters who objected to the court ruling that employers had to stick to the bargains that they had made and not press the court to change employment terms unilaterally.

Although s.57 of the Employment Contracts Act prevents duress in procuring employment contracts, Dannin argues that by not including economic duress under this provision, economic coercion is a core part of the way the Act effects workers and is conveniently overlooked.

But what Dannin overlooks herself are the larger economic imperatives behind the Act. She begins chapter six on 'Drafting and Introducing the Employment Contracts Bill' by acknowledging that the economy was in 'desperate trouble' with a high balance of payment deficit and foreign debt 'but what was of immediate interest to most people were [high] mortgage and loan interest rates and [high numbers of] jobless...with no sign of improvement'. She links such economic factors to the effects of Rogernomics, rather than as contributing causes to new market policies of Rogernomics (Dannin, 1997:88). Later, she sees the recent upturn in the New Zealand economy as tied to an improved international economy, not in improvements brought about by the ECA. These points are not plausible because she does not explain how international economic factors effect New Zealand, particularly the pressures from the global economy for the domestic economy to adapt to it, nor the specific circumstances here where meagre conditions for accumulation forced local capital to expand internationally to sustain profitability.

By skirting over macro-economic factors Dannin is reduced to explaining the ECA as an ideological tool, but not why a particular ideology gained ascendancy. This view that the Act was 'ideologically driven' goes along with the prevailing social democratic orthodoxy on state reform in New Zealand, argued by Bruce Jesson (Jesson, 1989) and Jane Kelsey (Kelsey, 1993). Their line is that the ideology emanated from 'nasties' in Treasury and the government fixated with ideas which have an existence largely independent of material interests. Elsewhere (Bakker, 1996, Bedggood, 1996, and Roper, 1997) restructuring is seen as an outcome of economic conditions which forced enterprises to undermine wages and working conditions in order to retain profitability in an increasingly competitive internationalised economy. Ideology develops to justify these processes.

Dannin claims that the ECA is 'naively doctrinaire' and 'so bound by ideology as to be unworkable'. What will work for her is treating workers as partners in the workplace through legal protection for unions. She claims that effective labour laws reflect democratic ideals, revealing her belief that capitalism can work for mutual advantage, to balance the interests of employers and workers. She argues strongly for the benefits for employers in a secure stable labour market where unions are protected. She fits neatly into Tom Bramble's continuum of the role of unions as either unitarist, pluralist or radical/Marxist (Bramble, 1997) as a pluralist because her idealistic position rests on an assumption of a pluralist society, where the tensions between capital and labour can be contained by institutional forms when in reality deregulation and restructuring have changed the character of institutions and exacerbated antagonisms that cannot be resolved within current structures.

Dannin says that the ECA treats workers and employers as equals and this ignores the ways law and society support employers and guarantees inequality (Dannin, 1997:309). Yet merely by changing the law, she sees the interests of capital and labour converging. Her book argues the case against one law, the ECA, but her reliance on legal change as the solution to unequal work relations is problematic, even in her own terms. When Dannin looks at pre-ECA conditions 'New Zealand labour law was one of the most protective of unions and unionisation in the world' (Dannin, 1997:6) she suggests this did not create an ideal environment for unions. She questions whether the high density of union membership represented union strength and suggests that within this legal system there was a 'deep malaise' expressed through passive unionism and ritualised negotiations. Certainly, she needs to spell out how to achieve legal protection for unions without the union complacency this framework apparently fostered in the past.

More importantly, she needs to go beyond legal and political rights for work relations and extend her recognition that formal equality in these spheres does not mean real equality. When Dannin advocates that unions should be fighting unions, that 'union success depends on union activism' (Dannin, 1995:155) she is acknowledging that the ability and proclivity of unions to vigorously contest employers is central to good unionism. I think she is naïve to suggest that conflict can be resolved through common interest as this disregards the way economic inequality is inbuilt into capitalism. The limitations of her analysis can be overcome by using a Marxist explanation that shows how exploitation at the point of production is the source of profit.

Despite the tendency for concession bargaining after the ECA she celebrates the gains of more militant unions and the fact that 'not all workers were supine in the face of superior power' (Dannin, 1997:309). But I think with her fallback to a pluralist position, she equivocates on her portrayal of active unions. This is evident when the narrative in her book is compared with an earlier essay covering much the same ground, where she contrasts passive and active unionism more incisively than in her book (Dannin, 1995). For example, when she describes the Manufacturing and Construction Workers' Union (MCWU) as 'confrontational' in her book, this label does not carry the positive connotations it does in the essay where she puts this militancy in the context of a union valuing internal democracy, with members controlling the union. The rearrangement of points and the omission of her point on internal democracy gives a negative slant to 'confrontational' in the book. These comments are part of a comparison of the tactics of MCWU towards the ECB with those of the Engineers' Union, which was seen by MCWU and the Seafarers' Union as a business union accommodating to the Bill and later the Act. This criticism was also directed at the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (CTU) because their strategy was tied closely to the engineers. Dannin claims that although this criticism is correct, it actually contributed to the problem of CTU inaction, because the sniping manner of the criticism was divisive and 'may have forced them to take even less action than they might otherwise have, solely so they could maintain their relationship of being on different sides of all issues' (Dannin, 1995:87). This view is not convincing because she does not provide any evidence for it, or indication of why she has reached it, or even how polite criticism may have changed events. She holds back on her point on the importance of active unionism when she makes the differences between union strategies sound like

deliberate posturing rather than principled stands on a survival issue for unions. And she lets the CTU off the hook.

Her account of the CTU role over the Bill varies which also blunts the potency of her point on the tension between union activists and passive union officials. The relevant section in her essay begins with criticism of the CTU 'vacillation'; the CTU did not take the lead and split the opposition to the Bill in the union movement. Her other points flow on from this criticism. In her book, the equivalent chapter makes the same point about vacillation, but it is buried in the middle of detail of events and seems like an aside rather than the defining aspect of the CTU approach. In this respect the book is a watered down version of the earlier essay. Dannin does show clearly in her book that the CTU was timid, taking its cue from public opinion polls in January 1991 which showed that the public had little awareness of the ECA and what opinion existed supported the government claim that the legislation would boost productivity. This poll was conducted before the campaign of opposition to the Bill was underway. Although the campaign caused a massive swing in public opinion against the Bill, the CTU did not adapt to this and change its strategy, and delegates voted against a general strike. Dannin should draw out the static nature of the CTU's approach through its inability to take account of the dynamic of events and its lack of confidence in its own ability, and other peoples', to effect change and transform society.

Even what Dannin terms 'vacillation' gives the CTU an alibi for what I argue was their deliberate policy on the Bill. This is evident in the *National Business Review's* coverage of the CTU's week of action at the beginning of April 1991.

The *NBR* clearly identified the differences between the CTU's token opposition response and a worker response that had the potential to escalate into a mass mobilisation and disrupt the economy. The *NBR* headline on page one on April 2 ran 'Protest week could trigger wildcat strikes'. The story related proposed union action over the bill, and contrasted CTU and rank and file concerns, 'the week of action [is] the centrepiece of the CTU's campaign against the Bill...they will only hold stop work meetings, rallies and marches in protest at the Bill [whereas] there are suggestions that rank and file concerns about the Bill could spill over into more serious strike action'. The story examines the possibilities for a serious strike in relation to actions across sectors involving several unions. Dannin records the popular protest as involving a sixth of the population, but does not weigh up the potential in this upsurge of rank and file protest against the reluctance of the CTU to make the action count.

Although Dannin refers to the CTU and the Engineers as playing a quasi-government role, this is brought out more sharply in her essay where she recounts that CTU President Ken Douglas 'found it demeaning to have to move from a statesmanlike partnership with government in which he helped determine policy to standing in the streets shouting, shut out of the locus of power' (Dannin, 1995:87). Her book does give a clue to Douglas' defeatist attitude, quoting him as resigned to the passage of the Bill as inevitable: 'the government has the machinery to ram the Bill through Parliament' (Dannin, 1997:149). But she never draws the logical conclusion from this behaviour, that union officials are subject to the pressures of incorporation while they work within the limits of capitalism

without challenging the system itself[1]. The CTU strategy was consistent with this as it worked to maintain its own position and secure concessions from government so that the Bill would be altered to accommodate a union role in the workplace. This occurred. The Bill was revised to guarantee authorised bargaining agents access to workplaces to negotiate contracts and check relevant wage and time records. They were also able to become parties to contracts by agreement.

Dannin (Dannin, 1997:153) notes that the Bill was changed to protect unions but she does not make any connection between the reluctance of the CTU to take a lead in protesting against the government's Bill, and the government concession to protect unions. The limitations of her analysis have important political consequences, particularly with the government's plan to revise the ECA and current CTU policy towards this revision which accepts the framework of the Act.

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[1] I make this point in a 1993 essay, and it is also made by Bramble, 1997 and Roper, 1996.

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Middleton, S. and May, H., 1997 **Teachers Talk Teaching 1915-1995; Early Childhood, Schools and Teachers' Colleges.** Palmerston North, New Zealand, Dunmore Press, 379p. NZ$49.95

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*Teachers Talk Teaching 1915-1995; Early Childhood, Schools and Teachers' Colleges* is a welcome addition to the growth in qualitative research in education and in particular, the advent of studies in which the teacher takes central focus, not as the object of research, but as the subject. Such studies provide opportunities for teachers' stories and voices to be heard. In this book Sue Middleton and Helen May use life history interviews with 150 teachers and educators from across all sectors of education, and over a time span of 80 years, from 1915-1995 to examine how teachers develop their professional knowledge to create their own educational theory.

For too long the ordinary teacher has been, as Elbaz points out, 'the silent subject who has not always been given a position as subject in our discourse' (Elbaz, 1991:8). Middleton and May have aimed to provide a view from the 'bottom up' by 'charting the tides and currents of educational ideas as experienced and described by 150 teachers and former teachers' (p.10). These stories provide a useful insight into the everyday world of teachers and into information that has rarely been disclosed. They provide an alternative set of stories about teachers and teaching to counterbalance accounts derived from positions of power and policy makers.

This book uncovers not only teachers' experiences overlooked in accounts of the past, but also acknowledges the frequently overlooked existence of the early childhood sector within the education system. It serves to remind readers that teachers and teaching begins, not at the time of entry into primary school, but prior to this. Here Helen May continues her valued and ground breaking work to document the history of early childhood education in New Zealand and to ensure a true representation of all sectors within accounts of our educational past.

As I read through the book nearly thirty years of personal experiences of early childhood history unfolded, evoking recognition of shared experiences and reminders of forgotten events, people and debates. Playcentre in the 1970s, was for me, as for many women both then and since, an empowering organisation. The friendships, confidence and self awareness gained through my eight years' involvement in Playcentre provided a strong stepping stone into later tertiary study and teacher education. More recent memories of the lead into and eventual educational reforms of the 1980s and 1990s were recalled as I read the final chapter covering the political and social changes of the past decade. The attempts to address the inequalities within early childhood education through the development of an integrated system, the growing call of Maoridom for self determination, the expectations, (and subsequent disappointments) evoked with Education to be More, are all recounted. In short, embedded in these snapshots of historical events, I was able to find and relive significant aspects of my own history as a teacher.

In their cross-sector approach the authors show education to be a highly contested arena, one made up of

multiple theories and factions and intersected with broader political movements and interest groups. The chapter titles present an alluring glimpse into the controversial nature of education history. Titles such as 'Postwar Expansion: Possibilities and Constraints', 'Democracy and Equality, Protests, Diversity, Rights and Freedoms', 'Revolution and Reactions' clearly signpost many issues and debates which characterise the formation of New Zealand's education policies and practices.

This analysis provide the backdrop for the presentation of teachers' experiences of, and perspectives on, education over time. Middleton and May reject the assumption that teachers passively accept educational policy as presented to them by policy makers and teacher education. Rather they present a view of teachers as 'creative strategists whose theories-in-practice are products of their own agency' (p.10) within the constraints and opportunities available at the time in which they lived. Thus teachers' voices are placed within the broader social context in which their educational experiences and perspectives are formed.

This book has particular relevance for teacher education programmes concerned with the link between theory and practice and involved in helping student teachers construct individual theories of teaching and learning. The authors' use of examples of 'theories in action' in the everyday classroom and early childhood centre illustrate the dynamic process by which teachers' theories are built within prevailing educational, political or social concerns. These examples are described by Middleton as helping

> student teachers to deconstruct the educational and other possibilities of their own lives and to view themselves as active and creative educational theorists, who will not merely mimic what has gone before but creates new analgams of theories and concepts which they encounter in the course of their professional lives to create pedagogues and educational strategies which are their own (Middleton, 1995:3).

This book adds further insight to an evolving field of research centred around teacher's narratives and everyday experiences of teaching using life history techniques. But it is an ambitious book, which in attempting to provide snapshots of teachers' experiences, has yielded an uneven coverage of educational change. The interviewing of 150 teachers produced 3,000 pages of raw data, involving the authors in a process of selection, interpretation and analysis of material which, through necessity, served to accentuate some experiences and to cloak others. It is hoped that this book will encourage others to undertake similar research, to ensure the range of diversity of teachers' stories are studied and heard along with those of policy makers. Such work is crucial to ensure teachers' experiences of the everyday world of the classroom and the centre do not continue to remain private and largely unexamined, but are made visible and teachers' voices heard.

This book would be of interest to all teachers, aspiring teachers and those interested in education or 20th century New Zealand history. In particular teacher education programmes would be enriched through inclusion into study material educational narratives such as are contained in this book with their examples of 'theory in action'. These narratives would flesh out the more formal

theoretical and practical aspects of teacher education. I am confident that this book will be of interest to New Zealand teachers and educators, who, like myself, will find themselves critically reflecting on their 'taken for granted' educational beliefs and values, and on the constructed nature of educational theory.

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O'Brien, P. and Murray, R. (eds.), **Human Services: Towards Partnership and Support.** Palmerston North, New Zealand, Dunmore Press, 1997 NZ$49.95

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This collection of works, which emphasizes sociological and philosophical approaches to thinking about disability, contrasted to medical and charitable models, is said to be targeted to human services practitioners. It is, in my opinion, much more academic in nature than practical. It does fill a gap for graduate level disability studies in New

Zealand literature, however, as this collection introduces central debates within the field of disability support services, elaborates on the current theories and illustrates with New Zealand examples.

Though the book may not be suitable for an introductory human services course, nor suitable as a how-to book for those working in the field, it does provide an in-depth examination of policy and ethics issues surrounding human services in New Zealand and abroad. The book's divisions are logical: social implications of disability; philosophical implications of disability; service development; management and leadership issues and finally, quality of life, are the topics analyzed and discussed.

In Part One we are introduced to theories of disability which view disability as a social construction/creation, we are also given a clear description of the medical model to which opposition has given rise to the construction/ creation views. Also introduced in this section is a description of the current framework for disability services. Despite the fact that this is such a recent publication, the framework for services described is quickly becoming outdated as policy changes so rapidly: RHAs, for example, have already disappeared and been reformulated since the publication of this book. Included in Part One are stories of social oppression by services designed to be of help. The stories are powerful and summed up well in the statement by David Hughes, who writes of personal experience with disability services; 'control [held by agencies] doesn't make people independent, it makes them powerless' (p36).

Also included in the stories of oppression is a chapter discussing the dual oppression experienced by offenders with intellectual disability. This is an often overlooked issue within the field of disability and corrections/justice and it is pleasing to see it addressed so well by Colin Burgering, Chris Shepherd and David Falconer. The recommended strategies for assisting offenders with intellectual disability are services, which could benefit and assist in the rehabilitation of most offenders.

Part One contains reflections on culture and disability beginning with a chapter on The Deaf which elaborates on the meaning of culture. It is an excellent source for students and others who are working to grasp this concept of culture and disability. Maori, Pacific Island and Aboriginal Reflections are also contained in the text.

'Human Services: Creating or Alleviating Disability?', a chapter by Patricia O'Brien, provides a rare, critical analysis of human service systems designed to be used by professionals within the system to critique their own service. It is thought provoking and aptly describes the management model era of disability service provision that New Zealand, like much of the world, has entered. Other recently published texts from overseas on human services are descriptive rather than critical, making this edited collection unique in its field.

The final chapter of Part One is Pauline Boyle's description of an emancipatory research process within disability. It is a clearly written chapter, which explains well the complexities of blending research methods, using co-researchers and working towards empowerment for disabled individuals within an educational institution.

Part Two, 'Philosophical Implications of Disability' contains chapters which examine Social Role Valorisation, policy skills for human services and more consumer perspectives of human services. SRV is well described and defended. This is a long overdue chapter as this theory is often said to be embraced in New Zealand yet in reality its implementation is performed with 'a mere drizzle of commitment' (p.99). Lesley Chenoweth's contribution on policy within human services has already proved useful in my teaching this year, with her explanation of history, ideology and policy.

Personal stories in this segment of the book illuminate the realities of the dreadful impact of New Zealand and Australia's historical policies on disability, institutionalization and human services. Within these stories are very practical suggestions for those working in human services; exactly what we need in a textbook for those involved in disability service provision. More practical material would have been welcomed in this text, to complement and balance the theoretical discussions.

Service Development is the focus of Part Three. Within the chapters are pragmatic ideas for managing change and they are illustrated with single case research examples. This is what I need to use while teaching future service system managers: concrete, replicable examples of effective support system design. For example, Rod Astbury spells out the process of screening, matching and training carer's for an individual which includes:

- An information session for carer applicants aimed at achieving self-selection as well as providing information.
- Individual 'section interviews' to further select carer applicants, followed by:

- a values and attributes questionnaire to contribute to the selection of suitable carers;
- police and medical clearances of those selected as suitable;
- a matching process to determine compatibility with Bob;
- an induction programme with a high training component to ensure the carers are capable of carrying out their caring duties.

(p186-187).

Part Four reiterates the theme of support over dominance in service delivery. Teamwork within the multidisciplinary model is highlighted. Service evaluation, a growing and vital discipline, is addressed in a chapter by Angus Capie. Values based versus compliance approaches are emphasized. A brief history of New Zealand based service evaluation is also provided.

The fifth and final section of the book examines Quality of Life from various angles. Here it is made clear how difficult it is to quantify and measure a value laden concept. The separation of quality of life from quality of service providers fodder for discussion and debate. Abuse and challenging behaviours as well as quality of life and family issues are addressed. Rod Willis provides a perspective which expertly weaves personal and professional perspective of these issues. Finally, Canadians Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint conclude the book with a chapter introducing tools for change for people with disabilities, such as Circles of Support, MAPS (Making Action Plans) and Path (Planning Alternative Tomorrow's with Hope).

This edited collection is a combination of history, research and personal stories that reflect policy and

practice in New Zealand and overseas. There is an emphasis on intellectual impairment and the editors' intention could have been made clearer with a more focused title and theme. Very little information was provided regarding acquired disabilities and issues relating to disability rehabilitation as opposed to long term disability support issues.

Throughout the book the theme of support is consistent. As the author's intent is stated to be to assist those involved in disability support provision to examine their practices and perspective of disability the editor's have produced a superb tool for many. As stated at the beginning of the review, the text may be more academic than practical and the material may be most likely accessed by those studying at higher tertiary levels.

The study questions and discussion topics at the end of each chapter make it a good tool for use in a classroom situation. I have already used excerpts from this text in my teaching and have found it useful, though have found selective reading suitable for students who are yet learning to define, before they can critique human service support systems.

The contributors to this volume appear to be some of the best in the field and it is exciting that New Zealand has produced such a collection of research and essays in the area of theoretical and personal perspectives on disability and human services. The collection is unique in that it is critical and not just descriptive about the delivery of services to individuals with disabilities.

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Andrew D Trlin and Paul Spoonley (eds.), **New Zealand and International Migration: A Digest and Bibliography**

**Number 3.** Palmerston North, The Department of Sociology, Massey University, 1997, 181p. NZ$22.00 (+p&p)

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The 1997 volume is the third in a series and follows the format of the earlier ones published in 1980 and 1992: a series of essays followed by a select bibliography. As in earlier editions the digest comprises a lead essay on immigration policy and a series of essays on specific migration-related issues which have arisen since the publication of the previous volume. The digest comprises six essays on immigration policy (Andrew Trlin): arrivals and departures data (Richard Bedford and Jaqueline Lidgard); the adaptation and employment of East Asian migrants in New Zealand (Elsie Ho, Jaqueline Lidgard, Richard Bedford and Paul Spoonley); ethnic minority writing in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Nina Nola) and immigrants and language maintenance in New Zealand (Mary Roberts). The essays 'stand alone' and except for a brief comment in the introduction, no attempt is made by the editors to link them.

Trlin's essay is, as always, a succinct and excellent summary of developments in immigration policy. It deals with the major changes in legislation which occurred in 1991 and the amendments of 1995; outlines the outcomes of those changes; traces the partial transition from selective entry rules to promotional entry rules; outlines current debates over immigration and changes in the administration of immigration policy in 24 pages. As always the political and economic contexts of immigration policy

frame this discussion and make it a valuable contribution to the sociology of migration in New Zealand.

The Bedford/Lidgard essay shows how migration data between 1984/5 and 1995/6 years reflect policy shifts outlined in the preceding chapter. It outlines the revolution which has occurred in migration flows in the past five years and, in particular, the increasing significance of East Asian immigration. The inclusion of data from the earlier period is valuable since it both provides a historical context and makes the most recent trends more 'visible'. Discussion of the political and economic contexts of migrant flows also shape this discussion. It raises the important issues of whether the 'new' Asian immigration is socially and politically sustainable and whether it is useful to discuss immigration without recognising the significance of international restructuring of both industrial activities and labour markets. It is a valuable adjunct to the Trlin paper and 'sets the stage' for the following essay.

The Ho et. al. essay is an important contribution to a somewhat sparse literature on this important 'new' East Asian element in the New Zealand population. Using data from a survey of 440 adolescent immigrants, it provides insight into their educational, employment aspirations and future plans. It points to the fact that both external and internal factors determine where New Zealand-educated East Asian adolescents may choose to work and reminds us of the increasingly global nature of the labour market. It makes the important observation that the group's potential contribution may have been over-estimated initially, and has been further limited by the absence of pre and post-migration settlement policies on the part of New Zealand. The essay also notes that this absence of policy is consistent with market led policies which assume that the

market has some mystical power to solve all problems in the best interests of all!

The Nola paper, draws from a PhD thesis on multicultural writing in Aotearoa, is the 'first major exploration of those writers of fiction who articulate an identity alien to the dominant Anglo-Celtic norm of New Zealand' but which, ironically, excludes Maori and Pacific Island authors. It outlines some of the history and themes in the somewhat sparse offerings of these 'other voices'; asks why particular groups, notably 'Asian' authors, are absent and seeks to explain this by reference to the stultifying effects of the assimilation ethos which has prevailed until relatively recently and to cultural and economic factors which may have discouraged immigrants from writing their stories. She suggests that a transformation of the Creative New Zealand policy, additional funding and a more receptive cultural environment emerging, one has to be less than optimistic about increased funding or a shift in creative New Zealand policy.

The Roberts paper, after a very brief discussion of the history of language maintenance in immigrant populations in New Zealand, focuses on language maintenance and shifts in the Cantonese, Gujurati, Dutch and Samoan communities using data collected by linguists at Victoria University in the past decade. The essay outlines various forms of language maintenance activity in each and the consequences of participation for fluency. Somewhat different evidence for each of the groups makes for a somewhat uneven coverage of the respective groups. I found the argument beyond this comparative material somewhat disjointed which was disappointing since the role of language maintenance in identity maintenance is

clearly extremely important in shaping a 'nation's character'. One significant irony is established in the article but left unresolved. How does one encourage and assist migrant language speakers, who are either confident that their language will survive or are unconcerned about their demise, to affirm these languages and cultures? While the desirability of these projects is clear, the prospects of attracting funding for such language promotion projects in a market-driven policy arena is almost zero.

The bibliographical section of the book, compiled by Andrew Trlin and Diane Barnard, is immensely valuable because its methodology is clearly outlined; because it concentrates on material which is likely to be of most use to academic users and is selective; it draws on the content of both major periodicals and other series which are not as widely known and because of a proven and comprehensive cross-referencing system. This volume lists 893 items published since the last volume and includes some which were inadvertently omitted from the previous volume.

The subject index also gives an instant snapshot of the recent research profiles of different subjects and groups. I think it is unfortunate that the compilers considered it unnecessary to search the theses catalogues on this occasion. I noted that a number of theses were apparently not identified by the new search strategy and, given the importance of theses as sources of original local research, this decision was unfortunate.

The volume as a whole then is a useful, and relatively inexpensive, site for the presentation of a series of analytical and discursive essays on a range of contemporary issues in migration. It has the additional

value of continuity with previous volumes in certain thematic areas. Andrew Trlin's three essays, for instance, are arguably the most complete collection of articles on recent New Zealand immigration policy available. The volume is a valuable addition to the academic discussion of migration and, along with the earlier volumes, is an essential item in any collection on immigration.

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Brennan, C.M. **Max Weber on Power and Social Stratification - An Interpretation and Critique** Aldershot UK and Brookfield Vermont U.S.A., Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997, Hardback 324p. 42.50stirling.

*Reviewed by John Rex*
*Department of Sociology*
*University of Warwick*

This is a book by an Irish author based upon a doctoral dissertation for the Australian National University, the work for which was financially supported by a grant from Massey University in New Zealand. It would be a great pity however if it did not obtain a wide international readership amongst sociological theorists. In this reviewer's opinion it is one of the very best recent studies of Max Weber.

A foreword by Frank Parkin asserts boldly that the subject of sociology has and should have an unusually narrow intellectual base in the work of Marx, Weber and Durkheim and that, with the collapse of politically situated Marxism, the work of Weber who dealt with the main issues raised by Marx has become central. Too much of the recent scholarly work on Weber, however, has

concentrated on him as a historical figure without looking at the crucial epistemological issues and the theory of action in his writing.

Brennan's account of Weber's epistemology draws primarily on the *Methodological Essays* published in English in 1951 rather than on the introductory chapter of *Economy and Society*. These indicate clearly Weber's Kantian view that we can never know social reality as it actually is but that we construct it in terms of categories and concepts chosen because of their 'relevance for value'. All those who talk about society make such constructions, including Weber himself, but he is also concerned to dissociate himself from these values in order to provide an account, which is 'value free'. He does this through the concepts of action and interaction which he develops. I have not read any account of these problems as complex and subtle as that which Brennan offers, both in terms of Weber's historical position as one seeking to illuminate all social structures in their relation to a modern rationalised capitalist world and as someone developing a more abstract and universal notion of action and interaction.

Brennan sees Weber as having an individualist bias and considers Habermas' attempt to transcend it through a notion of shared consensual goals amongst actors as a departure from Weber. For her, social action is limited not by such shared goals but by the clash with the goals of other actors, this clash often being resolved by the imposition of the goals of the first actor on others despite their resistance.

There are also several sections in this book which deal with the American appropriation, or misappropriation, of

Weber both through the influential essay by Davis and Moore and in the more complex theoretical account of Parsons in his theory and revised theory of stratification. These, one hopes, will lead American sociologists to a new understanding of their own limitations when they claim to be introducing a Weberian dimension in their research.

Brennan's title indicates that her main concern is precisely with stratification and power. Hence her main chapters are on class, status and party. This involves her in discussion of a range of European authors who have argued about these questions. At the same time these chapters deal with different historical types of society in which class and power were less important than status, while the final one deals with the whole question of plebiscatory democracy and the problems of controlling bureaucracy faced by classes which are themselves in conflict with one another. On this last question Brennan's sensitivity to the underlying problems of Weber's treatment of action may provide the basis for a more adequate evaluation of the work of writers like Mommsen.

What is much more contentious in the book is Brennan's argument that rational purposive action is a strategy only available to the powerful and that other actors are seen by Weber simply as means to their ends. These others are not seen as acting but rather as doing what they are told. It is this view of social structures which Brennan sees as informing all Weber's work whether on stratification, domination, bureaucracy or political democracy. Brennan believes that Weber himself accepted the inevitability of this situation and that his political views were therefore necessarily anti-utopian and pessimistic. I take her to be critical of Weber on this

central question. Many Weberians will see her as basically anti-Weber. What she does not discuss sufficiently is the possibility that other actors may be seen as fighting back and not merely resisting but seeking to deploy sanctions to impose their goals against resistance. Perhaps Weber could be seen as providing a basis for conflict theory even if his own realism led him to assume that the powerful would impose their will.

There is so much wonderful critical theorising in this book that one should not ask for even more, but my hope is that Brennan will be forced to go on to deal with some other important questions in the interpretation of Weber. Central here would be a look at the differences between the epistemology and theory of action in the *Methodological Essays* and those in the introduction to *Economy and Society*. It is interesting that the names of Simmel and Dilthey, not to mention Durkheim, do not appear in the index; nor do the topics of *verstehen* or 'hermeneutic'. Surely these questions must be faced in an account of Weber which makes epistemological issues so central.

To say this, however, is not to underrate what Brennan has done. Starting out myself inclined to resist her anti-Weber critique I found it very convincing. I think her book is a *tour de force* based upon sophisticated and sensitive scholarship, and one, which deserves wide international recognition.

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# A NEW BOOK ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

## New Zealand and International Migration A Digest and Bibliography, Number 3

**Editors**
***Andrew D. Trlin** and **Paul Spoonly***

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