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REVIEWS

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'The Poverty of Employability: Women, Work and Restructuring'

Maureen Baker
Department of Sociology
University of Auckland

Abstract

This paper examines the discourse of recent employability initiatives as it applies to low-income mothers in liberal welfare states. Although these new programmes have been portrayed as opportunities for dependants to exit from welfare and poverty, the reality for low-income mothers is that paid work marginalizes their unpaid domestic labour yet does not always improve their take-home incomes. Furthermore, these employability programmes can be expensive for governments because they must involve skills training and child care services when clients are mothers with young children. The assumptions behind employability programmes are examined and the implicit gender biases inherent within them are identified. This paper argues that new social programmes which assume that paid work is the best way to exit from poverty are based on misleading assumptions and need to be re-examined, especially when their clients are low-income mothers.

Introduction

In the 1990s, a mother living on social benefits faces vastly different work expectations and approaches to government benefits depending on where she lives (Baker and Tippin, 1999). The Canadian province of Alberta considers such a mother to be 'employable'

when her youngest child is six months old, and several other Canadian provinces have recently reduced the youngest child's age from six years to two (Freiler and Cerny, 1998:67). State governments in the United States are even more determined to move 'welfare mums' into paid employment. Wisconsin, for example, expects these mothers to enter paid employment when their youngest child is three months old (Morris, 1999:9).

The New Zealand government has already reduced the age of the youngest child from sixteen to fourteen in this decade, but in 1998 attempted unsuccessfully to require beneficiary mothers to enter the workforce part-time when their youngest child is between seven and fourteen years old. The age still remains at fourteen although there is increasing pressure to lower this age further. In Australia and the United Kingdom, mothers on benefits are still not required to find paid work until their youngest child is sixteen years old (although Tony Blair's new Welfare-to Work programme may eventually change that). Despite the different expectations, these countries have all recently restructured the state along neoliberal lines, to create less state involvement in the economy and labour force, lower taxes and government expenditures, and less generous social programmes.

These programme changes have coincided with several sociological and demographic trends. Since the 1980s, marriage has become less stable and birth outside marriage more socially acceptable in most industrialised countries, and more mothers are attempting to support themselves and their children without a male breadwinner (Baker, 1995). Structural and cyclical unemployment rates have increased and have stubbornly resisted attempts at reduction.

Unemployment, underemployment and marriage dissolution have all reduced incomes, augmenting the need for income security programmes. At the same time, more politicians and taxpayers are becoming concerned about the 'high' cost of the welfare state and its inability to sustain itself with an aging population, high unemployment, and the growing globalisation of labour markets (Baker and Tippin, 1999).

The political consensus that supported the post-war development of social benefits began to fracture in the 1980s, especially in 'liberal' welfare states that focus mainly on means-tested benefits (Esping-Andersen, 1990). Powerful conservative lobby groups have pressured governments in countries such as New Zealand and Canada to reduce social programme costs, to lower marginal tax rates, and to eliminate public debt. Governments have reacted differently to this pressure, but all liberal welfare states have tightened benefit eligibility and created 'employability initiatives' to encourage or coerce beneficiaries to upgrade employment skills and find paid work (Baker and Tippin, 1999). New justifications have been created to 'sell' these initiatives to the public, including arguments about lack of public money for social programmes but also suggestions of the moral superiority of paid work over other activities.

This paper discusses the political justifications and discourse of recent employability initiatives in liberal welfare states, and the implications of this restructuring for low-income mothers in New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. These countries have been categorized as 'liberal' welfare states because, in comparison with 'social

democratic' countries in Northern Europe and the 'corporatist' western European nations, they tend to focus on relatively ungenerous means-tested benefits rather than universal benefits or social insurance. They also share some similarities in cultural and legal backgrounds (except French Canada), yet their social programmes differ substantially (which is beyond the scope of this paper but is more fully elaborated in Castles and Pierson (1995) and Baker and Tippin (1999)). These countries have also shared policy options in the past and continue to do so. For example, the New Zealand Social Security Act (1938) and the British Beveridge Report (1943) influenced social security in the British colonies (Baker, 1995; Briar, 1997; Cheyne, O'Brien and Belgrave, 1997). In recent years, the liberal welfare states have looked to New Zealand for ideas about the goods and services tax (GST), to Australia and United States (especially Wisconsin) for child support enforcement measures, and to United States (Wisconsin) and Germany for ideas about training and employability programmes.

Dependency and Social Assistance

The neoliberal discourse of restructuring emphasises the economic need to cut public spending in order to reduce direct taxation. Low taxes are thought to improve the survival chances of businesses in a competitive and global market and therefore to increase general prosperity and private-sector job creation. Social spending is (falsely) seen as the major component of public spending, and concern is expressed about rising costs and the fact that social spending has remained high even in periods of lower unemployment (Jones, 1997). Unfortunately, discussing the validity of these

claims is beyond the scope of this paper.

Neo-liberals refer to the percentage of people drawing on social benefits as 'dependency' and always consider it too high. Figures vary among the liberal welfare states, but the percentage of lone mothers on social assistance in the mid-1990s was about 94% in Australia, 89% in New Zealand, and 44% in Canada (Baker and Tippin, 1999). High rates of welfare dependency are viewed as costly to governments, but are also considered to be an indication of a malfunctioning welfare state that discourages able-bodied people from working and becoming self-sufficient. No mention is made of the fact that some beneficiaries (such as women on the Domestic Purposes Benefit) are performing socially useful but unpaid work such as childcare or community service, or that labour markets increasingly are becoming polarised, squeezing out certain categories of workers. In Canada, for example, part-time employment grew during the recessions of the early 1980s and 1990s, and barely declined in the recovery periods following these recessions. In 1998, 18.7% of all workers had part-time hours compared to 12.5% in 1976. Furthermore, by the mid-1990s, almost one third of part-time workers were classified by Statistics Canada as 'involuntary part-timers' (Torjman and Battle, 1999:7).

The discourse of dependency is highly ideological. First, it deals with only 'welfare' dependency and ignores all other forms (such as business people relying on tax concessions or start-up funds and husbands dependent of their wives' unpaid work). Although the concept of 'welfare' has been used in the social policy literature to refer to means-tested benefits, the discourse sometimes

includes universal programmes such as NZ National Superannuation or the former family allowances in Australia and New Zealand (Jones, 1996, 1997).

The discourse also tends to be gender neutral and ignores matters of race and culture; implying that all able-bodied people should be working for pay, are available to enter the labour force, and are able to become self-supporting once they find a paid job. The rational unemployed person is assumed to be motivated by money and the desire to become self-sufficient. No recognition is made of the interdependence of people in relationships or within communities, of racial discrimination, or barriers to geographic mobility.

Neo-liberals tend to blame beneficiaries for their economic circumstances, sometimes arguing that they lack motivation, education, skills, work discipline, or employment experience (McAll et al, 1995). Consequently, new policy initiatives in the liberal welfare states have focused on how to motivate or coerce people to enter or return to the labour force. Working for pay is considered to be 'activity'. Most people are encouraged to enter the labour force and to stay there as long as possible, with the introduction of the concept 'active aging'. Consequently, governments spend considerable amounts of time and money measuring 'inactivity' or the length of time on benefits, the time between 'welfare spells', and rate of 'recidivism' (Dooley, 1995).

The neoliberal notion of dependency carries considerable ideological weight and has been a powerful theme of political mobilization. Especially in societies with strong individualistic cultures such as the United

States and now New Zealand, the language of dependency and personal responsibility provides much of the organizing logic and discourse surrounding welfare reform. We can see this clearly in the Code of Social and Family Responsibility proposed in New Zealand in 1998, and in Canadian reforms to social assistance from 1996 to 1998 (Baker and Tippin, 1999). It is even more obvious in the US *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act* of 1996, which limits welfare benefits to a maximum of five years and requires adults to work or accept job training after two years of welfare. The legislation also expects teen mothers to reside with their parents and stay in school in order to receive benefits, and offers no additional funds for children born to mothers on benefits (Hardina, 1997).

The language of dependency makes a distinction between entitlement and charity, and who is deserving and undeserving (Gordon, 1994). It presents social issues as individual and moral concerns, marginalizes those who are so labelled, and places them under more intense forms of state surveillance and control (Fraser and Gordon, 1994; Brodie, 1996; Higgins, 1998). Within this ideological framework, interdependence, community, and social solidarity are downplayed (Leonard, 1997).

Conservatives in many countries, however, hold contradictory values about the employability for mothers. They expect middle-class mothers to care for their children at home but support legislation forcing beneficiary mothers to enter the workforce (Piven, 1990; Millar, 1996). Lone mothers on benefits are especially seen as a social problem, a drain on the economy, a social underclass, and poor role models for their children

(Duncan and Edwards, 1996). Dependence is acceptable when middle-class wives rely on male breadwinners or when husbands depend on their wives for personal care or childcare. Dependence on social assistance by the poor, however, is definitely unacceptable (Cass, 1994; Fraser and Gordon, 1994).

Within neoliberal discourse, 'independence' is associated with wage labour, male breadwinners, and the family wage, and coexists with imagery stressing social autonomy, self-actualization and control over one's destiny (Leonard, 1997). In contrast, 'dependence' is associated with receiving income support from the state. No distinction is made between interdependence related to the provision of care for fellow human beings and dependence which is related to unjust social conditions (Fraser and Gordon, 1994). Neo-liberals often argue that paid work and unpaid care are both socially acceptable; the difference is that unpaid care is a family or 'private' matter that should not require supplemental financial support by the state (Baker and Tippin, 1999). Yet the distinction they make between what is private and what is public is considered by feminists to be a false one, and one that has allowed governments to provide little support for childrearing and child protection (Ursel 1992; Baker, 1995).

The encouragement and glorification of paid labour represents a shift in dominant political and popular discourse since the 1970s, when governments began to provide more generous income support for lone mothers. Yet liberal welfare states always focused on paid work for men. Now, all citizens are viewed as customers, clients and consumers, and unpaid work such as caring for children or persons with disabilities is presented as

less legitimate or socially useful (Goetz, 1994; McAll et al, 1995). The elevation of paid work into an ideal to which both men and women should aspire also represents a transition from a model of social policy based on the male breadwinner family to a more gender-neutral (or gender-blind) one that focuses on the individual earner. This in itself could be emancipatory for women, except that gendered work inside the home has changed little over the decades and more mothers are expected to work for pay while retaining their caring roles (Statistics NZ, 1993; Baker, 1995; Bittman and Pixley, 1997). Furthermore, countries such as New Zealand have not provided statutory maternity benefits, affordable childcare, leave for family responsibilities, or pay equity, which means that many women are disadvantaged in the job market (Baker and Tippin, 1999).

Solutions to high rates of 'welfare dependency' vary, but they usually include better enforcement of paternal child support after divorce, targeting social services and benefits to low-income families, and initiatives to encourage beneficiaries into paid employment. Social assistance is increasingly conditional on community service, paid work, or enrolment in employability programmes (Shragge, 1997). For both men and women, 'work' is now defined primarily as paid employment, and is becoming a focal point and central criterion of modern forms of citizenship (Cass, 1994).

Employability Programmes: Assumptions and Effectiveness

Employability initiatives combine well with the neoliberal vision of a greater role for private markets in social decision-making, reduced expectations of state

assistance, and increased individual responsibility for well-being (Jenson and Phillips, 1996). These programmes have been classified as compulsory ('workfare') if they require people to work or train in return for their full benefit, or voluntary if they offer beneficiaries training and job-search facilities but do not penalise them if they fail to participate.

Workfare programmes were prevalent in the United States before World War Two but reappeared early in the 1980s (Hardina, 1997). These programmes are often considered to be punitive with moral overtones and mixed results, and research on their effectiveness has concluded that they fail to make a substantial impact upon participants' standard of living, do not develop useful work skills, and do not help job-ready individuals (Gueron, 1995; Shragge, 1997). Furthermore, the effects on poverty or welfare dependency have also been limited (Nightingale, Smith and Haveman, 1994). Most recent US studies also show that compulsory employability programmes involving little job training offer limited success in improving the quality of jobs that participants are able to find (Torjman, 1996).

US research also indicates that when jobs are scarce, workfare programmes help create a pool of cheap labour and marginalized workers who displace existing employees (ibid). Furthermore, workfare programmes tend to place people in jobs that do not permit them to escape from the welfare system because these programmes necessarily involve low-skilled poorly paid work with few long-term prospects, performed by people with few skills (Hardina, 1997). Self-respect cannot be increased if the job leads nowhere and mandatory work cannot give people more control over

their lives (Jacobs, 1995; Briar, 1998). Forcing low-income mothers off social benefits and into low-paid work can also increase 'child poverty' (Freiler, 1996) which has been a policy priority in Canada and Australia.

Lone mothers receiving benefits have been portrayed as an urgent social problem in the United States (Hardina, 1997). Their presence and numbers were used to justify mandatory work for beneficiaries with young children, limits on benefits for any additional children born into a family on welfare, and the elimination of benefits for teen mothers (Goertzel and Cosby, 1997). Although the most prevalent components of US workfare are job readiness programmes (such as interviewing skills and resumé writing), there is no empirical evidence that education, job training, job search or workfare programmes are effective in putting people in jobs that help them leave the welfare system (Hardina, 1997). Most jobs obtained by former welfare recipients are temporary positions with low wages and these positions do not allow mothers to move off welfare permanently (Evans, 1995; Shragge, 1997). Nevertheless, these programmes have influenced welfare reforms in New Zealand, Canada and Britain because they are seen as cost-effective, especially for youth and male beneficiaries.

Baker (1996) has argued that mother's poverty rates are not necessarily influenced by whether or not they are considered to be 'employable'. Some countries (such as the Netherlands and Australia) have encouraged women to care for their children at home for extended periods, while others (such as Sweden and the United States) except women to enter the workforce as soon as possible after childbirth. These are two different models

model one can find jurisdictions that provide high levels of public support and others where social provision is minimal. Poverty rates differ substantially between Australia and the Netherlands, as they do between Sweden and the United States. For example, after taxes and government transfers, 63% of single parents in the US, 56% in Australia, and 48% in Canada have low incomes (defined as below 50% of the nation's median income adjusted for family size), compared to 24% in the Netherlands and 3% in Sweden (Baker, 1996).

These cross-national figures indicate that family poverty rates can be reduced by social programmes, such as generous and comprehensive cash transfers and tax concessions for families with children (Wennemo, 1994; Baker, 1995; Cauthier, 1996). Poverty can also be lowered by high wages, statutory employment benefits such as pay equity, parental benefits, and leave for family responsibilities, as well as by subsidizing child care and providing public health insurance and unemployment benefits. Pushing everyone into paid work without support services and legislative protection, however, can be detrimental to mothers and their children (Briar, 1997; Baker and Tippin, 1999).

A focus on enhancing the employability of beneficiaries would make good policy sense in a thriving economy creating many new jobs with living wages, with low unemployment rates, extensive public childcare, preventive social services, and minimal wage inequalities between men and women (Baker, 1996). Yet these conditions are not currently present in any of the countries we are discussing. In Canada, for example, there were 400,000 job vacancies in 1997and 1,400,000

there were 400,000 job vacancies in 1997and 1,400,000 unemployed (Torjman and Battle, 1999:14).

1. Motivation and the Exit from Welfare

Employability schemes often assume that lack of motivation is the primary factor preventing beneficiaries from entering the workforce, yet researchers in several countries have noted that remaining on social benefits may be more rational than accepting paid work for some categories of beneficiaries. For example, a longitudinal study based on intensive interviews in four US cities has shown that neither social assistance nor low-wage work provided sufficient funds to meet the subsistence needs of low-income mothers and their children (Edin and Lein, 1996). These mothers made ends meet through survival strategies that included unreported income from side jobs, illegal underground activities such as selling of sex and drugs, and loans and exchanges from their social networks. These strategies, however, did not necessarily help them to move into the legitimate workforce.

When low-income mothers accepted low-wage work, it often cost them more than they received for social assistance, as extra costs for childcare, transportation, clothes and food outweighed the advantages of accepting a job. Moreover, employment reduced opportunities to share childcare with neighbours or exchange other services, placing them at a disadvantage within their personal networks. Furthermore, the paid jobs available to these mothers usually devalued their previous life experiences as care providers and household managers, failed to offer sick leave or paid vacation, and provided unstable income (Edin and Lein, 1996).

Canadian studies (Gorlick and Pomfret 1993; Lero and Brockman, 1993) indicate the importance of social support, especially the encouragement and assistance of female friends, in influencing economic survival and welfare exit strategies. Although most low-income mothers wanted to come financially independent and find paid work, some were unable or unprepared to do so immediately. Two-thirds of these lone mothers with children under thirteen could not accept a job immediately because they were studying to improve their qualifications, they felt obligated to care for their child at home, or they had difficulty finding or paying for childcare.

These studies suggest that expecting low-income mothers to accept paid work is often complicated and risky, and may result in a net financial loss of them and their families. Yet policymakers and politicians do not always acknowledge these complications, as they call into question the insecurity and low pay of available jobs, the shortage of training positions to allow workers to move to better positions, the psychic damage caused by dead-end and low-paid work, the lack of child support paid by some non-resident fathers, and the inaccessibility of affordable and high-quality childcare (Baker and Tippin, 1999).

2. Is Paid Work the Best Route Out of Welfare

Employability discourse assumes that paid employment is the best route out of welfare and will reduce individual and family poverty. Yet a recent review of the evidence in the United Kingdom suggests that getting a job does not necessarily guarantee an escape from or even a major alleviation of poverty (Webb, Kemp and Millar, 1996). Labour-market models that make this assumption

contain a male bias. For low-income mothers, getting a job involves additional work-related expenses that swallow a larger portion of after-tax income for low-wage workers than for higher-wage workers (Pearce, 1990).

The assumption that paid work will reduce poverty ignores current trends in labour markets in which many new jobs are temporary or low-paid, and in which low-wage work does not necessarily lead to better jobs with higher wages (Lochhead, 1997). In a competitive and low-wage labour market, women with family responsibilities and limited mobility are disadvantaged compared to other employees. OECD figures indicate that 34% of women workers in Canada, 31% in the UK, 21% in NZ, 18% in Australia are in 'low paid jobs', defined as two-thirds of the median wage for full-time employment (Freiler and Cerny, 1998). Furthermore, a recent multi-country study (Hunsley, 1997) concludes that unless lone mothers can earn an above-average income, they are better off receiving social assistance. The women in Hunsley's interviews reported that marriage to a male wage earner, not paid employment, was a more effective way for women to improve their economic status (p. 91). Yet other research indicates that husbands do not always share their income equitably with their wives (Pahl, 1989; Fleming, 1997).

Local economies are being restructured and integrated into global requirements. The service sector has grown, but labour markets in the English-speaking countries are creating more 'bad jobs', or temporary and part-time positions with low pay and few employment benefits, than 'good jobs' with high wages and statutory or union protection (Armstrong, 1996; Boyd, 1997; Larner, 1997). Employability schemes such as the one

now in place in the United Kingdom ('Welfare-to-Work') can be negated by a 'revolving door labour market' in which employees are shuffled between temporary dead-end jobs and spells on government benefits. In fact, a recent British study found that two-thirds of participants in employability schemes end up back on social benefit within nine months (Denny and Elliot, 1997).

Employability advocates assume that the labour market will be amenable to the needs of job-seekers, yet these schemes tend to idealize or misrepresent the realities of job markets (Nightingale, Smith and Haveman, 1994; Briar, 1997). There is no evidence that the market can provide either a sufficient number of jobs for those that need them or adequate wages, especially for candidates of employability programmes who tend to be among the most socially marginalised. Furthermore, the expectation that cash-strapped community organizations will train and employ welfare recipients without additional government resources is also unrealistic. This suggests that community wage or other employability programmes are a new mechanism for managing marginalisation and enforcing social control rather than fully integrating beneficiaries into the workforce (Lord, 1994; Deniger et al, 1995; Lightman, 1997).

3. What is 'Good Mothering' and 'Responsible Behaviour'?

Employability programmes contain implicit assumptions about the composition of families, the nature of family dynamics, and what constitutes 'good mothering' and 'responsible family behaviour' (Millar, 1996:185). While opinions vary within nations about what is acceptable, dominant views are embodied in policy. These include

gender-appropriate work and how it is to be supported by government, and the changing demand for women to participate in the labour market. In countries such as the UK, Australia and New Zealand, with strong histories of male breadwinners and female caregivers, it has been increasingly acceptable for mothers with school-aged children to be employed part-time. Full-time employment, however, is still thought to interfere with childrearing and homemaking responsibilities (Millar, 1996). Nevertheless, the New Zealand government announced changes in 1998 to their benefit rules in order to encourage greater employability among beneficiaries, including low-income mother whose children are between seven and fourteen years old. Yet opposition within government and from community groups prevented the changes pertaining to Domestic Purposes beneficiaries from being implemented (Baker and Tippin, 1999).

The identities of mothers on benefits are frequently tied to the traditional idea that women can be 'good mothers' only when they remain in the home to care for their family. Although liberal welfare states accepted this idea in the past, government support for mothering at home is shrinking. Indeed, in countries such as Canada and the US, childcare is considered to be 'work' only when it is done outside families (Baker, 1996). Yet the low value placed on caring negatively affects the identities of homemaker mothers.

Employability programmes are now portraying mothers on benefit (along with other unemployed people) as burdens on the taxpayer and the state, and are encouraging these mothers to be seen and to define themselves as potential workers who must support themselves and their children (Brodie, 1996b). Once

women are defined as employable individuals and not solely as mothers, they become 'welfare dependants' if they remain at home, in need of 'training' to become 'productive' societal members. In contrast, employed mothers are encouraged to see themselves as making a valid societal contribution regardless of their jobs.

Identity is related to social circumstances, is shaped by thought, discourse and practice. People have multiple identities that can be contradictory and transitory but do not necessarily make sense to outsiders. Employability programmes ask low-income mothers to juggle multiple identities, as they often must deal with emotional and physical responsibilities which many men do not have to shoulder by virtue of their lesser involvement in domestic chores (Larner, 1997). Transforming identities is assumed to be something that can be accomplished if one has the will and aptitude to do it, yet this assumption overlooks the fact that many of these mothers have limited job skills and employment experience, and lack confidence. In addition, the full-time job market is becoming more competitive in most OECD countries, and lone mothers with young children are sometimes seen as 'high risk' employees.

In nations such as Australia and New Zealand, political rhetoric emphasises giving women the choice to enter the labour force or care for their children at home (Baker and Tippin, 1999). Yet what choices do mothers really have to combine paid and unpaid work, and what support will their decisions receive from their governments, community, and social networks? Without effective employment equity programmes, leave for family responsibilities, and affordable childcare, the existing inequalities of power and opportunity between

mothers and fathers, as well as parents and non-parents, are augmented. Employability programmes give little consideration to family needs or mothers' views and values. If mothers receive income support, governments tend to ignore the importance that raising their own children at home might have for women's sense of self-worth (Deniger et al, 1995). Low-income mothers are objects for policy, increasingly required to behave in ways dictated by governments.

Conclusion

Social programmes are often based on misrepresentations of family or personal life (Baker, 1990; Eichler, 1997). When they assume that women are men's dependents or base eligibility upon labour force participation, then women without male partners and women without employment are at a structural disadvantage (Lewis, 1993). New employability initiatives, unlike earlier programmes based on the male breadwinner family, tend to assume that all beneficiaries are autonomous wage earners capable of self support, who make rational economic choices to maximize their income. Yet research suggests that people make choices based on many different factors in their lives, and not solely the pursuit of money. Furthermore, the outcomes of employability programmes vary by age, gender, family status, and work experience.

The neo-liberal view of the 'modernization' of social provision focuses too much on economic motivation and paid work, and contains misrepresentations about the daily life experiences of women and men, the nature of family life, and current labour markets. People entitled to and accepting government benefits are viewed as

'dependants' who are unwilling to work, but many are already working hard to raise their children and to support their communities.

An alternative view, arising from an understanding of the gendered division of paid and unpaid labour, would question why low-income mothers – whether partnered or not – can seldom support themselves and their children without government assistance. The answer would lead back to difficult historical questions:

1. Why are there so many jobs that do not pay a living wage?

2. Why are childbearing and caring granted a lower social value than paid work?

3. Why do inequalities exist between the wages of men and women?

4. Why do we undervalue work that is performed by women?

5. Why do women form the bulk of the part-time workforce? and

6. Why do gender disparities remain virtually unaltered in household labour despite the influx of mothers into the labour force? (Baker, 1996).

Employability initiatives have been portrayed as opportunities for dependants to exit from welfare and poverty. Yet low-income mothers are one category of beneficiaries who have revealed the poverty of employability programmes. These mothers may have been out of paid work for years and need a change in self-identity, updated job training, and subsidized

childcare to enter and remain employed. When they find work, wages must be high enough to support themselves and their children while allowing them to pay for childcare, and statutory leave must be available for family responsibilities. For these reasons, employability programmes targeted at mothers have been expensive for governments and have not always improved women's economic situation.

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What it Means to be a 'New Zealander': Issues Arising from a Question on Ethnicity

Ann Dupuis
School of Sociology and Women's Studies,
Massey University

David Hughes
Department of Education
University of Canterbury

Hugh Lauder
Education Department
University of Bath, UK.

Rob Strathdee
Department of Education
University of Canterbury.

Abstract

For social science researchers questions on ethnicity are highly problematic in both their formulation and analysis. This paper describes the rationale behind the formulation of, responses to, and problems in coding, the ethnicity question in the Smithfield Project, a large scale New Zealand educational research project funded by the Ministry of Education. In particular it focuses on the 20% of responses in which respondent's self definition was 'New Zealander' or occasionally 'Kiwi'. Follow up research examining the meaning of the term 'New Zealander' brought to the fore two very different issues. The first, a methodological issue concerns the way questions on ethnicity are posed. The second is the inherently political nature of the term's usage, which in this paper is highlighted through an analysis of the range

of meanings encompassed by the term, from superficially benign to outright racist.

Introduction

Over the last three decades the concept of ethnicity has been adopted broadly by social scientists in their attempts to 'categorise experience according to sameness and difference' (Howard, 1990:259). A useful working definition of the concept is provided by Spoonley who describes ethnicity as 'essentially an identity that reflects the cultural experiences and feelings of a particular group'. Elaborating on this definition, Spoonley claims that '[f]or an ethnic group to exist, there need to be cultural practices or beliefs that define it as different from other groups in society'. These are listed as 'particular kin structures, diet, religious beliefs, rituals, language, dress, economic activities or political affiliation to the group' (Spoonley, 1993:36-37). Using Smith's definition of an ethnic community Pearson (1989:61) adds the dimensions of a common myth of descent, a shared history and an association with a specific territory. While current understandings and definitions of ethnicity are the subject of much debate, it is generally recognised that as a conceptual tool ethnicity has to do with cultural experiences and identity, is complex and dynamic in nature, and rather than being externally imposed on an individual or group is self defined.

Self identification of ethnicity is not however, a matter of simple personal preference, but rather, as Bell (1996:145-146) claims, 'choices of ethnic identity are inherently political and tell us much about individuals' and groups' values and orientations towards the issues related to cultural politics'. Ethnic identity claims

therefore, need to be seen as particular positions within the political context of specific societies.

A major theme then of this paper is the political nature of claims of ethnicity. This was not a theme however, that the authors set out to explore, but rather one that emerged as we worked through one specific component of a large scale, New Zealand educational research project: The Smithfield Project. To set the background for this paper and to better link the theme of the political nature of claims of ethnicity to The Smithfield Project, a brief description of the Project is in order. The Smithfield Project was a longitudinal educational research project, established to study the impact of government reforms on education in New Zealand. The Project was divided into three time phases that spanned the years 1992 to 1998 which corresponded to the progress of a cohort of school students as they moved from their final two years at elementary school and on to their high school education. The first phase of the research focussed on the creation of educational markets in New Zealand and the consequences of such markets for parental choice of secondary education (hence the somewhat tongue in cheek title given to the Project). Phases Two and Three examined the impact of choice regimes on school effectiveness. [1]

It was during Phase One that our interest in the question of ethnicity arose. We were concerned at this time with collecting baseline data for the intended longitudinal study and establishing the cohort of students

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[1] A full analysis of the research and conclusions regarding educational markets can be found in Lauder, Hughes *et al.* (1999)

for the researchers to study over time. The first step in contacting a group of possible student participants was to send out a letter explaining the nature of the research to approximately 4,400 parents/caregivers of Form I students in two cities and one rural centre in New Zealand, requesting permission for their child's involvement in the Project and, if granted, their co-operation in filling out an accompanying questionnaire. One of the questions included in the questionnaire was intended as a measure of the family's ethnicity. It was this question and the issues surrounding its wording and analysis that provided the catalyst for the material presented here.[2]

The remainder of this paper tracks the development of our concern with issues of ethnic identification. It moves from the initial stage of question formulation, underpinned as it was by our understandings of the difficulties involved in operationalising the concept of ethnicity, and our awareness that other New Zealand educational research had treated the issue inadequately, through to the more reflective consideration of the issue we started with in this paper, ethnic self identification.

The Measurement of Ethnicity

Before we embark on our discussion of the measurement of ethnicity it is necessary to recognise a commonly made, albeit problematic distinction between ethnicity and 'race',[3] as it was our understandings of this

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[2] For a detailed report on the baseline data gathered during Phase One see Waslander *et al.* (1994)

[3] Following Miles and Phizacklea (1984) and others who are critical of the use of the word 'race', we also indicate our unease with the word by putting it in quotation marks.

distinction that provided the rationale for framing the ethnicity question in the Smithfield questionnaire. The distinction between the concepts of 'race' and ethnicity recognises that 'race' is a 'social product or construction that has a common sense meaning ... [and its] once accepted scientific status is now rejected by the biological sciences as inappropriate when classifying human groupings' (Spoonley, Macpherson, Pearson and Sedgwick, 1984:10). The term itself goes back to a period of European colonial expansion and was used by Europeans to describe differences according to phenotype. Underpinning its usage however, were arguments to do with the polarities of superiority/inferiority and advancement/backwardness, a ranking of 'races' always premised on the superiority of the colonisers, and an association of 'races' with certain virtues and vices (Spoonley, 1993:2). Although this view is now largely discredited in scientific and social science communities, it nevertheless lingers on strongly in the common sense views that form the basis of lay understandings of difference. In discussing this distinction it should be recognised that on the basis of 'race', the measurement of difference did not pose the problems for social scientists it does now. The categorisation of difference among people was made with reference to 'blood' (Kilgour, 1992) or the differences in such physical features as skin and hair colour and the shape of certain facial features. The 'racial' categories so delineated were viewed as objective, clear cut and immutable and 'race' understood as 'differences that we can all see' (Miles and Phizacklea, 1984:13).

By comparison with the ease of measurement offered by the concept of 'race', the difficulties posed in

operationalising the dynamic concept of ethnicity, based as it is on cultural experiences, identity and self definition are obvious. According to Brown (1984:162-164) we can group the problems associated with measuring ethnicity into two main areas: technical feasibility and political acceptability. In terms of technical feasibility, the successful measurement of ethnicity rests on individuals identifying with particular ethnic groups. Significant measurement problems exist where individuals do not identify with any particular ethnic group, identify with more than one particular group, identify with broad general groups such as 'Kiwi' or 'New Zealander', or when the group with which they identify varies for whatever reason.

The problem of political acceptability is more complex, but turns on the idea that ethnic statistics, and the categories through which they are expressed, are constructed within socio-political contexts (Shannon, 1991:29). While, as Brown recognises, ethnicity is associated with tendencies of identification and inclusion and hence inherent to multiculturalism, the statistics derived from questions of ethnicity can still be used to the political advantage or disadvantage of various ethnic groups. From a somewhat different perspective McKegg (1992:25-26) points to the disjuncture often evident between the researchers' conceptual understandings of ethnicity and their operationalisation of the concept in ways that tend to fall back on more common sense understandings of difference. This may be because of the inherent difficulties in operationalising such a complex concept. McKegg claims however, that it might be that researchers, like most lay people, still cling to residual, essentialist notions of 'race' which make for difficulties when operationalising the concept of ethnicity.

As will be elaborated on in later sections of this paper, the Smithfield team met both problems of technical feasibility and political acceptability in their attempts at framing a question on ethnicity.

The Formulation of the Smithfield Question on Ethnicity

It would be no exaggeration to say that the formulation of the Smithfield Project question on ethnicity was a long and drawn out process. The result was however, a question that took account of the criticisms we had developed of the treatment of ethnicity in other New Zealand educational research, fitted with our overall approach to social science investigation and certainly provided us with rich and thought provoking data. Saying that, we also recognise that the question we settled on, like all questions in any research, should be open to criticism and might easily be improved upon. However the point of describing in detail the rationale behind the final wording of the question is our desire to open up for debate an issue that poses enormous difficulties across a range of endeavours from educational research such as ours, to Census data gathering (Department of Statistics, 1993).

To help us formulate our question on ethnicity we undertook an analysis of the treatment of ethnicity in educational research that had been published in this country's major educational research journal, *The New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies,* between the years 1984 to 1992. To be included in our analysis a number of criteria had to be met. First, the researchers themselves must have gathered data on the ethnicity of the sample they were studying so, for example, a study

in which the data on ethnicity were taken from official statistics would be rejected.[4] Second, the researchers must have used ethnicity for something substantive and not just to describe the sample. Excluded therefore, would have been a paper which simply said that the sample comprised 78 per cent Europeans, 13 per cent Maori and 9 per cent Pacific Islanders, and did not use ethnicity to analyse the results. Third, only full papers, as opposed to brief notes, were included.

While recognising that the studies analysed had a range of aims and purposes, and that it would therefore be unrealistic to expect their measures of ethnicity to look exactly the same, a number of observations can still be made about their treatments of ethnicity. We make these observations not as an exercise in criticism, but for the value they held for us in helping shape our question on ethnicity. First, we observed that by and large the concept of ethnicity was treated as unproblematic and typically there was little or no discussion of it. Saying that, a scattering of studies did hint at the complexity involved. For example, Clay (1985) touched on the fact that 'Pacific Island' covers a number of distinct cultures, but nevertheless ignored the differences between them, Nash & Harker (1992) pointed to the complexity of ethnicity in mixed families and Townsend, Manley and Tuck (1991) recognised that different methods of gauging ethnicity might result in slightly different classifications.

The second observation made was that the procedures used in these studies to measure ethnicity were either, described in the barest detail, or simply

[4] For the purposes of our research we did not view school records as official statistics.

omitted. For example, several studies used terms such as 'self-declared', 'self-described', 'identified themselves', 'maternal report' and the like, but did not say how the data were gathered (Chapman, 1984; St George and Chapman, 1984; Chapman, St George and Ibel, 1985; Fergusson, Horwood and Shannon, 1986; Fergusson, Lloyd & Horwood, 1991; Podmore, 1988; Townsend and Townsend, 1990). Was an open ended question asked or were the subjects required to tick a box? If the former, how was the question framed and how precisely were the data coded? If the latter, how many boxes were provided, how were they labelled (e.g. Pakeha or European or Pakeha/European, etc.) and what were the instructions given (e.g. tick the box which best describes your ethnicity, tick the box or boxes which best describe(s) your ethnicity, etc.)?

Third, we observed a lack of consistency in the way ethnicity was measured. For example, among the studies reviewed above we found (i) a direct measure of ethnicity based on pupil self declaration (Chapman, St George & Ibel, 1985), (ii) a measure of ethnicity involving combining the ethnicity of the parents e.g. one parent Pakeha and one parent Maori (Fergusson, Horwood and Shannon, 1986; Fergusson, Lloyd & Horwood, 1991), (iii) a measure of ethnicity involving giving an overriding influence to one ethnic identification which classified as Maori any family where one parent identified as Maori or Maori/European, irrespective of the identity of the other parent (Nash & Harker, 1992). Later investigations on the same topic brought to light a further measure, which classified pupils only if they were from a single ethnic background (Nicholson & Gallienne, 1995).

Fourth, we noted a lack of consistency in the terminology used to describe ethnicity. For example, in the articles perused we have the terms Pakeha, (defined in Nicholson & Gallienne (1995) as New Zealand-born European and in Townsend and Townsend (1990) as simply European), European, Caucasian and Non Polynesian. When little detail is given, it is difficult to tell if authors are using the same term for different measures, or different terms for the same measure.

Fifth, the comparisons made were not consistent even when we allow for the third point made above. For example, we came across comparisons involving Maori and Pakeha; Pakeha, Maori and Polynesian (sic); Polynesian and Non-Polynesian; Pakeha, Maori, Pacific Island and Asian.

Armed with this information we set about formulating our ethnicity question. Mindful of the difficulties associated with questions where the researchers' preconceived notions constrained the range of possible responses, we wanted to avoid 'tick the box' questions and instead devise one that would provide all the research participants with an opportunity to respond in ways in which they felt comfortable, using their own words and own terminologies. As noted above, a further important consideration in question formulation was our desire to get rich and detailed data. This consideration was driven by first, the importance we gave to the issue of ethnicity in the overall conceptualisation of the research project and second, our concern to ensure that future analyses would not be limited by lack of data. Our position was that detailed information could, if necessary, be collapsed into a small number of categories for statistical analysis, whereas responses

which were curtailed in the first instance, could never be expanded into more comprehensive descriptions.

Developing a question that took account of our concerns, while still producing responses that could be used in quantitative analyses was a gradual process involving much discussion and testing. We began by posing the question: 'How would you describe your family's ethnicity?' This question was adequate from the point of view that it incorporated our concern with family and moved away from a tick the box format, thus enabling participants to construct their own responses. However, we were concerned that the use of the term ethnicity in the question might be perceived by some participants as a problem, or that it might be misinterpreted as synonymous with 'race' and so limit responses to purely biological interpretations. Finding an alternative term to ethnicity while ensuring our question was still able to obtain the information we wanted was no easy matter. After much debate we decided to substitute the term 'cultural background' for that of 'ethnicity'.

While aware that 'culture' has a much wider connotation than 'ethnicity' (Pearson, 1991; 1995; 1996) we were satisfied that the term 'cultural background' would broaden the scope for responses. We were concerned however, that this terminology might also be ambiguous, with research participants confusing the term culture with the notion of 'high culture'. In order to make the question clear, yet not impose undue restrictions on the interpretations that respondents might give, we chose to offer a range of possible responses within the wording of the question. We thought that the inclusion of these examples acknowledged that cultural background was not unidimensional and that New

Zealand families showed much cultural diversity. Importantly too, the question retained an open-ended format.

The question on ethnicity we finally produced was worded as follows and followed by five lines in which respondents could write their responses.

> People living in New Zealand see their cultural backgrounds in a variety of ways. For example some people regard themselves as Europeans, Maori or Tongans, others as New Zealanders of Samoan or Chinese or Dutch descent and others see themselves as from a mixture of cultures such as Pakeha/Maori, Anglo/Irish or Fijian/Indian/Scottish.

How would you describe your family's cultural background?

Judgements regarding the usefulness and validity of the format of the question we finally settled on we leave to the reader.

The Self Reporting of Cultural Background

Those completing the ethnicity question gave responses which varied from a single word through to quite complex descriptions of cultural background such as the example below which mentions language, citizenship, place of birth, church membership, type of family and family connections.[5]

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[5] The names of the students and the names of areas, cities, and suburbs given in the responses have been removed from the quotes in an effort to preserve anonymity. Where

'Our family's cultural background. Both of us parents are full Samoan. We do speak Samoan at home all the time. We are not New Zealand citizens yet but we came (parents) here many years ago. Husband 1962 wife 1968. Children speak their Samoan language at home but we won't force them unless they want to use it. They understand it very clearly if we speak to them.

P.S. [A] is in the Samoan Cultural group at church. He goes there every Saturday (at 2 o'clock) with his younger brother but his two older brothers are at the Multicultural youth group and the Samoan one (both groups are at church). We are an extended family, [A] has uncles and aunties in the Community of the Samoan People in this City and [another city].'

Descent was a significant theme that emerged in a proportion of responses, although the extent of detail in these responses varied. A number of Maori respondents mentioned tribal affiliations and a proportion of Pakeha/European respondents named the country their ancestors had come from, or the ethnic group to which their ancestors had belonged.

'Maori on fathers side Ngati Mahanga, Ngati Haua, Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Te Rangi and Nga Puhi. Maori and Irish on mothers side. Ngati Kahungungu, Kings County in Ireland.'

'[B] is a mixture of Pakeha, Maori, Irish, English and French. I believe it is important for [B] to 'find her roots' and so encourage her to learn about her Maori culture. She is Ngati Mutunga'

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this has happened the altered text is given within square brackets [ ].

'Fifth generation New Zealanders. Mix of Scottish, English, French, Huguenot, German. [C] is a French Huguenot name.'

'English as opposed to British. Although [D] has lived longer in NZ than he did in England. Attitude is now fast becoming Kiwi with English descent.'

Historically in New Zealand, 'racial' categorisation in official statistics such as the Census, was underpinned by a notion of 'blood', in the sense of having Maori, European, Chinese or some other 'type of blood'. This approach was driven by the view that the percentage of the 'racial' component of blood could be measured accurately. In the early New Zealand Censuses the term 'half-caste' was applied to those with 'mixed blood', although those people who reported themselves to be half-Maori and half-European were categorised as either Maori or European according to their mode of living. Those who had greater than half Maori 'blood' were categorised as Maori regardless of their mode of living (McKegg, 1992:11; Brown, 1984:160). While such a distinction has long been surpassed in official statistics, the notion of the presence, or the absence, of blood has lingered in the vernacular as a means of conceptualising ethnicity as the following examples demonstrate.

'We consider ourselves as New Zealanders being 4th/5th generation born Kiwis. Our blood has been pretty well mixed with pretty much everything. I suppose basically we are mongrels.'

'I like to describe my family background as New Zealander. If a distinction is needed we do not have any Maori blood.'

'We have four adopted children ages 18, 16, 13 and 11 years. The two younger children have some Maori background and are interested in the culture. As my husband also has a small amount of Maori blood we are all learning some Maori culture at varying levels.

A number of responses stressed birthplace, or place of origin. These ranged from parents' birth in a country other than New Zealand, to origins in an area of New Zealand other than the one in which the study was carried out, to a mention of a suburb of the city in which the study was carried out. The following responses, while including notions of descent, family size, nationality and ethnicity, all encompassed a sense of place as part of cultural background.

'I was born in Trinidad and Tobago in the West Indies. I am of Spanish and Chinese descent. [E's] father is British. He is caucasian so [E] is quite a mixture. We lived in England before emigrating to NZ.'
'Anglo/Indian. Brought up in Malaysia with eastern and western culture.'

'Both parents born to Pakeha families. Mother of [name of province] descendant coming from a family of ten. Father of [name of province] descendant coming from a family of five. [F's] parents been living apart for two and a half years.'

'Caucasian English (fourth generation [name of suburb in the city in which the study was carried out] resident).'

A further element of place, the urban/rural distinction is highlighted in the following example which, like the first example given in this section, mentions the element of religion as a component of cultural background.

'Rural pakeha NZer with a strong [name of province] background. Our family lives also in a Christian way with many Christian family friends. Our nuclear family is also now rather urbanised. Our family has spent 2 years in developing countries and has many 'international friends' which also influences our culture.'

Smaller proportions of the more detailed responses alluded to such factors as religion, religious denomination and class as part of cultural background.

'White Anglican New Zealanders.'

'Christian European.'

'White middle class.'

A number of responses indicated directly the sense of pride the respondents felt about their families' ethnic backgrounds.

'Cook Islands culture. Cook Islands language. I love myself to be a Cook Island Maori.'

'We see ourselves as New Zealanders and are as proud of our heritage as others are of theirs.'

Like the parent who penned the previous response, approximately one fifth of the responses described the family's cultural background as New Zealander, or a variation on that term, Kiwi. Some even indicated their criteria for qualification as a New Zealander as being born and bred in New Zealand.

'New Zealanders - our family are born and bred New Zealanders as far back as [G's] great grandparents.'

'Definitely New Zealanders (of Irish, English, Norwegian American extraction). Grandparents born in New Zealand means you are a New Zealander.'

'All our family have been born in New Zealand. We are not European, Pakeha, etc but are New Zealanders.'

A small number of respondents alluded to the discomfort or distaste they, or others in their family, felt in answering a question on cultural background. Despite our attempts at framing the question as sensitively as possible, the implication of some responses was that such a question was, in itself, inherently racist.

'My husband refuses any identification other than New Zealander. I am German-Jewish and [H] is a mixture of the latter with Russian and English.'

'New Zealander. All our family was born in New Zealand. Is that telling you how we feel and how strongly. This is because we are a mixed family. The boys in it are brothers even though they have different colouring and ethnic origins. We all learn the culture and customs of the different parts of each others backgrounds and others as well. PS I also wish the bureaucracy would treat us all the same so that children would not have their eye shape skin colouring etc emphasised all the time.'

'I don't like answering questions like this as I was brought up without prejudice and respect for all people and I'm trying to do the same with my children realising the hard job my mother had.'

Rich Data and the Problems of Coding

Clearly, responses such as those described above must be coded if they are to be used in quantitative analyses. We began by using a coding scheme involving nine digits in an effort to retain as much of the richness of the data as possible, while still converting the responses to numerical form.[6] For analytical purposes where we wanted to look at general patterns, we collapsed the ethnic information into four categories: Maori, Pacific Island, Pakeha and Other. The percentage figures of Smithfield respondents placed in these categories were as follows: Maori (11%), Pacific Island (7%), Pakeha (75%) and Other (7%).[7] In many cases deciding where to place a response was unproblematic as the respondent gave a clear and unambiguous answer such as Pakeha, Maori, European, Cook Islander and so on. However, in other cases the response was problematic and we were faced with coding such responses as 'New Zealander' or 'Kiwi'. Despite concerns with the validity of our decision, we coded these responses as Pakeha. In what follows we investigate the validity of this coding decision by following up the ambiguous responses in one urban centre we call 'Central City'. Our aim in so doing was to clarify the ethnic status of the respondents who chose to identify themselves as New Zealanders

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6 A description of this coding system is available elsewhere in Hughes, *et al.* (1996).

7 The reason for using the four discrete categories of Maori, Pacific Island, Pakeha and Other was that we wanted to carry out large scale, quantitative analyses of such things as school choice using ethnicity as a classificatory variable and it is only possible to do this with limited, discrete categories.

and to probe their choice of wording in their original responses.

The 'Central City' Data

Of the 1,386 'Central City' questionnaires returned 1,332 (96%) had answered the ethnicity question. From these 1,332 responses, 918 (69%) gave responses which were unambiguously classifiable into one and only one of the four categories mentioned above. For example, there were single word replies such as 'Maori', 'Pakeha', or 'European', or longer replies such as 'We consider ourselves to be Europeans' or 'Sally's cultural background is Samoan'. A further 146 (11% of those who responded to the question) described a mixed ethnic background such as 'Maori and Pakeha'. In order to code these types of responses we followed a procedure in which preference is given to Maori in situations in which Maori and some other identity are mentioned but one is not clearly specified ahead of the other. For example, the response 'Jane is Maori and Pakeha' would be classified as Maori as would the response 'Jane is Pakeha and Maori'. However, the response 'Jane is European with a little bit of Maori blood' would be classified as Pakeha because it is clear that Pakeha has been given primary emphasis. In other situations involving two ethnic identities such as Pacific Island and Pakeha, preference was given to the minority status if there was no indication to the contrary.

This left 268 cases (or 20% of respondents to the ethnicity question) in which the response was ambiguous. Placing these cases in any category involved a good deal of inference. By far the most common of these responses was 'New Zealander',

although 'Kiwi' was occasionally used. These responses, with no added information, were given 200 times and accounted for 75% of the ambiguous responses. The next most common response was 'New Zealander' (or in many fewer instances 'Kiwi') but with further information of a kind which made it clear that 'New Zealander' (or 'Kiwi') was the primary status. Examples here include: 'third and fourth generation New Zealanders', 'New Zealander and English' and 'Born and bred New Zealanders'. There were 61 such cases accounting for 23% of the ambiguous responses. The remaining ambiguous responses included descriptions such as 'American' and 'Australian'.

We assumed these responses stood for what Scott (1991) refers to as 'Pakeha New Zealanders' and coded them in the Pakeha category. Clearly, it was possible that in some (even many?) cases our assumption was wrong and the responses stood for something else such as 'Maori New Zealander' or 'Asian New Zealander'.

We decided therefore, to follow up on these cases using telephone interviews in order to check on the validity of our decision to code these responses as Pakeha. Altogether 188 (70%) of the 268 respondents were contacted.[8] Of these, 2 (1%) refused to give further information, but the bulk, 180 (96%) gave responses which indicated that our classification was correct and they were indeed Pakeha. We were wrong in 6 cases: 4

[8] The other 80 respondents could not be contacted for a variety of reasons such as the phone having been cut off, the phone not being answered on any of several attempts or the family having shifted. For a detailed description of the method used for these telephone interviews see Hughes *et al.*, (1996).

(2%) were Maori/Pakeha and using our coding system should have been classified as Maori and 2 (1%) were Pacific Island/Pakeha and should have been classified as Pacific Island. The results of this aspect of the analysis certainly confirmed as correct our initial assumption to code the responses of 'New Zealanders' or 'Kiwis' as Pakeha.

Less expected however, were the insights into the meaning of the term New Zealander we were able to develop from these responses. The following section takes up this issue and examines what it means to people who define themselves as either New Zealanders or Kiwis.

What is a New Zealander?

The data on which the analysis in this section is based comes from a series of questions to parents/caregivers of school students in our cohort aimed at clarifying what they meant when they had earlier defined themselves as either New Zealanders or Kiwis. The key questions posed were what it meant to the respondents to be a New Zealander (or Kiwi) and why they chose to use that term rather than any other.

At this stage of the article it is useful to return to the point made at the outset: that ethnic identity claims need to be seen as particular positions within the political context of specific societies. Therefore claims about being a New Zealander, particularly as we have demonstrated that they were made by white New Zealanders, must be viewed in relation to the understandings of claimants of other ethnic identity labels: most significantly the labels of Pakeha and Maori

(Bell, 1996:145). There is no question that the ethnic label Pakeha is highly contested in New Zealand society, (e.g. Bawden, 1995; Greenland, 1991; King, 1991; Spoonley, 1991) and a number of the following quotes from our research participants will attest to this point. It is also clear that the meaning of the term Pakeha has evolved as issues of biculturalism have come to the fore in New Zealand politics. Commenting on what it means to be a Pakeha in New Zealand Spoonley (1995:111) claims that Pakeha is 'a label that represents the politics of a fraction of the middle class. Its authenticity as a reflection of an emergent ethnicity is still unconvincing to many, but it is an important part of binary politics - Maori/Pakeha - that renders biculturalism possible. For the moment, the political position of those who identify themselves as Pakeha, as partial and contested as it is, is a critical part of the post-colonial terrain of Aotearoa New Zealand'.

The above comments and Spoonley's quote in particular, provide a useful theoretical backdrop against which we can analyse the interview responses regarding what it means to be a New Zealander. These responses illustrate five discernible meanings of the term. It should be noted however, that in some questionnaires the responses were less clear cut than the examples given here. As a consequence, analysing the frequency of the different meanings was difficult. The first meaning of the term 'New Zealander' was found in responses of those for whom the term was merely one they chose to describe themselves, giving it no greater significance than any alternative response such as Pakeha or European.

'I've always thought of myself as a New Zealander. I don't mind being called a Pakeha but I've always thought of myself as a New Zealander. This is because I've been born and raised in New Zealand. This is where I live.'

'Born and bred in New Zealand. There was no reason for not putting down Pakeha. I don't mind the term.'

The second meaning came through from a group of respondents who held strongly to the notion that the term New Zealander had its own special meaning and was not interchangeable with other terms. This group of people chose their original response on the grounds that alternative responses, such as Pakeha, focus on differences among people and as such have the potential to be divisive. In this second group of responses there was a strong sense of respect for cultural diversity and in particular for minority ethnic groups to retain and celebrate their cultural practices, but in the final analysis, they saw New Zealanders as one people and the term New Zealander as a generic term that encompassed that notion. It was clear that for these respondents, the term New Zealander had a specific meaning. It was a way of describing an evolving society that has a special mix of cultures, but still has a sense of oneness about it that comes from its unique historical development. A major problem with this position however, has to do with the language itself involved in the choice of the label 'New Zealander' and the fact that the desire for oneness not only masks differences, but in so doing also masks the history of these differences and the uneven power relations that have existed between Maori and Pakeha. An additional problem with this position is that these respondents do not see their own culture as ethnic.

'New Zealand has a distinctive New Zealand culture. Pakeha equals European New Zealander but to be a New Zealander means something wider. It's to be part of the cultural mix which is our society today.'

'We don't like being classified as Pakeha, nor do we like Maori being classified as Maoris. To us we're all New Zealanders. I'd like to get away from a them and us sort of attitude and just all be New Zealanders. We do it in sport so why can't we do it in other aspects of our lives?'

'I respect everyone's opinions etc. I don't look at people and notice differences. I acknowledge people's differences and I don't look for them or judge them. I wouldn't call myself Pakeha because that acknowledges difference. I find answering these questions quite difficult because it means that I have to highlight difference.'

'To be a New Zealander is to be born here and live here. I wouldn't call myself a Pakeha because I believe that as a country we must see ourselves as one. We must respect cultural differences but in the final analysis we're all New Zealanders.'

'It means that we're white New Zealanders. We don't mind being called Pakeha, though we want our society to be united and calling ourselves New Zealanders adds to this feeling.'

The third meaning of New Zealander emerged from a set of responses from participants who specifically chose the term as a conscious rejection of the term Pakeha which they either disliked or understood as being pejorative. Of particular interest here is the third quote

below which, while overtly supporting the notion of integration, makes it clear that integration is something that allows the Other (Maori) their language and culture. There is no sense in the quote that integration is premised on notions of biculturalism.

> 'We were born and bred here and that's how I see us. I hate the term Pakeha. It's either Kiwi or New Zealander.'

> 'Pakeha is so culturally insensitive. It has negative connotations in today's society. I prefer to be known as a New Zealander.'

> 'To me being a New Zealander means being born here, living here. People of different cultures that live in New Zealand are entitled to their own culture. I fully support the Maori language etc. They should keep up their culture. I don't use the term Pakeha because it's offensive. It doesn't help integrate the cultures. There must come a time when we must become one people. I'm not European, I'm a New Zealander. I see Pakeha as an equivalent to calling Maoris niggers. We are all one.'

The fourth meaning of the term was apparent from the responses of participants who also professed a notion of oneness for all New Zealanders, but for these participants it was an overt assimilationist position, a desire for oneness at the expense of Maori culture in particular. The basis for these views was the claim that Maori had special rights and privileges under the Treaty of Waitangi which were deemed unfair. This category of responses included views about not only the term Pakeha itself, but also about the non-use of Maori terminology. The racist nature of these comments is clear, although some are more overt than others.

'I prefer the term New Zealander because separate terms continue to categorise people. Racial problems stem from placing people in separate categories. I'm not against people promoting their own cultures. I just wish that they would do it together without the aggro.'

'My husband doesn't like being called Maori words and thinks Maoris get too much as it is - fishing rights for example.'

'It means to be part of the culture and to live here in New Zealand. I don't like the terms Pakeha, Maori or European because we shouldn't discriminate between cultures. We're all one. Dividing society in this way brings prejudice. I'm not too happy about Maori people harking back to the old days and dragging up treaty issues for example. We're all in this together and should get on with it.'

'New Zealander means coming from New Zealand. So long as you think of New Zealand as your home you're a New Zealander. We're not European because we have no connection with Europe. We don't like the term Pakeha because we're all New Zealanders. We don't like the terms Pakeha and Maori because they're divisive. If there were a Pakeha rugby team there would be a lot of stink. Why's there no problem with the New Zealand Maoris?'

'I'm not a believer in there being any segregation in New Zealand. I'm sick and tired of what's happening in New Zealand at the moment. I'm not racist or I wasn't. I'm tired of the Maoris. I'm sick of picking up the papers and seeing the Maoris want this and that. We should let the past be the past. I think everybody thinks the same - my work mates etc. Maori land claims are making me sick. I'm not racist, I've got Maori friends and they think the same. There's no

reason to be distinguishing between races. We're New Zealanders.'

Overt racism is the way we would describe the fifth meaning underpinning the term New Zealander. In these instances the term was used by white New Zealanders as a mark of superiority to others. On occasion 'exceptions' were made for Maori, so the invective was aimed elsewhere, but by and large the responses in this category were racist towards all groups, except white New Zealanders.

> 'Born here. If people are of Samoan culture they should stay Samoans. There's too much mixed marriages particularly in places like [name of province] - you don't know what colour is going to come out. Not that I'm racist ... It's too dark in [name of province], thank goodness we don't have them ... Here they look after their kids. [There] they let the kids run loose. Maoris are New Zealanders. My comments are about Islanders. Maoris were here first. I would not like my sister to marry an Islander. I'd disown her. I don't mind the term Pakeha.'

> 'Anyone who is a New Zealand citizen. This includes Maoris or whatever. No need for terms such as Pakeha or Maori because we're all or should be New Zealanders together. Asians could be classified slightly differently, who are swamping New Zealanders and taking us over. They could be classified as Asian New Zealanders. I think it's a shame what is happening in New Zealand. Maoris are getting far more support from the state. They say that Maoris aren't getting a fair deal in education, well it's not the education system that's failing but the fact that their parents aren't pushing them hard enough.'

Conclusion

The major motivation for gathering the interview data on which this paper is based stemmed from our concern that we may have misclassified the ethnicity of families who, in response to the question on ethnicity in the first Smithfield questionnaire in 1992, stated that they were New Zealanders. The decision we made to code these families as Pakeha, in the absence of any other information to the contrary, was made without the empirical evidence we needed to justify our procedures. Given the central importance of ethnicity in the Phase One reports, and the continuing importance of the concept in the further phases of the project, we felt it important to investigate the validity of our coding decisions.

Fortunately, the results presented here show that our original decisions were vindicated and that the vast majority of those describing themselves as New Zealanders (or much less frequently Kiwis) were in fact Pakeha. Within our definitions, only three per cent of families who described themselves as New Zealanders and were thus assumed to be Pakeha, had been coded wrongly.

However, in the process of gathering the interview data we were able to show that the term 'New Zealander' has a range of meanings and can be used in very different ways. For some, it is a term of no great significance. It is totally interchangeable with other terms such as Pakeha which might just as easily have been used when filling out our questionnaire. For others it is a term with a particular meaning, carefully chosen and not at all interchangeable with other terms. However, people

who view the term in this way are not uniform in their views. Some use it to avoid using terms such as Pakeha, which they view as divisive in a culturally diverse society. For these people, recognition of, and respect for, cultural diversity is important, but they also believe we need an overarching term which signifies the uniqueness of our society and binds us together. For them, New Zealander is that term. For others, the use of New Zealander avoids the use of the term Pakeha which they see as having pejorative connotations and thus reject as offensive. Others still use the term because they too believe in the oneness of New Zealand society. This, however, is not the oneness which recognises and values diversity, but rather a oneness that comes from an assimilationist perspective in which it is believed that the correct cultural values should be the values held by the dominant culture. While the assimilationist viewpoint is clearly racist, it expresses a different facet of racism from that expressed in the extreme perspectives held by our final group. These are the people who use the term New Zealander in an exclusive way in order to establish the cultural superiority of those they would endow with the term over those who are outsiders.

There are two very different issues that the exercise of examining the meaning of the term New Zealander has brought to the fore. The first is a methodological issue and involves the way questions of ethnicity are posed. The choice of wording for the ethnicity question in the Smithfield questionnaire was made after much deliberation (and testing). The primary consideration in question construction was to ensure that research participants were able to respond to the question using their own words and terminologies, rather than the common tick the box options. The framing of the

question therefore was consistent with our definition of ethnicity as self-defined. The question of whether the choice of the term 'cultural background' as a preferable alternative to ethnicity and the inclusion of prompts which recognised descent and cultural pluralism, we leave for readers to debate. We would argue however, for the value of an approach that aimed at obtaining rich data, despite the added difficulties that eventuate during the coding process.

In delving further into the meanings of the term New Zealander, we were able to demonstrate that people describing themselves by using the same terminology, may be poles apart in their notions of ethnicity and, as a consequence, may also be poles apart in their views and opinions on a range of matters and behaviours in a range of situations. The attitudes, values and beliefs of the 'New Zealander' who rejects cultural difference and would disown a sibling who married a Pacific Islander are far removed from those of one who acknowledges and respects cultural differences and would welcome someone from another culture into the family through marriage. To lump such people together in a single category is only logically possible if one subscribes to some kind of essentialist notion of 'race' rather than a view of differences based on an understanding of ethnicity.

The second issue highlighted by the exercise of examining the variety of meanings that underpin the term New Zealander is the political nature of ethnic identity claims. The use of the term, while not recognised as an act of political positioning by the claimants themselves, must nevertheless be seen as a position that denies recognition of other ethnic groups. This is especially

problematic with regards to the position of Maori, the context of more than a century and a half of colonialism and the recognition of the importance of issues of biculturalism in a new and rapidly changing period of post-colonialism.

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Beyond Cartwright: Observing Ethics in Small Town New Zealand

Martin Tolich
Carl Davidson[1]
School of Sociology and Women's Studies
Massey University

Lofland and Lofland (1995) claim that 'starting where you are', or even staying where you are, is a suitable place to begin any qualitative research project. Even places where one finds oneself by misfortune such as prisons (Newbold, 1982), a TB ward (Roth, 1963), or (visiting) asylums (Goffman, 1961) can offer fertile research beginnings. But an altogether different kind of beginning also has to take place with institutional ethics committees. This paper had its genesis in the experience of the senior author with an application to such a committee. Tolich sought approval to observe customer service interaction between customers and clerks in local shops. As his application floundered within back and forth memos, two formal meetings (one month apart), two formal applications, and two phone calls to the Chair of the committee, he made jotted notes to support his own case. These fieldnotes recorded him pushing out, if not through, the boundaries of research ethics as he

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[1] Martin Tolich is a Senior Lecturer in Sociology at Massey University's Palmerston North campus. Carl Davidson at the time of writing was a Lecturer in Sociology at Massey's Albany campus on Auckland's North Shore. This paper draws on material from their book *Starting Fieldwork: an Introduction to Qualitative Research in New Zealand*, which was published by Oxford University Press, Auckland in 1998. The authors thank the two anonymous NZJS reviewers for helpful comments.

tried to gain approval to watch people in public space. Tolich's claim seemed straight forward enough: observation of visible social interaction in public space did not warrant informed consent as the anonymous data collection could do no harm. However, this was seen as fundamentally problematic to the Committee.

As the dialogue between Tolich and the committee continued he found himself constrained more by unwritten rules based on what he would later identify as a hegemonic medical model of research ethics (Lee, 1993). These medicalised, positivistic ethics proscribed informed consent as an essential ethical rule rather than one of *many* ethical principles. Not surprisingly, here personal troubles became public issues found in other critiques of institutional ethics committees (See Agar, 1996; Pettit, 1994:89; Daly and McDonald, 1996:xiii).

Historically, research ethics protocols are ambulance chasers. Pettit (1992) claims that ethical guidelines address popular scandals with legislative responses. Some crisis have been grand: Nazi treatment of Jews resulted in the Nuremberg Military Tribunal, later formulated on the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki in 1964, revised in 1975 (Pettit, 1992:94). Within this declaration are grand guidelines making ethics universal in format. Lesser crisis, though nonetheless profound, have affected individual disciplines or collections of disciplines. For instance, no sociology student can emerge from an undergraduate degree without knowing how Laud Humphries' (1970) *Tearoom Trade*, potentially exposed homosexual men to their heterosexual partners. Equally, anthropology's 'Project Camelot' caused a scandal at the 1970 meetings of American Anthropological Association and provided

the catalyst for promoting the adoption of a Human Ethics code (Agar, 1996).

The evolution of New Zealand's institutional ethics committees closely resembles the international experience with regulatory bureaucracies developed in response to research scandals (Pettit, 1992).Prior to 1987 institutionalised research ethics followed the Declaration of Helsinki protocol. In 1987 institutionalised research ethics became localised within the findings of the Cartwright commission, a government commissioned inquiry set up to investigate alleged abuses of women in medical experiments. The commission essentially recast institutional ethics in New Zealand. The question this paper raises is whether it is time, in the absence of such a crisis, to re-address this approach to ethics? It talks about how the post-Cartwright environment works to constrain ethnographic research.

For some of our colleagues, these remain controversial questions that are best avoided. The suggestion here is that ethics are a binary issue: you are either 'for' the institutionalisation of research ethics within ethics committees, or you are 'against' ethical research. Clearly, the issue is much more complex (and interesting) than such a position suggests. That this issue remains among the 'backstage' of New Zealand's research community can be seen in the fact that we may well be the first New Zealand social scientists to publicly offer this critique.[2] However, we are reassured by the

[2] There is good reason why observation based researchers have not brought this issue to the surface in New Zealand and confronted ethics committees with this dilemma. Few observation based researchers need funding for their

fact that it is also a critique that has been made by social researchers in countries long before us. Many social scientists in the United States and Australia, for example, have similarly found the imposition of generic research ethics problematic. Some have even described the experience as 'traumatic' (Wax and Cassell, 1981:224 in Lee, 1993). Others (Seiler and Murtha, in Lee, 1993) see the issue in expressly political terms. They claim 'the federal government and members of such powerful professions as law and medicine, formulated ethical principles for the politically weaker and unrepresented social sciences. (1980, 149)'. As in New Zealand, the catalyst for the regulation of social science research by ethical principles in the United States stemmed *not* from abuses perpetrated by social scientists (Camelot and Tearoom being notable exceptions). Lee is clear (1993:31) 'the regulation of social research has generally emerged as an incidental or unintended consequence of attempts to control wider social abuses'. In this paper, following on from others overseas, we are attempting to push back the medical model in New Zealand to find room for qualitative based research.

Ethics committees have a positivistic methodological bias which means they fit well with survey and experimental research design (Agar, 1996) but fit poorly with the vagaries of qualitative research. Institutional ethics committees may be even less comfortable with observation based research. Agar (1996:107) goes as far to state that the guidelines for human subjects ethics committees were not designed with ethnography in mind.

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research. And not having to apply for funding usually means that ethical procedures are subject to peer review.

Ethnography is based on two distinct research methods, those of observation ad those of unstructured interviewing. While some kinds of unstructured interviews are unproblematic (precisely because they meet the conventional criteria of voluntary participation and informed consent), unstructured interviewing in the 'field' can also be much less structured than this. Many are fleeting, such as a five second dialogue as you pass an informant on the stairs (Tolich and Davidson, 1998:97). Clearly, in such situations the normal ethical principles flounder. Observation in public places, we argue below, poses a similar problem for those committed to the notion of informed consent and voluntary participation given that the anonymous person(s) under study may not know they are being researched. Agar (1996:108) makes the same point when he tells us

> ethnography is not so nicely packaged [as conventional, more positivistic, research]. People drift in and out of situations. The ethnographer is not always collecting data in interviews....does one need to identify oneself to have a casual conversation with a stranger about the weather?...If one is drinking in an urban bar and notices something interesting about sociolinguistic variation, must she announce that she is now doing ethnography by attending more carefully to intonation contours? Those are silly questions, generated by a set of guidelines that do not take ethnography into account. Yet you must deal with them if you apply for a grant or go though a local committee for the protection of human subjects.

Tolich's research application being simply one example of the poorness of fit between the enforcement of standard research ethics and the highly inductive, non-linear method, which is ethnography. That non-

linearity is perhaps captured best by Dillard's (1989:5) point that ethnography is more akin to artistic painting than conventional research, where 'painters work from the ground up... the latest version of a painting overlays earlier versions'. Like grand painters, ethnographers do not begin to paint with a clearly defined image in mind (Tolich and Davidson, 1998:1).

Of course, none of this means that supporters of ethnography are arguing that their research should be beyond a consideration of ethics, just that there must be a recognition of *other means* of maintaining ethical integrity than simply negotiating informed consent. The solution offered in this paper is to see research and ethics as far more holistic, looking beyond data collection towards an interdependence of analysis and the presentation of text. In what follows we want to situate this micro situation of gaining ethical approval within a more global, historical phenomena to explain how New Zealand researchers, like those overseas, have ended up in a position of being constrained when conducting observation in public places. Beyond playing-out our sociological imagination and situating our biography within a global and international history, we see to be proactive in influencing ethics committees.

The two part paper details New Zealand's unfortunate experience with ethics and suggests ways to recontextualise social science research in New Zealand. The first part of the paper documents that 'unfortunate experiment' involving the diagnosis and management of a collection of women with carcinoma in situ. The immediate aftermath of the Cartwright Commission was the finding that these women's informed consent had been abused and the commission

recommended the setting up of ethics committees to monitor research on human subjects. Massey University's ethical guidelines for human subjects is exemplary. Not only was Massey University the first New Zealand university to create such a set of ethical guidelines *it is also our employer.*

The second part of the paper documents Tolich's recent attempts to conduct a simple observation in local retail outlets to expose problems with the type of contemporary ethical committees generated by the Cartwright commission, notably the committee's obsession with informed consent. While we believe informed consent to be an important principle, we do so only when accompanied by the other principles of anonymity/confidentiality, social sensitivity, minimising harm, truthfulness.

Part Two ends by proposing the addition of one rule governing ethics in New Zealand social science – one stemming from New Zealand's isolation and population smallness. At 3.6 million people New Zealand is larger than Melbourne but about the same size as Sydney. We suggest that this 'small town' nature of New Zealand society can act as the first rule to guide ethnographers precisely because researchers who attempt to capture and present rich, unique data are constrained by this smallness. Informed consent pales in comparison.

Part One: New Zealand's 'Unfortunate Experiment'

> The Inquiry into Allegations Concerning the Treatment of Cervical Cancer at [Auckland's] National Women's Hospital in 1987 and 1988 will be remembered as one of the most significant medical controversies of the twentieth century. Although it focused on a

> gynaecological issue, the inquiry inexorably broadened to encompass scrutiny of research practices, teaching methods, patients' rights and medical power (Sandra Coney 1989).

To understand research ethics in New Zealand, we first need to understand the 'medical controversy' which occurred at the National Women's Hospital between 1966 and 1982. It was a controversy first made public by a *Metro Magazine* article written by Sandra Coney and Phillida Bunkle in 1987, and then in Sandra Coney's (1989) book *The Unfortunate Experiment* (from which the quote above is drawn). Coney's book documents a medical experiment in which 131 women diagnosed with the pre-cancerous condition, *carcinoma in situ*, had their condition monitored rather than excised. By 1966 carcinoma in situ (CIS) was widely accepted by the International medical community as a precursor to cancer. The accepted treatment for CIS was the removal of all affected tissues. Although not all women with CIS developed invasive cancer the reasons for this were not understood. It was therefore considered too risky to leave the patient untreated once CIS was detected. Dr Leopold Koss, a leading authority on cytology was clear that no-one can predict which one of the pre-cancerous lesions will progress to cancer and which will not. Therefore all must be treated (Coney and Bunkle, 1987:50).

Dr Herbert Green, an Associate Professor at National Women's Hospital, an institution affiliated with the Auckland University Medical School, had a radically different view of CIS. He believed CIS was not a precursor to invasive cancer at all but a separate disease. For him this became an empirical question to be answered with an experiment. Between 1996 and

1982 he took 131 women that had evidence of persistent and uncured CIS and simply monitored the progression of the disease. Where accepted treatment was to remove tissue until CIS was no longer found, Dr Green gave these women **no further treatment**. The experiment continued for 16 years.

Unfortunately, Dr Green's hypothesis was wrong. A significant portion of the patients did go on to develop invasive cancer. Eight of these women died from it.

What makes this experiment more tragic than 'unfortunate' is that the patients in the experiment were uninformed about their condition, their treatment, or the fact that they were participating in an experiment. Some women referred to Dr Green because of a 'suspicious smear' were never told that they had CIS. Patients either believed that the monitoring process was standard treatment, that previous treatments had been successful in eliminating the CIS (when it had not), or that there was nothing to worry about. Dr Green's patients did not know that his theories and treatments were experimental, and flew in the face of the accepted medical practice of the time. They certainly were not informed as to the aim, conditions or risks of the experiment.

The story was made public in 1987 by the glossy monthly *Metro Magazine*, but it had appeared earlier in the academic literature. A 1984 research paper did 'expose' the experiment but to no immediate effect. It was published in *Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, the journal of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynaecologists in October 1984. This point is important for our discussion here because neither Peer Review

nor the academic press had any influence on what was patently unethical research. As evidence mounted against Dr Green's theory he was challenged by some of his colleagues. However, Green was a respected and influential doctor. The hospital administration, for reasons only they can understand, never supported these challenges. No one was successful in halting the experiments until Green retired in 1982. The Cervical Cancer Inquiry, chaired by Judge Sylvia Cartwright and commonly called 'The Cartwright Commission', which was appointed to examine the *Metro Magazine* story, credits an unwillingness of the hospital to impinge on the clinical freedom of one of its doctors. The implication here is that the doctors seemed all powerful and the welfare of the patient counted for little.

The Cervical Cancer Inquiry

The Cartwright Commission was established to see how much truth there was in the *Metro Magazine* claims. It was charged with finding out how this experiment, with its apparent disregard for patient safety and rights, could have been allowed to take place *and continue* for 16 years. The Cartwright Commission was given a wide brief that included coming up with recommendations to ensure such tragedies could never occur again. Although there are a large number of reasons why the experiment occurred, essentially what the Cartwright Commission found was:

- National Women's Hospital had an inadequate way to review and approve research proposals from a ethical standpoint. Although there was a medical committee that approved Dr Green's proposal this committee was made up only of medical personnel, Dr Green himself was on that committee. There were no lay persons on these committees. There was no one trained in ethical principles

and their application in research. This implies a bias in the committee towards furthering medical knowledge at the expense of patients' rights.

- National Women's Hospital had no consistent policy or procedure to ensure patients had all (or any) of the information that they needed to make informed decisions about their treatment. The Cartwright Commission found there was a 'mediocrity of standards' in the information offered patients. Again there is an implication of science taking precedence over people. 'Patients were not asked for their consent to be in a radical experiment'.

We have included this overview of Green's 'unfortunate experiment' and the Cartwright Commission because the eventual outcome had far reaching implications for any type of research involving human subjects. Guidelines for all such research, including social research, were a product of the Cartwright Commission's recommendations.

These guidelines are outlined as follows (Cartwright Commission, 1988)

- All human subject research must be approved by an ethics committee whose purpose it is to consider the subjects or patients rights. This committee evaluates the research to make sure the research won't harm the subject.

- The ethics committee is made up of a balance of academics and lay people so that the good of the common folk is not forgotten in the quest for knowledge. Some committee members have ethics as their speciality, i.e. clergy people.

- Subjects (patients) must be fully informed of the nature of the research, how it could affect them and what

participating in the study involves. The subject is therefore fully informed.

- A written consent must be obtained from every subject in the study. A need for written consent of patient when interventionist or non-therapeutic research is planned.

- A written statement of patients refusal or request to go along with certain treatments.

Massey University Ethics

Massey University (where both the authors teach) is exemplary as the first New Zealand University to establish a Human Subjects Ethics committee. By 1990 Massey University had developed a code of ethics for research involving 'human subjects'. They called it the Massey University code of ethics conduct for research and teaching involving human subjects. The five major principles are

- informed consent [of the participants]
- confidentiality [of the data and the individuals providing it]
- minimising of harm [to subjects, researchers, technicians etc.]
- truthfulness [the avoidance of unnecessary deception]
- social sensitivity [to the age, gender, culture, religion, social class of the subjects]

On the surface the ethics are straightforward but in Part Two we explain why they are not. A genuine tragedy of Green's experiment is that all scientists whose

research involves human subjects are burdened with his transgression: as if his research was the original sin. All contemporary scientists whose research involves humans must make up for his absence of informed consent whether it applies to them or not. In Part Two we detail our experiences with Green's original sin.

Part Two: The Contemporary Situation

An Observation based research project

That our current discussion of Green's 'original sin' is supremely relevant for the practice of social research in New Zealand is demonstrated by Tolich's recent dealings with Massey University Human Subject Ethics committee. Tolich submitted a research proposal to the committee outlining a project which aimed to study New Zealand attitudes to customer service and how they complained, if they found an example of poor customer service. The project, built on existing research (Tolich, 1996), had already won funding from the University *contingent* on approval from the Ethics Committee. The proposed research was based on observing customer service interaction in local retail outlets. In the course of his *normal* weekly shopping (4-5 times) Tolich planned to stand in the checkout line and if any poor customer service occurred (i.e. clerks talking to each other) he would make mental notes of *what the customer did or did not do.*

Contact with the ethics committee took three forms. First, there was a formal written proposal. Second, Tolich was required to meet with the committee to answer their questions about the research. This meeting took thirty minutes but Tolich's responses failed to satisfy the committee that ethical assurances were sufficient. The

committee wrote to him stating that informed consent of people in the study must be sought. They went as far as to suggest that at a minimum the store manager should be informed of the research.[3]

When the ethics committee met next, a month later, Tolich appealed the committee's decision not to grant approval. Again he made the case that neither the people in the study nor the store itself would be named and he felt confident there was no risk and no harm would eventuate. The committee balked at these assurances, hung up with the 'violation' the researcher's presence would create. It was essential, they argued, that all people in the research be informed in advance of the researcher's presence and intentions. In other words, the committee maintained that informed consent was mandatory.

A face-saving compromise was finally brokered after one hour of keen discussion. If allowed the researcher to conduct the research without first gaining informed consent if the researcher agreed to broaden the research frame beyond his home town of Palmerston North, conducting the research instead in the *entire North Island region of New Zealand.* In the end the application was formally approved after he once more made a formal written application.

Tolich's eventual success with the Ethics Committee was tempered by a warning that no precedent was set by his submission – and that each such observation

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[3] Tolich rejected this compromise as it did not achieve the result the ethics committees sought. It did not inform either the clerk or the customer. And that surely was the ethics committee's goal.

would only be on a case by case basis. This article seeks to support such cases. A person with less experience such as a graduate student would have faltered at this immense pressure to conform to the informed consent. Yet a person with our own experience may also have faltered under certain circumstances. If the researcher had a significant research funding grant hanging in the balance (this researcher had less than $2,000 at stake) the researcher is likely to be less flexible and less willing as this researcher did to go head to head with twelve others[4].

By now our point should be clear; if New Zealand researchers continue to use the Cartwright Commission as the basis for building qualitative ethics, then *it effectively makes all observational research impossible because it often does not entail informed consent.* In this sense the power of the medical model has trampled on qualitative researchers. More importantly, the Massey University Ethics Code is clear that

> *Ethical principles are not to be confused with ethical rules. Rules are specific and prescribe or forbid certain actions. Principles, on the other hand, are very general and need to be interpreted before being applied in a context.*

Tolich's dealings with the Committee make it clear that their guidelines *are* prescriptive and specific. They may call them 'principles' but they are applied as rules. Instead, what we suggest is that when taken as *principles*, the core values of 'Do no harm', 'Informed Consent', 'Anonymity and Confidentiality' and 'Avoid

[4] The situation one can only liken to the Asch (1952) experiments. Conformity is virtually assured.

Deceit' can be used in concert to protect the subject's rights. Where one principle is not applicable, then the others must shore up the absent principle. And if they cannot, like we said above, *then* the research should not proceed. But, it must be stated at the outset that there is not a hierarchy of principles. So, if informed consent is missing then the research can proceed only if the other principles can support its absence (Tolich and Davidson, 1998).[5]

Tolich's research was declined by the Human Subjects Ethics Committee on the grounds that his observations did not involve informed consent and therefore breached privacy. But in public places the need for informed consent from those being observed is made unnecessary because their anonymity is guaranteed in data collection, analysis and presentation (the other principles can adequately cover the 'gap' left here). Sometimes our research means that we need to observe people in a public setting despite that this does not lend itself to gaining prior consent. If you were observing how the people on the terraces behaved during a rugby game, should you announce to everyone within earshot that data collection is in progress? Perhaps you should ask the public address announcer to tell everyone in the ground your research goals? Julius Roth (1970:279) says not and we agree.

If a researcher was in a public square during the lunch hour and announced their research intentions to everyone in earshot, they would likely think the

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5 A NZJS reviewer further critiqued the primacy of informed consent as an ethical principle claiming that informed consent, under any circumstances, must always be considered partial consent at best.

researcher odd. The convention we use is that if the observation occurs in a public place, does not engage informants in conversation, maintains the *anonymity of those being observed* (in other words, the researcher doesn't know the names of those being observed, doesn't jot down car license plate numbers [see Humphries (1970) *Tearoom Trade* below]), and doesn't change the experience of those being observed – if their lunchtime or shopping experience is just the same as it would have been had you not been observing them – then informed consent is not required (Grady and Wallston 1988: 89). Anonymity remains as given.

The final irony of this state of affairs emerges from the last page of Sandra Coney's book, an Unfortunate Experiment. There (1989:273, our emphasis) she writes

> *The real problem was the medical power and its exercise.*

And we agree. It was and it still is. The hegemony of the medical model continues. It is doubtful the 'unfortunate experiment' would have had such an outcome if it had not been from a medical source.

The Massey University Human Subject Ethics committee, using the biomedical model framed in the Cervical Cancer Inquiry as its point of reference, has deemed that informed consent is not only a principle but a rule, structuring all research involving humans in New Zealand. In one foul swoop these ethical principles challenge the ethical principles that underlay all anthropological and sociological research based on observational fieldwork. In other words, by creating a set of ethics whose aim is to cover all research situations,

those ethics necessarily constrain the rich diversity of methods and theoretical assumptions otherwise available to social researchers. What we are claiming here is that the ethics committee, paradoxically, is itself unethical. We make this claim because the committee breaches its own chief principle of *social sensitivity* by failing to account for academic difference. Although the code deals explicitly with differences of culture, age, religion, and class, it makes no mention of academic difference. It should. Qualitative and quantitative researchers work under different epistemological, if not cultural rules.

Small Town New Zealand

Vidich and Bensman's (1960) *Small Town in Mass Society* which describes the embarrassing details of residents of a small upstate New York town in the 1950's and Whyte's (1955) *Street Corner Society* are famous examples of research in small communities. Here we argue that this can be seen in a positive light – as the real bottom line for social research in New Zealand society. This is a principle that remains somewhat unique in the developed world. As a country about the same size as Great Britain but with a population of only 3.6 Million people, it makes sense to conceptualise New Zealand as a 'small town'. The idea stems from Mercurio's (1972) study into corporal punishment at one high school. He disguised his informants via pseudonymous but named the school in the acknowledgements. There Mercurio (1972:v) wrote

> I shall be forever indebted to Mr. Charles F. Caldwell, Headmaster of Christchurch Boys' High School, for accepting me into his school, and for his readiness to be of every possible assistance throughout the course of the research. His willingness to have me around for

> a year is deeply appreciated. I hope that his faith in my ability to see clearly and to report honestly has been justified.
>
> *As in all research of this kind, responsibilities exist regarding the confidentiality and anonymity of the people involved. With the exception of the Headmaster, the school's historical personalities, and the identity of the school itself, the names mentioned in the study are fictitious.* I want to thank the Board of Governors of Christchurch Boys' High School for permission to use the name of the school in the interests of bringing the study to life. I hope that their faith in my ability to interpret clearly and fairly also is justified (our emphasis).

If would not (and did not) take an expert to work through the variables to identify the actors in the text. No confidentiality (or anonymity) was maintained. But Mercurio's case is too easy. Even if he had not named the high school, New Zealand's smallness makes it relatively easy to identify any institution.

For instance, if we were talking with a New Zealand audience and talked about a school that we were proposing to study by describing it as

> a boys high school (so delete all the girls high schools and co-educational schools in the country); It is a private school of considerable prestige (so delete all the public boys high schools); It is not located in one of the main centres (delete all the private boys high schools in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin). Already, the number of schools that we could be talking about is slim. But if we were to add, or it were to emerge from the report or the interview

transcripts, that it includes British Royalty among its Old Boys, which school would we be talking about?

Even if most of our audience had never been anywhere near Wanganui they probably would still know what school we were talking about. They would certainly have heard of this school. Our point is that if we actually conducted some research at this school, and that research mentioned some problems with a geography teacher in that school, it would be no Herculean task to find their phone number and give them a call. This is what we mean when we say New Zealand is a **small town**.

And this remains the case in New Zealand if we were talking about sports teams, councils, companies, etc. This point was brought home recently to one of the authors who has been seconded onto a research advisory group with the New Zealand Ministry of Education. At a research advisory group, one of the researchers mentioned some problems she was having with one of the principals in the sample. Despite the fact that eight schools were involved in the study, two other members of the advisory group were able to offer comments such as 'I bet I know which one...'. No amount of pseudo confidentiality (through mechanisms such as pseudonyms) could disguise the participants in such a small community of interest.

Unlike the other ethical principles, in New Zealand a consideration of this smallness needs to become the overriding rule. Acknowledging this means that ethical issues have to be thought carefully through before beginning the research. How will the data collected from the above high school be presented? How can the

schools unique character come to the fore if the very defining characteristics must be glossed over? These are questions of enormous ethical significance for all New Zealand social scientists, especially ethnographers.

As a case in point, any attempt to hide the institutional ethics committee dealt with in this paper would have been pointless. Such is small town New Zealand. We have published this anecdotal evidence because we know that others have had troubles with the hegemony of institutional ethics committees[6].

In sum, New Zealand social science faces the same bio-medical ethical hegemony that American and Australian researchers faced twenty years ago. The paper has sought to identify the particular origins of this bio-medical models of ethics in the New Zealand setting, and has then attempted to push it back. The key ideas here are that the notion of ethics is not just about informed consent. Instead, it is heavily contextual, needing a holistic approach to research. Institutional ethics committees have their part to play in this, but we believe that this should be one of helping the researcher find a path through their research design, data collection, analysis and presentation. A metaphor we like is one that suggests that ethics committees need to act more as a guide and facilitator than the Judge and police officer that they often do today.

Encouraged by Australian researchers (see Pettit, 1994; Daly and McDonald, 1996; McNeil, 1996) we see a need to start a debate in New Zealand beginning by

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[6] Since 1998 Martin Tolich has served on the Massey University Human Subjects Ethics Committee.

contextualising research ethics around issues of time and power. It is ten years since the Cartwright commission but little of the growth seen in Australia in the practice of research ethics is obvious. As said earlier, this paper may be the first New Zealand critique of the practice of research ethics. As yet we have not seen the emergent dimension of research ethics that Agar (1996) claimed when he stated that issues surrounding the protection of human subjects and research ethics are complicated and still emergent.

It should be clear that all New Zealanders owe a great debt to those who brought the 'unfortunate experiment' to our attention. In the fall-out from Green's abuses of position in the name of 'medical science', the Cartwright Commission has made research ethics both salient and transparent. This is a very important contribution to the practice of research in New Zealand. It is also one that we like to believe we are adding to by now critiquing the model they established, pushing back the bio-medical model, and championing academic freedom while maintaining academic responsibility.

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Panic, What Panic? The Moral Deficit of New Right Politics in Aotearoa New Zealand

Brennon Wood
Massey University

Abstract

The 'moral panic' concept has developed in quite different ways in Aotearoa New Zealand and UK cultural studies. Unlike the UK case, the ANZ literature has produced neither a general theory of ideological crisis nor an interpretation of new right hegemony. Developing this comparison, I investigate what the panic studies imply are a number of significant differences between contemporary right-wing politics in the UK and ANZ. On this basis, I suggest that the ANZ new right is a politics of cultural demobilisation that lacks a sense of moral conviction. I conclude by exploring some implications of this moral deficit.

Introduction

For some time, now and then but increasingly often, many of us have begun to live in a new social formation, Aotearoa New Zealand. Understanding this emerging way of life is a challenge facing all those who somehow identify with these islands. It is clear, both in everyday and more esoteric discussion, that Aotearoa New Zealand takes shape by somehow breaking with the historic compromise achieved by New Zealand social democracy. Little more than a generation ago, this compromise seemed firmly institutionalised as a welfare state that marched us all 'from cradle to grave', but now

that state is manifestly in disarray. The old order is in crisis and the new is struggling to be born. These are certainly interesting (if not indeed classical) times to be a sociologist. How are we to make sense of it all? What powers have breached New Zealand social democracy and what character do they give to the emerging social formation?

As its name suggests, Aotearoa New Zealand (ANZ) is deeply motivated by what sociologists often call 'ethnic' powers, that is, by the Maori and their pale shadow, the Pakeha. Unsurprisingly then, a substantial literature on ethnicity is developing in the local sociology. But it seems equally clear that ANZ is also driven along by another powerful agency, the so-called 'new right'. Few would doubt that our lives have been profoundly reshaped by a novel right-wing politics that has radically transformed the postwar welfare state. '1984 and all that' is a story as depressingly familiar in the textbooks as it is in the mass media and everyday conversations. It must be said, however, that compared with the study of ethnicity our sociology of the new right is considerably less advanced. To date, discussion has tended to narrowly focus on identifying characteristic government policies and evaluating their consequences. There is relatively little work on the broader social character of the new right and consequently even less on its relation to ethnic mobilisations. I aim here to help fill this gap in our understanding.

How has the new right set its stamp upon ANZ? What sort of leadership does it provide? I believe the new right lacks moral conviction and fails to make sense. I will argue for this admittedly absurd conclusion by comparing the study of moral panics in ANZ and the UK.

The term 'moral panic' refers to stereotypical identifications of certain people as fundamental threats to the social order. Panics are produced through intensifying exchanges between the media, interest groups and various established authorities, including politicians, the police and the judiciary. The response to such perceived threats typically involves calls for increased social regulation to protect 'accepted' values. Moral panic has proved a productive concept and played a particularly important role in the emergence of British cultural studies.[1] Originally something of an import from American sociology, the concept was developed by Cohen (1980) to analyse lay and official responses to various youth subcultures. Hall, however, considerably expanded its significance by adding the dimension of race to the focus on youth. On this basis, the study of panics fed into his influential interpretation of the UK new right as an authoritarian and populist 'Thatcherism'.

According to Hall *et al*'s (1978:321-2) scene-setting *Policing the Crisis*, the signs of change first appeared in the early 1960s as 'a diffuse social unease' located in 'the experienced reality of ordinary people'. Unable to find 'normal' political expression, this unease was displaced as numerous moral panics turning upon the sense of a nation besieged. Successive governments were drawn into these mobilisations, lodging the tendency to panic 'at the heart of the state's political complex' (1978:222). Hall (1983) subsequently reinterpreted this crisis of political authority as a 'great moving right show'. Thatcherism elaborated upon the

[1] For more general reviews, see Goode and Ben-Yehuda (1994) and Thompson (1998).

stridently apprehensive sense of 'Englishness' (1988a:2). Public discourse was colonised by claims that the UK's overly 'permissive' society needed a more righteous politics than that available through traditional means. Throughout the 1980s, the popular press in particular constantly revitalised the rhetorics of racial and sexual pollution that empowered Thatcherism by grounding it in the everyday discontents of British life.

Hall uses the panic concept to theorise the new right as hegemony. He defines hegemonic leadership as 'the conduct of a wide and differentiated type of struggle; the winning of a strategic measure of popular consent; and, thus, the securing of a social authority sufficiently deep to conform society into a new historic project' (1988a:7). The escalating sequence of moral panics generated the complex vocabulary of Thatcherism's 'wide and differentiated' politics. Rather than producing a uniform consensus, the panics 'articulated' a range of moral positions. They stitched together diverse commitments not only to 'self-interest, competitive individualism, [and] anti-statism' but also to the values of 'nation, family, duty, authority, standards, [and] traditionalism' (1983:29-30). 'Free market - strong state', Hall concludes, 'around this contradictory point, where neo-liberal political economy fused with organic Toryism, the authentic language of "Thatcherism" has condensed'.

The study of moral panics has been central to Hall's work on both hegemony theory and the new right. Similar studies in ANZ, however, have yielded much more modest results. Although a substantial panic literature was produced in the 1980s, it remains undeveloped and is considerably less systematic than is

the case in the UK.[2] By and large, the ANZ studies lack the generalising power of the UK 'model' they otherwise quite faithfully replicate. I think this difference is significant. It provides yet another opportunity to think through the importation of concepts developed overseas and to reconsider their relevance to local circumstances. Notably, the ANZ studies have not coalesced as a general theory of cultural crisis, nor as an interpretation of the new right as hegemonic leadership. This comparison with the work of Hall is worth developing further because it reveals a number of significant differences between the UK and ANZ. In particular, the comparison suggests that our new right lacks 'the authentic language' of an elaborated moral discourse.

The Social Context of Moral Panic

Hall investigates panics about a wide range of social identities, including, for example, criminals, inner-city blacks, the unemployed, students and homosexuals. Ultimately, these various scares 'map together', producing 'a *general panic* about social order' (1978:222). By comparison, the ANZ panics have been preoccupied with a much less extensive field of wrongdoing. Indeed, they have concentrated almost exclusively on children and youth. The ANZ studies thus tend to reinforce Cohen's early focus on the young and have not followed Hall's 'mapping together' of a wider

[2] Bartholomew and Dickeson (1998) have recently attempted to rekindle interest in moral panics by calling for an expansion of the field of study to include such oddities as the 1909 Zeppelin scare. If anything, however, this suggestion promises only to further fragment the literature.

field of identities.[3] This narrow focus on the young suggests that the ANZ panics concentrate on the identification of recurrent and largely marginal 'deviants'. They lack amplification and so do not culminate in deep-seated fears about social order in general.

The ANZ panics also seem to be driven along by a more restricted social agency than is the case in the UK. Hall (1988a:4, 262) insists that 'the effectivity of Thatcherism has rested precisely on its ability to articulate different social and economic interests'. The UK new right is a heterogeneous 'social bloc' that 'does not consist of one class or even part of one class'. In comparison, the ANZ panics are much more narrowly sourced. Shuker and Openshaw (1990:17) consistently highlight 'an attempt on the part of an emergent middle class to establish their ethic of respectability as the norm'. In particular, ANZ panics reflect the growing power of those 'professional' middle classes whose interests are 'closely linked to the expansion of government bureaucracy and the emergence of the interventionist State' (1987:87). Accordingly, for example, the panics typically promote an 'increasing employment of "the expert", especially in education and in child welfare' (1990:40).

As these remarks suggest, the politics of panic in ANZ is quite different from that of the UK. Hall's new right has diverse bases outside 'normal' politics. Moral

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[3] The most systematic work to date remains Shuker and Openshaw (1990), an anthology of previously published writings. See also Kelsey and Young (1982), Poole (1996) and Soler (1989).

panic mobilisations gave Thatcherism 'ideological and intellectual *authority* outside the realm of the state proper and, indeed, *before* - as a necessary condition to - taking formal power *in* the state' (1988b:47). Shuker and Openshaw (1987:87-8), on the other hand, firmly locate the ANZ panics within a 'process of governments becoming interested in controlling things'. Like those before them, the postwar panics were routinely expressed as an extension of state regulation.[4] This pattern continued into the 1980s. The dominant interpretation of the 1984 'Queen Street riot', for example, made it 'logical that the political focus would be on legislation' (1990:49).[5] In a similar vein, fears about 'video nasties' in the late 1980s prompted 'a State-imposed legal solution', yet another extension of censorship (1990:71).

Studies of moral panic in ANZ are much more sociologically reductionist than those of the UK. Hall's 'crisis of hegemony' theorises precisely the sort of 'hard times' in which unproblematic identifications of class,

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[4] Given the ease of such 'normal' expression, the panics do not systematically accumulate pressure for radical political change. Shuker and Openshaw (1990:30) argue, for example, that the rapid decline of a 1950s scare 'can be directly linked to its very success: a more strictly defined legal definition of the "problem". Once this was achieved the impetus for escalating the panic was lost'.

[5] This panic quickly resulted in an Act extending local authorities' ability to control alcohol consumption. In contrast, Thatcherism greatly reduced local government power throughout the 1980s (Stoker, 1988).

world view and state can no longer be made.[5] Shuker and Openshaw (1990:11), on the other hand, interpret panics as the expression of groups that have 'to some extent "captured" the emerging state apparatus' and whose 'world view [is] derived from their middle class position'. Such interpretations focus on political routines and so yield a strong sense of historical continuity.[6] The ANZ panics thus extend rather than radically depart from the social democratic tradition. As Lealand (1991:212) comments, it is remarkable 'how regular such panics have been'. Accordingly, rather than producing a conjunctural account of the current situation, Shuker and Openshaw (1990:45) draw out 'a long history' that dates back to the late 19th century. When set within such an expansive frame, the study of panic loses the sense of urgent contemporaneity it has for Hall.

The ANZ and UK studies refer to quite different social contexts. They have a different sense of who the panics are about and who is driving them along. By comparison, the ANZ panics have a much narrower social compass. Moreover, the ANZ and UK studies

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5 Hall (1988a:7) argues that he 'deliberately used the Gramscian term "hegemony" in order to foreclose any falling back on the mechanical notion that Thatcherism is merely another name for the exercise of the same, old, familiar class domination by the same, old, familiar ruling class'.

6 The focus on youth also reinforces a sense of routine. Following Cohen, for example, Openshaw and Shuker (1991: 62) point to an evergreen 'generational' conflict that 'gives rise to recurrent crises at roughly thirty-year intervals'.

point to different political and historical consequences. The ANZ panics are much more in tune with state regulation; they suggest historical continuity rather than a departure from the way things are normally done. Given these differences in social context, it is not surprising that the ANZ and UK panics also have markedly dissimilar cultural orientations.

The Cultural Orientations of Moral Panic

The mass media are central to Hall's interpretation of the UK new right. They undertake 'the critical ideological work of constructing around "Thatcherism" a populist common sense' (1983:29). Rather than the servants of some pre-established agenda, the media ground Thatcherism in everyday experience and so are powerful political forces in their own right. ANZ panics, on the other hand, are typically *opposed* to popular media. While Shuker and Openshaw (1990:1), for example, claim to approach the media as both a panic agent and as 'the object of concern', it is the second theme that predominates.[7] In keeping with their status as an 'object of concern', the ANZ media tend to play a subservient role that 'proceeds within the terms of reference' furnished by established authorities (1990:19). Rather than undertaking 'critical ideological work', their

[7] Panics routinely appear with the arrival of new media: 'indecent literature' in the late 19th century, silent film in the early 20th century, 'talkies' since the 1930s, American comics and rock'n'roll since the 1950s, television since the 1960s, video recorders since the 1980s, the Internet since the 1990s, and so on (Shuker and Openshaw, 1990:8-9).

participation in moral panics is largely limited to repeating what the 'control agents' say.[8]

The ANZ panics are thus decidedly less populist than their UK counterparts. Shuker and Openshaw (1990:105) stress instead a persistent drive to distinguish between 'high' and 'low' culture. Although such class-based judgements sustain a nationalism similar to that of the UK, ultimately this similarity only further highlights the differences between these two situations. Hall (1988a:2) interprets panics as the expressions of a strident 'Englishness' provoked 'by the unresolved psychic trauma of the "end of empire"'. Although the ANZ panics also sponsor a British identity, their anti-populist tenor means this is more a matter of Arnold's 'best that has been thought and said' than Hall's 'experienced reality of ordinary people'. Rather than an emphatic 'Englishness', the ANZ panics waver uncertainly between 'a self-conscious Britishness', a 'sense of insecurity vis-a-vis the United States' and 'New Zealand's own longstanding search for a national identity' (Openshaw and Shuker, 1991:59-60).[9] They may register a similarly 'unresolved psychic trauma', but in comparison with the UK the panics sustain a much weaker and more colonised nationalism. They do not elicit a strong sense of everyday belonging to a particular place.

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[8] The 1950s, for example, were so 'dominated by strict notions of consensus and uniformity' that the 'press reaction was to be largely clear-cut' (Shuker and Openshaw, 1990: 19).

[9] As is so often the case, 'America' connotes the presumed degradation of a mass culture (cf. Lealand, 1988).

According to Hall *et al* (1978: viii), anti-black sentiments were central to the feeling that Britain was 'coming apart at the seams'. The ANZ panics, however, have not developed the nationalist generalisation opened up by racist connotations. Kelsey and Young (1982:135), for example, argue that the 1979 panic about 'Maori gangs' was quickly 'defused'. The state calmed public anxiety by treating gangs as a 'traditional' criminality that had 'been effectively brought under control'. Similarly, Shuker and Openshaw (1990:48) note that while press coverage of UK riots highlighted a 'black' confrontation with the police, representations of the 1984 'Queen Street riot' simply 'left this dilemma unstated'. Indeed, 'the fact that some Maoris had been actively involved in attempting to stop the violence ... appears to have been utilised as evidence that New Zealanders were, after all, one people'. The contrast with Thatcherism could not be more stark.

Hall (1988a:2) argues that Thatcherism makes a 'decisive break with the postwar consensus'. The ANZ studies, on the other hand, suggest such a degree of cultural conformity that it often seems hyperbolic to use the word 'panic' at all. Panics occur when the sense of shared values is 'seemingly' rather than actually under threat (Shuker and Openshaw, 1990:61). Such confidence in the continued stability of an underlying consensus is lacking in the UK studies. Evidence of long lasting social repercussions in ANZ points more to the 1950s than to contemporary times (1990:107). Even then, however, the panics seem subdued.[10] Moreover,

[10] Shuker and Openshaw identify an intense cluster of 1950s panics, spanning a fracas in the Hutt valley, American comics, 'bodgies', rock'n'roll, *The Wild One*, the Mazengarb Report, the Hulme-Parker murder trial, and so on. Despite

though continuing to run along established lines, they have declined in intensity since the 1950s. Young (1989:170), for example, reports that the policing of alternative sexualities in the 1980s was 'obviously' not based on moral panic. Rather than revealing evil forces undermining life in general, the 'Queen Street riot' was treated 'as an aberrant phenomenon in a homogeneous law-abiding society' (Shuker and Openshaw, 1990:48). Similarly, the 1988 spate of suicides by 'Gothic' youth 'failed to be translated into a full-blown moral panic on a national scale' and 'the press quickly lost interest' (1990:102-7).

ANZ and UK moral panics have quite different cultural orientations. The ANZ studies notably assign much less novel powers to the mass media. Rather than cultivating a strongly nationalised identity, the ANZ panics construct an anti-American and insecure Britishness. In comparison with the UK, they lack exclusory racial connotation. They also tend to be more 'high' cultural than populist. Far from radically displacing consensus from below, the panics reinforce a statist realm of shared values. Indeed, the ANZ studies so emphasise the reaffirmation of consensus that any sense of Hall's 'general crisis of hegemony' is effectively lost altogether.

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such intensity, the sense of conformity seems relatively secure. 'Bodgie' subculture, for example, was 'muted by overseas standards' and provoked a 'fairly tame response' (1990:97, 100).

Thinking Forwards

I have considered a wide range of what are surely significant differences between the study of moral panic in ANZ and the UK. In general, the ANZ panic concept is relatively undeveloped. The most concerted expression remains Shuker and Openshaw's (1990) now rather dated anthology 'cobbled together from different sources' (Lealand, 1991:213). The analytical looseness of these studies is manifest in a number of ways. The panic concept, for example, remains both heavily descriptive and socially abstract. As Phillips (1991:83) argues, Shuker and Openshaw 'fail to analyse systematically the social groupings involved in promulgating the panics'. The identifiers are not clearly identified.[11] The ANZ studies are loose threads that somehow need drawing together. But what is the significance of this lack of system and how should we respond?

Perhaps the ANZ studies are so inarticulate compared to their UK counterpart because description has outweighed concern for theoretical rigour.[12] And

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[11] It is telling that Shuker and Openshaw rely on the old Whiggist ruse of an ever 'rising' middle class. They acknowledge the incomplete character of their studies, noting in particular that they have not 'thoroughly addressed the broader contention advanced by Hall *et al* of how the panics 'fit into a wider model of a crisis in hegemony' (1990: 103-9). Curiously, they do not refer at all to Hall's work on Thatcherism.

[12] Thus, for example, we might seek to follow Hall more thoroughly by doing away with reductionist conceptions of the state and social values. Though for a critique of Hall's own work in this regard see Wood (1998).

perhaps they are socially abstract because the panic concept ultimately remains at best a half-hearted import, an 'essentially provincial footnote to the British studies' (Philips, 1991:84). Such appeals to theoretical speculation and local authenticity are powerful forces in contemporary social theory. Although there are certainly good grounds for both sorts of move, I do want to sound a word of caution. When setting out to somehow rigorously theorise the panic concept and make it more at home in the ANZ context, we must not forget that there is nevertheless still something to learn from what is, after all, a relatively substantial local literature. I certainly do not believe this work suffers from such a massive theoretical deficit that it tells us nothing at all about the contemporary situation. Indeed, I believe it suggests crucial differences between Thatcherism and the ANZ new right.

Conjecturing the Contemporary Situation

Given their historical focus, the ANZ panic studies shed light on the background of the contemporary situation. According to Shuker and Openshaw (1990:17), the panics incorporated within the welfare state established middle-class hegemony. I think this interpretation is incorrect. Like those before them, the postwar panics did not mobilise a complex of social interests across diverse issues. Rather, they aligned state power with 'professional opinion' and 'high' culture. The panics promoted a puny and colonised nationalism teetering anxiously between longing for Britain and fear of America. Rather than provoking significant value disputes, they reinforced a prevailing consensus. Any political leadership constructed on these terms would be relatively undeveloped culturally and morally. As they did

not articulate conflicting voices, at most the panics can have established only a very attenuated middle-class hegemony.

If this is the historical background then what are we to make of the current period, when the welfare state is contested and transformed? Since the 1970s, we have experienced the onset of economic depression and the decay of old political commitments. Given '1984 and all that', we surely expect the new right to make an appearance, but it hardly figures at all in the ANZ panic studies. Unlike the UK case, these studies are not organised by the overarching narrative of an historic 'rupture' that marks the advent of a new right. In contemporary ANZ, it seems, moral panics have not developed as sites of cultural displacement and political reconfiguration. I suggest, then, that the ANZ studies have not come together as a theory of hegemony because that is not how the ANZ new right has come together.

A decade ago, Jesson *et al* (1988) advanced a hegemonic interpretation of the new right. Unfortunately, this ground-breaking work has not been further developed; it certainly needs reconsidering in the light of contemporary experience. Jesson *et al* (1988:3-5) remark that, unlike overseas authors, they found themselves unable to treat their subject as 'a coherent movement'. The new right proved so 'at odds with itself' that it 'split apart' into quite distinct 'libertarian and authoritarian strands'. Although Jesson *et al* cautiously noted 'the absence of a complete success', they also found it 'fairly clear' that 'both forms of the right are working in the area of hegemonic politics' and that this politics is powerfully reshaping our social lives. Ten years

on, however, I think we have good reason to question such claims. I believe that the panic studies prompt a reinterpretation of Jesson *et al*'s divide between the 'libertarian and authoritarian strands', a reinterpretation that casts doubt on the power of new right hegemony.[13]

The panic studies highlight a social democratic discourse that privileges middle-class professionals within the state. Many contemporary commentators have noted that the new right also emphasises 'expertise'. Since the 1970s, however, the sort of 'professional opinion' enacted by the state has moved away from social service specialists towards the abstract generalities of economists and managers. New right health reforms, for example, have been carried out by 'generic professionals' who prioritise commercial goals and claim to administer all types of social activity. This privileging of managers and economists is consistent with Jesson *et al*'s account of the right's two 'strands'. While libertarians are preoccupied with 'the economic sphere' and self-interested individualism, authoritarians focus on 'the issues of "race", identity and morality' (1988:5-6). Jesson *et al* (1988:85, 115) argue that the authoritarians are 'the weakest section of the new right' and seem unlikely to achieve their goals. The rise of generic professionalism confirms this prediction. However, the right's consequent preoccupation with market formalities and its emphasis on an expertise sanctioned by the state implies a less radical break with

[13] Jesson *et al* (1988:58) mention moral panics only once, referring briefly to failed attempts by right-wing campaigners to escalate fears about 'permissiveness' in the early 1970s.

the social democratic past than is often thought.[14] Moreover, the abstract character and narrow base of this expertise suggest an aversion to culture and limited social mobilisation.

How did these generic professionals become such a dominant force in state regulation? Certainly not by way of cumulative moral panics, for if anything such panics have become less significant since the 1970s.[15] Moreover, the fitful scares of the early 1980s continued to reinforce a statist and technocratic control by experts.[16] If not panics, then what other sort of cultural events marked the rise of new right expertise over social democratic know-how? That is obviously too large a question to address here, but I would like to draw attention to one event in particular. Instead of escalating panic, there was the sharp shock of the 1981 Springbok Tour. The students of moral panic have not investigated

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[14] It also gives reason to doubt the new right's success. Easton (1995:45-7), for example, concludes that 'generic professionals' have 'failed miserably' to displace the specialist 'culture of health professionals'.

[15] Nor does the popular media seem to have played a central role. Leitch (1991: 23-6), for example, argues that news about public sector reform has 'uncritically adopted Government definitions' and 'confined the debate ... to peripheral concerns'.

[16] Fears about 'Maori gangs' and the 'Queen Street riot' were smoothed away by a criminalising strategy that foreclosed any wider discussion of pressing social issues, such as racial disharmony and youth unemployment (Kelsey and Young, 1982: 138-42; Shuker and Openshaw, 1990:48-9). The contemporary Thatcherite response, on the other hand, repeatedly amplified urban violence into far-reaching interrogations of society-at-large.

the Tour.[17] And yet consider its extensive scale, its highly moralised confrontations between police and a wide range of social groups, the wealth of representations it unleashed about 'law and order', racism and national identity. What is surely significant now, however, is that for all its intensity the Tour is largely forgotten, a lapse that can indeed be tracked back to 1981 itself.[18] This forgetfulness registers the defeat of the 'authoritarian strand' in new right politics.[19] The period following the Tour, therefore, is littered with signs of the right's new amnesia towards the 'issues of "race", identity and morality'.

ANZ panics lack amplifying spirals of racial connotation. This is surely a striking finding given the country's greatly increased ethnic politicisation, particularly in terms of the Treaty of Waitangi.[20] The

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17 Phillips (1991:83) rightly criticises Shuker and Openshaw for focusing solely on panics that stabilise right-wing morality. Although the significance of the Tour was remarked early on in ANZ cultural studies, it has since dropped out of view (see Crothers, 1983; Fougere, 1981).

18 Gerondis and Page (1982:59-60), for example, found Wellington's two major dailies 'less likely to make controversial observations' than the foreign press. While for overseas' papers the Tour was possibly 'the biggest story on New Zealand that any of them had dealt with', the more fainthearted local press simply 'wished to emerge unscathed'.

19 Jesson *et al* (1988:98-9) argue that the various right-wing groups that formed round Tour issues 'have become moribund for lack of support and anything to focus on'. They are thus 'irrelevant to the debates and pressure group politics of the late 1980s'.

20 This finding should be treated with some caution, although it is supported by other studies. Significantly, the most

absence of an elaborated 'race card' has forestalled the nationalist generalisation achieved by Thatcherism. Instead of racial exclusion, there is 'biculturalism' and a new ethnic identification of the dominant as Pakeha. Rather than cohering as a powerfully contested sense of national belonging, Pakeha identity has remained culturally abstract and politically ambiguous. Jesson *et al* (1988:127) themselves highlight 'a Pakeha reluctance to look critically at the position and values of their own group'. More recently, MacLean (1996:110) has described the Pakeha as a 'silent centre', an 'empty alterity'.[21] This silencing shows the extent to which Maori have emerged as powerful actors that the new right must recognise.

We need to know more about how the state's colonial legacies have articulated the new right with various decolonising trends. It is significant that Treaty settlements have been agreed by an apologetic rather than an assertive Crown. The right, however, has not

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detailed exploration of racism in contemporary ANZ media makes no explicit reference to moral panics (Spoonley and Hirsh, 1990). Cochrane's (1990:16) investigation of newspapers found that 'recurring negative images' of Maori 'are constantly interrupted by the presentation of positive images'. Jesson *et al* (1988:125) argue that pro-British racists failed to establish links with other conservative constituencies throughout the 1980s and thus remained no more than a 'small community of fellow travellers'.

[21] MacLean (1996:117) argues that an 'articulated Pakeha ethnicity' has been forestalled by its proponents' emphasis on state reform. Given the lack of cultural elaboration, the political implications of this emphasis remain highly ambiguous. Pearson and Sissons's (1997:79) study, for example, finds 'the link between being Pakeha and being bicultural ... surprisingly weak'.

taken such apologies as an opportunity to develop conscience and self-understanding. Instead, Treaty settlements have been negotiated through what Sharp (1997:162, 178) describes as a 'juridical' expertise that tames the past by promoting a 'unidimensional and casuistical account of human activity'. Such denials of the multiplicity of meaning reinforce the right's moral amnesia and allow it to concentrate on highly publicised but absurdly meagre financial transactions. As the right has proved unable to engage in far-reaching cultural mobilisation, its politics inevitably lack social authority.

Conclusion

The study of moral panics in the UK culminated in a general account of hegemonic crisis and leadership. The argument outlined above, however, departs from this theoretical trajectory. I think we should attend to issues that bear upon but distort and lead beyond the panic concept.[22] The ANZ studies have proved unsystematic and descriptive; their concerns are more historical than contemporary. I have argued that this lack of development should be considered an empirical insight rather than a theoretical failing. New right politics does not generate and dominate a hegemonic crisis. The ANZ studies themselves suggest the contours of the interpretive terrain ahead. There has been a change in the balance of forces within the middle classes, but

[22] It seems misleading to apply the term 'panic' to such phenomena as managerial expertise, the Tour and Pakeha identification. Rather than an explicit and embodied 'folk devil', more apt psychological terms would invoke an abstract and indefinite object of foreboding (fatalism, phobia, guilt, etc).

political leadership remains tied to a sense of professional expertise. The new right is not as new as it may seem. It continues within the statist mode and has not developed a highly moral sense of purpose. The rise of the Pakeha has reinforced the tradition of a weak and socially abstract nationalism. Events such as the 1981 Tour and the series of often dramatic Maori mobilisations have propelled the right away from the cultural terrain. Accordingly, as Larner (1999) has recently suggested, we cannot understand the contemporary situation by reducing it to some sort of coherent new right identity.[23]

The new right is either a defeated hegemonic project or a different sort of politics altogether. Hall (1988a:7) defines hegemony as 'a wide and differentiated type of struggle'. He interprets Thatcherism as a politics that mobilises consent by fusing 'neo-liberal political economy' with 'organic Tory' commitments. The ANZ new right, however, has not established cultural leadership through the waging of 'wide and differentiated' conflict. Indeed, the Fourth Labour Government broke up along the very fault-lines Thatcherism traversed throughout the 1980s. It marks precisely the disarticulation of neo-liberal economics and social values. It is thus not surprising that interpreters of the new right have concentrated on government policies, for that is just what the right itself has done. However, accounts that over-emphasise policy-making élites provide an incomplete and, if taken alone, flawed interpretation. By ignoring wider social conflict, they

[23] Larner argues that we should move from the analysis of new right hegemony to a more expansive understanding of neo-liberal discourses. I consider this proposal in Wood (forthcoming).

effectively reduce culture to a political reflex and history to a *marche de dupes* (Gramsci, 1971:164). Jesson *et al*'s (1988:41-50) own argument shares these weaknesses, such as when they claim that libertarians took power through a 'policy coup' driven by 'quite a small group of people' whose economic dogma 'effortlessly dominated political debate'. There is more to the story than such comments suggest. How is it that 'quite a small group of people' could bring about such radical transformations?

I have argued that new right power is culturally inarticulate. As its authoritarian strand withered away, the right concentrated on 'the economic sphere' and abandoned the social terrain altogether. Tellingly, the local equivalent of the UK's vividly personalised 'Thatcherism' is 'Rogernomics', a term that neatly encapsulates and distances the dead hand of statecraft and economic doctrine. According to Jesson *et al* (1988:42-6), the new right's dominant 'libertarian strand' both rigidly separates the social from the economic and systematically reduces the former to the latter. Moreover, as economic issues are treated as 'a technical matter to be settled by experts', with their advance 'a feeling of fatalism' has 'overwhelmed political discussion'. In a similar vein, other influential narratives of recent times have emphasised a 'leap into the dark', a 'quiet revolution', a state-centred 'experiment' (Sharp, 1994; James, 1986; Kelsey, 1995). These are not phrases that describe hegemonic politics.

The ANZ new right lacks moral concern for the social implications of its politics. Of course, such irresponsibility has not prevented constant *moralising*. Quite the opposite, the right has proved a relentless source of

platitudes. Moralising, however, offers no more than third-party evaluations according to abstract principles. Moral discourse, on the other hand, is a context-specific 'dialogue among persons who are actually involved', a dialogue that aims for a 'truthful revelation of self' (Pitkin, 1972:150-4, 327). As the new right has not engaged in such discourse, it has not invested neo-liberal economics with social authority. It thus must be counted a hegemonic failure. Indeed, perhaps the new right is better conceived as an anti-hegemonic project, as a cultural demobilisation hostile to meaning and morality. After all, the sense of political absurdity is surely widespread these days.

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REVIEWS

Neville Bennett, 1998 **Asian Students in New Zealand.** Wellington, New Zealand, Victoria University Institute of Policy Studies and Asia 2000 Foundation, 107p. $18.00.

Pauline B Keating, 1998 **Studying Asia, The Challenge for Tertiary Educators.** Wellington, Victoria University Institute of Policy Studies and Asia 2000 Foundation, 94p, $18.00.

Reviewed by Bill Willmott
Emeritus Professor of Sociology
University of Canterbury

The Institute for Policy Studies and the Asia 2000 Foundation are to be congratulated for contributing to the public discussion of our Asian policy by publishing a series of small books on various topics relating to New Zealand's relations with Asia and the Pacific. The two under review here are particularly useful in raising issues and presenting clear-cut points of view. Both written by historians, they analyse two related topics, Asian studies and Asian students in New Zealand.

Dr Pauline Keating's book is a strong plea for more Asian content in our educational institutions. The two great needs she identifies are for more Asian experts and for a higher level of knowledge of Asia among the general public. Since the latter will contribute directly to the former, she argues that the priority must be placed on 'mainstreaming' Asian studies at all levels of our education system.

From my own experience, I know that Asian scholars in New Zealand have been pursuing this plea for more than three decades – with minimal success, alas. The sudden realisation in the mid-1970s that our trade relations were ineluctably shifting to Asia brought Japanese language into our schools – but little else. Of course, one should not decry this achievement, for it was remarkable and rapid, but the notion that New Zealanders should be generally 'literate' in Asian history, cultures and languages has still not penetrated the political psyche. And the belief that economic advantage is the only rationale for introducing any Asian content into our education system is still widely expressed. Across the Tasman, a much more realistic approach has been taken over the past twenty years.

The situation in New Zealand that Dr Keating describes is almost desperate in the 'new environment' of the 1990s (p.5). At a time when our Asian trade is growing rapidly, when international academic networks are proliferating, when two-way tourism is accelerating, and when immigration is creating significant Asian communities in New Zealand, our general public still knows little of Asian cultures, and we still suffer a dearth of experts in Asian matters. Indeed, Keating is rather over-optimistic, in my opinion, when she outlines the current situation at the university level. Language departments are seriously under-resourced for the numbers of students seeking Asian language training. Our few Asian studies centres are also poorly funded for the immense tasks they are expected to perform. Even the Asia 2000 Foundation, an excellent government initiative in 1994, is hampered by government insistence that it become self-funding, an ideologically driven requirement which is certainly short-sighted for the interests of New Zealand as a whole and quite

inconsistent with government subsidy of the tourist industry, for example.

Keating points out that, despite their weaknesses, language programmes are ahead of general Asian studies courses in both universities and polytechnics. In part, this is due to an international (really, American) withdrawal from area studies back to disciplinary priorities, and in New Zealand this process was accelerated by Victoria University's unfortunate experience with its short-lived Asian Studies Centre in the 1970s. Heavily over-worked Asian language teachers have often been forced to introduce courses in Asian culture and society for their students because other disciplines have not done so. And Keating decries the lack of Asian content in any courses beyond the humanities. University departments of education, commerce, economics, law, for examples, are woefully innocent of the Asian world we live in.

The comparisons Keating draws with Australia point up the problems in every aspect of Asian studies. We lose our most promising experts because of the lack of adequate graduate programmes. We fail our language students because of the lack of any in-country training in Asia. Most important, we have no national strategy to develop Asian studies in New Zealand.

This last point Keating develops at length in her chapter on 'Ways Forward', over a quarter of the book (pp.50-78). Given the financial constraints in the education field, Keating argues that New Zealand should develop a national strategy to assure that we address such issues as the dearth of Asian languages offered (little beyond Japanese and Chinese), the effective

development of library resources, co-operation between polytechnics and universities, and the relations between the emerging Asian studies institutes. Let us hope this book is read by government leaders as well as the interested public.

In his examination of the role and presence of Asian students in New Zealand, Dr Neville Bennett argues forcefully that they will benefit New Zealand in a variety of ways, not all of which are self-evident. Having Asian students in New Zealand will, for example, assure New Zealand has future friends in high places, a benefit that anyone visiting Malaysia will recognise from meeting previous Colombo-Plan graduates of NZ universities.

Furthermore, according to Bennett, as well as contributing money to our universities, Asians will provide Kiwi students with the competition we need to improve our levels of scientific and mathematical knowledge. And they will help us to internationalise the curricula at all levels of our educational system, sorely lacking today, says Bennett. In other words, they will contribute to the 'Asia-literacy' that Keating is urging New Zealand to pursue.

While offering Asian students places in our universities was once thought of as aid to the Third World (the Colombo Plan was a prominent aspect of this policy), today education is seen as a commodity, to be sold on the international market as our wool, sheepmeat and kiwifruit are sold on their respective markets. A 1987 report of the NZ Market Development Board marks this conceptual shift, according to Bennett, one he evidently welcomes. 'The marketing of New Zealand's educational system overseas is a fascinating saga', he states (p.49), but offers no details to fascinate the reader.

Using 1996 figures, Bennett provides a detailed picture of the current situation in schools and universities, although there is little on polytechnics (only AIT) and nothing on colleges of education. At that time, there were 5,603 Asian students from overseas in 170 high schools (the table in the appendix numbers only 4,495, however) and 5,735 in our six universities. At the same time, there were over 16,856 students in private English-language institutes. These last are far less evident in our society, since many are taking short courses, and they have little contact with Kiwis beyond their homestay hosts.

In his final chapter, Dr Bennett sees a commercialised future for our universities, which he applauds. Universities responding to 'demand' will 'fit students for employment in a globalised and mobile environment' (p.86). Universities will become more 'internationalised' and provide 'deeper' (92) education as a result. Presumably the presence of Asian students will enhance this process.

Bennett's enthusiasm for a market model of education is certainly trendy, but it may ignore the long-range disadvantages of distorting our university curricula to meet 'demand' and eroding the relations of trust that are the foundation of our system. Knowledge develops through co-operative effort, and competition between different sectors may have more costs than benefits, as our scientific community is discovering today. Indeed, the rapid but fragile development of Asian studies in New Zealand, as Keating points out, requires a high level of co-operation and could be damaged by a market mentality among the various institutions involved. Surely we can welcome Asian students and gain benefit from

their presence without turning our schools into marketplaces.

There are editorial complaints that one could make about these books. For example, the notes in both books are filled with *op. cit.* for ops not yet cit! Bennett uses initials that sometimes leave the reader bewildered, e.g., 'the report by IDP Australia for DEET written in 1994' (p.77). And how can one remember thirty pages later what TAFE, ERASMUS or AUSTRAD mean? Furthermore, one would expect Dr Bennett to get his own vice-chancellor's name and initials right (p.50)! Still, these are minute quibbles; they do not seriously mar the easy accessibility of these publications and certainly will not prevent them from stimulating the public policy debate on Asia that we so badly need in New Zealand.

Jonathan Boston, Paul Dalziel and Susan St John, 1999 **Redesigning the Welfare State – Problems, Policies, Prospects.** Oxford University Press, 356p, $45.00.

Reviewed by Mike O'Brien
School of Social Policy and Social Work
Massey University

When I started teaching social policy almost two decades ago, there were constant, often justified, complaints from students about not having New Zealand material to work from. Such complaints are no longer sustainable – the volume of very good New Zealand material is now substantial, and the authors of this book and its publishers have played a very important part in filling that void. This book adds to the volume in both quantitative and, more significantly, in qualitative terms.

Reviewing it is difficult, not only because of my personal connections with the editors and many of the chapter authors and because of being an author of other work in the field, but more importantly because of the breadth and approach of the book's coverage. The authors set out to review the nature and directions of the changes in the welfare state in New Zealand over the last decade, a decade which has seen a steady and systematic direction of undoing and reshaping the framework of social and governmental supports in favour of individual and familial responsibility at both an ideological and material level.

The book falls into three parts. Part One provides some general conceptual and analytical material within which the specific developments of Part Two are explored. Thus, in Part One chapters review, inter alia, the role of the state, the nature of justice, Treaty dimensions of change, the macroeconomic framework of the changes and the targeting/universality debate. Part Two discusses such specific areas as housing, tertiary and compulsory education, ACC, superannuation, poverty and social security changes and the health reforms. One of the significant omissions is direct social services, an area that is regularly omitted from discussions of welfare state and social policy changes. The book concludes with a review chapter entitled 'Rebuilding an Effective Welfare State'. This final chapter concisely identifies the policy failure of the redesigners in each of the areas reviewed in Part Two and concludes with strong arguments for employment policy that is clear and informed and reductions in levels of poverty as central foci for the future welfare state.

This rather rapid summary does not do justice to the range of material covered here or to the usefulness of the material, both in terms of reminding us of the nature of the changes and, more importantly, in providing a broadly consistent social democratic framework through which to examine and analyse the nature and directions of the changes. While the core of this framework is not explicitly spelt out, the tenor of the discussions and the analytic framework within which those discussions are located are clearly based around a framework within which it is expected that the state can (and should) take an active role in enhancing the wellbeing of citizens, particularly those who are economically and socially disadvantaged. Not for these authors the simplistic nonsense so beloved of the neo-liberals who have destructively dominated so much of the policy and ideological developments of the last fifteen years. The neoliberal domination has been built on rhetoric, ideology and political power, usually without any shred of real evidence. One of the strengths of this collection is its attention to detailed evidence and to the use of normative judgement in assessing the meaning and implications of that evidence.

While there is no doubt that 'Redesigning the Welfare State in New Zealand' has an enormous contribution to make to our knowledge and analytic understanding of the processes and outcomes of the New Zealand Experiment (Kelsey, 1995) there are two reflections that I would like to raise in this review. First, the failure to explicitly identify the theoretical and ideological basis of the analysis and to use that actively throughout the specific contributions and more particularly in Parts One and Three leads to two outcomes. In the first place, something is lost in the coherence and cohesion of the overall work. This

coherence and cohesion is there implicitly, and in places explicitly, but there would have been real value in its being laid out for all to appreciate and understand. The chapters could have been more closely linked to central themes and been illustrative of those themes, thereby giving a strong alternative to the neoliberal dominance. For example, there is considerable useful material in chapter five on targeting, but this is only tangentially drawn on in later discussions on, for example, housing and social security changes.

Furthermore, articulation of the social democratic framework would have allowed expression of a strong and progressive promotion of future possibilities, built on an appropriate social, political, ideological and economic basis in which human, familial and community needs receive the attention they warrant rather than being marketised and commercialised as they have been since the mid 1980s. The final chapter does tend to concentrate on the ills of the reforms reviewed in the previous chapters, a concentration that is warranted and benefits from being concisely set out here. It is a concentration that the disciplines of neoliberalism have conveniently ignored. While there is also a useful reminder of the importance of employment and of the limitations of targeting, there would have been real value in spelling out the shape of a renewed socially democratic welfare state.

The second note of reflection moves in an entirely different direction. There is a vast body of international literature over the last decade which has attempted to explore the changing nature of social policy and welfare states, literature which has sought to engage, theoretically and concretely, with the somewhat elusive

tensions between the state, individuality, identity, community, social justice and difference. (Carter, 1998; O'Brien and Penna, 1998; Thompson and Hoggett, 1996; Williams 1992 provide a very good illustrations of this work.) Inter alia, one of the central questions underlying this exploration and the associated debates is the relationship between the long established concern in social policy with the enhancement of social justice and the attendant attention to issues of identity and difference. Unfortunately, these debates are not taken up in this book, but they are fundamental to both analysis of the future directions of social policy and welfare states here as elsewhere around the Western world. It would have been invaluable to have seen them opened up, particularly in the context of the development of targeting.

The neoliberal approach to targeting based on markets and individual choice represents a dangerous, dated and destructive form of response to social need in which we are all reduced to competitive individuals, devoid of any social nexus. However, this does not negate the importance of ensuring that provision, delivery and control of welfare occur in ways that reflect, respond to and enhance differences. Treaty imperatives, gender analysis, the insights from the disability movement all clearly demonstrate the need to ensure that a redesigned welfare state acknowledges and responds to difference. The key task for the analytic discipline of social policy and for its provision in specific concrete forms is to do so within a framework which is linked to social justice, and is not premised on the atomised individual so beloved of the mad marketeers.

I will go back to Redesigning the Welfare State on numerous occasions in the next few years. I am sure too

that my students will also be frequent visitors and their learning will be significantly enhanced by those visits. Thoughtful readers outside the academe will also find it invaluable. Unfortunately that excludes many of those who ought to read it and are in key policy positions that would enable them to act on it in socially useful ways!

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A. Quentin-Baxter (ed.), **Recognising the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1998, 216p, $29.00.

Reviwed by Paul Spoonley,
School of Sociology and Women's Studies,
Massey University

Having recently completed a book, with a colleague, on New Zealand's experiments with biculturalism and indigenous self-determination, it never occurred to us to spend much time on international statements about such matters. The historical process which has brought us to this point, the imposition of British institutions and values and the resistance, and sometimes acquiesance, by Tangata Whenua, and the contemporary and complex landscape of restitution, policy adjustments and the restoration of rights, or at least some of them, seemed to derive from the very specificity that is Aotearoa. International comparisons are drawn in acknowledgement of the common experiences of settler societies, and of the late twentieth century interest in belatedly and inadequately addressing the different issues of indigenous and ethnic rights. But to focus on international declarations was not part of our intention.

This book is a useful antidote to such an omission. It continues the contributions from the Institute of Policy Studies at Victoria University of Wellington which began with Peter Cleave's **The Sovereignty Game** through to Sir Douglas Graham's **Trick or Treaty?** The latest book derives from the presentations to a seminar held in 1997 which was co-sponsored by the New Zealand Chapter of the International Commission of Jurists and the New Zealand Branch of the International Law Association.

This signals its legal heritage, and of the nine substantive chapters all but one are written by lawyers, although those include contributors such as Doug Graham, Maui Solomon and Joe Williams. The speakers, and now the writers, were asked to consider the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples(NNDRIP) and how it might relate to the rights of self-determination and 'the right to participate fully, if they [indigenous peoples] so choose, at all levels of decision-making...'(p.x). It was to be a New Zealand response to a significant international statement on rights and indigeneity.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People comes in the UN-declared decade on the rights of indigenous peoples and it addresses what is possibly the most significant unresolved issue dating from the period of European colonisation. In the post-war period, international pressure, including 'declarations', have come to represent an important element in the restating of humanitarian rights, and the renegotiation of indigenous rights in particular. Attention has been drawn to such issues by various international agencies, and the option of resolution and sometimes litigation has been possible through international networks, pressure and institutions such as the World Court. The process has been helped by the guilt generated amongst Western powers by their unwillingness to do anything effective about the situation faced by European Jews in the 1930s and the subsequent Holocaust, by the assertiveness and politics of newly independent states in the colonised world and by the critical rereading of colonial histories. It is emblematic that in this period of re-evaluation, global agencies should provide an important forum and conscience in addressing the widely variable sets of

issues raised by the colonisation and exploitation of indigenous peoples. The question now is how well does this book traverse these issues, in this case for a New Zealand audience?

The answer, as always with an edited question, is that it varies according to the particular author concerned and the reader. The first thing to draw attention to is the structure of the book. There is a foreword, a preface (it is interesting to see Sir Paul Reeves quoting Edward Said) and an introduction, in addition to a summing up and a postscript. The front and back ends of the book are a bit crowded and most of it does not add much. There is one notable exception. Joe Williams 'Summing Up' is to the point, insightful and an excellent guide to the contents of the book. I would suggest that it should be read first. He summarises the central points of individual contributions, highlights what he sees as the important issues and why. He warns that the UNDRIP should not be read 'like a Warehouse money back guarantee' (p.187), and that the words should not take over from the spirit of the document. He even manages to introduce the debate involving Las Casas some 500 years ago about the rights of colonised peoples. It is all done with a touch of humour and succinctly.

This is not true of some of the other contributions although an exception must be made for Douglas Graham's chapter. It is still a puzzle as to why a conservative government should have come up with such a Minister who has not only carried the arguments of indigenous rights to what must have been a hostile Cabinet table, but he has extracted some important concessions and resources. An indication of why he has managed to do as much as he has is provided here as he develops a reasoned – and reasonable – account of

self-determination, although it is not without its problems, as the following complaint exemplifies:

...I find it offensive that Maori people go overseas and say that they are oppressed *here today*...I don't think that Maori are *oppressed.* They *were* but they are not today (p.14; italics in original)

Perhaps such feelings are justifiable after the tribulations of being a Cabinet Minister with such an unpopular portfolio, although he is quite wrong to argue the above. One of the most significant social policy issues for the first decades of the twenty-first century will be the intensification of Maori marginalisation and poverty.

In his wake come a number of more densely argued legal contributions. Alison Quentin-Baxter examines international and constitutional law contexts, and the degree of correspondance between the Treaty of Waitangi, and the restatement of these rights in recent decades, with UNDRIP. She concludes that the local statutory provisions for Maori are an important step in the right direction, although she does seem to lack the courage of her convictions. In trying to reconcile kawanatanga and tino rangatiratanga, she comments that '[t]he political rights of indigenous peoples included in the Draft Declaration seem likely to help us with the task'(p.45). Coming at the end of the chapter, it does not convey much confidence. Matthew Palmer's chapter traverses similar ground (statutory provisions, international practice and precedents) but comes down on the side of a much greater investment in relationship building. It is a point that is well-made but the author calls upon other legal commentators (McHugh) and an

historian (Coates) but with no reference to the considerable and relevant literature provided by contributors such as Will Kymlicka, John Gray or the material available in the edited book by Margaret Wilson and Anna Yeatman (**Justice and Identity. Antipodean Practices**, Bridget Williams Books, 1995). The same is true for other contributions. It is as though there are parallel debates and literatures with little cross-fertilisation. The same frustration was generated by the chapter by Magallanes. It is titled 'A New Zealand Case Study : Child Welfare', but we are told about the USA, Canada, Nicaragua and Australia – and New Zealand. Its strength is in identifying what should happen in protecting children's social and cultural rights, and the international comparative material, but the complex local terrain is only skimmed, and there is not a lot of detail, nor an acknowledgement of what is currently being provided and negotiated by a range of voluntary and community agencies, both iwi and urban Maori.

In contrast to this group of chapters are those by Maori contributors to the book. Denese Henare writes on health care, but before coming to it, discusses self-determination and autonomy for Maori. What is particularly interesting is that she highlights local Maori reactions to some of the international statements, including UNDRIP. For instance, a local hui concluded that 'indigenous peoples should not be required to state in what circumstances they would exercise such a basic human right [self-determination],nor should they be required to accept qualifications on the nature of the right'. This is more like it. Here is a sense that international declarations are useful in creating moral and political pressure but they are not going to dictate what Maori are seeking nor how they are going to achieve it. Similar issues are addressed in Maui

Solomon's chapter although there is rather more of the international material. But there is noticable difference in emphasis in those chapters written by Maori, and an interesting edge which (and here I am guessing) reflects their direct participation in what self-determination actually means on the ground in Aotearoa at the end of the century.

I started by observing that we had perhaps not devoted adequate attention to international statements of indigenous rights. This book helps rectify that balance but it is not without its frustrations. Often the international context is discussed and the modest length of the chapters then means that local material is not given sufficient coverage. This is particularly apparent in those contributions which talked in generalities about human rights and self-determination without getting down to the difficulties – often substantial – in giving practical effect to high-sounding rhetoric about cultural rights. The events of the mid and late 1990s have well demonstrated the internal dissension amongst Maori as well as the battle required to convince other non-Maori groups and institutions that self-determination should be taken seriously and that it needs to be appropriately resourced. This book seldom rehearses such matters. There is also the question of how relevant such declarations as the UNDRIP are to local developments. This book works hard to link international activity and local issues, but I am still left with the sense that the connections are often tenuous. Others can read this collection and draw their own conclusions.

Bassett, M., 1998 **The State in New Zealand 1840-1984: Socialism without doctrines?** Auckland University Press, Auckland, 445p, $39.95

Reviewed by Angela Jury
School of Sociology and Women's Studies
Massey University

Given the interest in the sweeping changes to the New Zealand State in recent years, a comprehensive history of the path that had led the nation to crisis in 1984 has been long overdue. This is precisely what Michael Bassett promises the reader in *The State in New Zealand 1840-1984: socialism without doctrines.* Bassett's twofold ambitions for the book are, firstly, examination of the rationale underpinning state activity, a response to his observation that such exploration is missing from previous commentaries, and, secondly, a discussion of the effects through time of "the public's early belief in government omnipotence" (p.15). It was with some anticipation that I immersed myself in Bassett's words, expectancy flavored by hope that his cabinet rank within the Fourth Labour caucus would enable insights unavailable outside the inner circles of state power.

Bassett organises New Zealand history into twelve chapters, each corresponding to variations of state philosophy and activity. Each shift of government direction is carefully linked into its international context with policy seen as largely a response to changing external influences, i.e. military conflicts and economic crises.

He offers up a wealth of detail drawn from a wide array of sources, ranging from interviews and

conversations with prominent business and political figures, through to the archives of government departments and newspapers, trade magazines and union publications. These are interspersed with comment from the civil service, Bassett's own journals and recollections, and, on occasion, the wider public. The thesis advanced by Bassett is that the New Zealand state, and the eventual crisis of 1984, were the inevitable results of years of misguided intervention by successive governments in areas best left to private interests.

The author supports his view of history by leading the reader through a journey illustrating the incremental growth of state activity in New Zealand. The tour commences with the birth of the New Zealand state - the 1840 arrival at Kororareka of Lieutenant Governor William Hobson, accompanied by a fledgling civil service in the form of several Sydney officials and with the military backing of around 100 Australian troops. It eventually winds to a close in the early 1980s, with more than 20% of the population on the government payroll, state expenditure running at around 30% of GDP, and with bureaucratic interference seemingly endemic in everyday life.

Early activity by Hobson and successive governors was largely devoted to the infrastructural demands of the burgeoning settler population, primarily bridge and road building. Although originally to be financed through land sales, these soon proved inadequate, leading to the development of a rudimentary tariff and licensing structure. These too became insufficient, and within a short time the government was resorting to overseas borrowing. This seemed unavoidable as infrastructural improvements could not be ignored or postponed if the

steady stream of new immigrants (necessary for further economic growth) was to be maintained. By the late 1850s and early 60s central government required a staff of almost 200, with another several hundred employed by provincial authorities. Not only was the civil service well entrenched, but also overseas borrowing had become a common source of development financing. By this time, Bassett suggests the pattern of state development in decades to come was firmly established; "[I]n their search for order and progress in the South Seas, settlers were giving birth to big government" (p.40).

The next milestone of the centralised state came with the abolition of provincial government in 1876, serving to more deeply embed the authority of central government. By 1890, according to Bassett, "[t]he paternalistic power of central government was the dominant feature of New Zealand life..." (p.43). This period saw the beginnings of government forays into commercial activity on a large scale. Extensive state energy and finance was invested in development of local industry – primarily those exploiting natural resources, (forests, flax and coal), but also fledgling manufacturing enterprises (paper and steel making). The same period saw the entry of the state into service industries such as banking and insurance, along with the strengthening of state monopolies over the rapidly expanding rail and telegraph networks.

Growing apace with its efforts in the commercial sphere were expectations that the state would assume responsibility for an ever-increasing range of social concerns. In relatively quick order the government found itself responsible for the health and education of its citizens. Alongside these came the need to care for the

sick and the indigent. In short, wherever a need was perceived, it was to the state that the population turned first for remedy. Government response to such demands was, more often than not, positive, and generally extended well past mere funding of solutions. Instead the state assumed control of service delivery and regulation, accompanied by a seemingly endless spiral of bureaucratic growth.

Such levels of state involvement however did not enjoy the unanimous support of all within government. While a certain level of state intervention was seen as inevitable, ideals of individual rather than collective responsibility remained strong. This philosophy was to be severely shaken by the widespread social upheaval experienced during an era marked by economic strife, culminating in the great depression of the 1930s. It was a change destined to have long-lived and far-reaching consequences.

Swept into office in the aftermath of the depression, the First Labour Government was determined to ensure that New Zealanders were protected from future vagaries of international economic influences. And so came a time of ever increasing state intervention as Labour launched what came to be known as 'cradle to grave' welfare, with scarcely an aspect of society untouched by government regulation. This pattern was to continue under various governments for the next half-century. Whatever the international forces in play, from world wars to economic downturns, governments manipulated the New Zealand economy via a vast and complicated array of tariffs, licenses and regulations. Thus producing, according to Bassett, a jerry-built and bureaucratically over-burdened structure, which, unless radically

reformed, was inevitably destined to collapse. Reforms that the 1984 Labour government (of which Bassett was a part) were eager to begin.

Yet is Bassett's view of history accurate... complete...partial...ideologically driven? These are questions dependent upon the reader's ability to not only 'read between the lines' but also to decipher the rhetorical devices that Bassett frequently employs. I have no wish to enter debate with the author on the information he presents. His research appears painstakingly rigorous and detailed, is accompanied by voluminous endnotes, and interrogates an incredible range of sources. My concerns lie more with the manner in which it is presented and the aspects of New Zealand society that he either dismisses as of little import or omits altogether.

My strongest argument with Bassett is the way in which he presents a uni-dimensional model of the New Zealand state whereby all of society is reducible to the economy – economy writ large with all other aspects of society of only peripheral concern. This narrow focus, if viewed from anything other than the neo-liberal perspective adopted by Bassett, runs counter to any but the most unsophisticated understandings of the state today. As Richard Mulgan suggests, a study of the New Zealand political system "will look at any aspect of society which will be relevant to understanding political decision-making and the workings of state institutions...There are few, if any, aspects of society which may not at some time in some respect be politically relevant" (1994:6-7). Bassett however appears to discount entirely all ideas of society as a complex and interconnected phenomenon, seeing the state only in terms of its role as an economic regulator.

The shallowness of Bassett's understanding is clearly illustrated in his dismissive recounting of events not directly connected to the economic machinery of the state. Ideas of gender conflict, ethnic struggle, labour unrest and so on all receive like treatment. These are presented on more than one occasion as little more than the diversionary tactics of political figures. He claims at one point that when Rob Muldoon's economic 'tinkering' seemed "not to be working he would divert public attention from his economic management. Nuclear ship visits, Pacific Island 'overstayers', a Maori land occupation at Bastion Point in Auckland and...a Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand in 1981...provided continuing sideshows from which the Prime Minister was a master at extracting the maximum political capital" (p.339). Elsewhere the violent social unrest during the 1981 tour is described as "distracting violence...which was then mollified to some extent by a visit from the Queen" (p.362). The insignificance attributed to these events by Bassett reveals an understanding of their impact that is naive at best. As has been pointed out by others (Kelsey 1997 Wilkes 1993), their influence was profound, causing lasting change to the relationship between the public and state. While it may be true that 'political capital' was made from such instances, this in no way lessens their effects upon the nation. Indeed, many continue to reverberate today.

Comments similar to the above appear with irritating frequency throughout the book. On a similar point, it is worth noting another rather cheap device used by Bassett to support his arguments. As mentioned earlier, the book is extremely rich in detail, the richest (and more extensive) of which is reserved for the most ludicrous examples of state mismanagement that could be

imagined. This, of course, supports Bassett's argument that state involvement in commerce is a misguided and wasteful use of taxpayer dollars, and, given the instances he notes, this is difficult to refute. Yet as the reader's mind is being quietly anesthetized by the carefully documented minutiae of bureaucratic ineptitude, they may well miss the lightly interspersed mentions of state success stories. This technique is exemplified by his discussion of State Insurance on pages 107-108 offering two (disapproving) paragraphs outlining consumer benefits from this state activity, immediately followed by several pages detailing the costly failure of early attempts to stimulate tourism. While not questioning the veracity of the evidence offered by Bassett, his presentation style is unfortunate and demonstrates a glaring lack of balance.

So, in the overall picture, does Bassett's book make a useful contribution to our knowledge of the New Zealand state? The answer will depend entirely upon the reader's purpose. As a record of the numerous stumblings of an infant state system, it provides some fascinating historical detail, offering a veritable 'who's who' of political actors in a relatively easily accessible format. And it undoubtedly has value as a chronological account of state growth. However, if the reader is searching for sociological analysis of the 'whys' of state development, Bassett has relatively little to offer. His narrow economic focus means that too much is omitted from his discussion for serious conclusions to be drawn. Of particular concern is his almost total neglect of contemporary issues concerning the relationships between Maori and Pakeha, and Maori and the state. This omission is difficult to fathom, especially considering the recent publication date. Similarly, his superficial treatment of environmental and gender issues is

perplexing, as is his failure to discuss questions around our military alliances and international relationships. New Zealand's earlier imperial ambitions in the South Pacific, for instance, receive no mention. That these issues have exerted powerful formative influences on the New Zealand state is undeniable. Bassett's lack of attention to a multitude of such areas means that, in the final analysis, his book must be judged as seriously flawed.

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Jack Hodder and Jane Foster, **The Employment Contracts Act: The Judicial Influence 1991-1997.** Wellington, Institute of Policy Studies, 1998, 107p, $29.00

Paul Roth
Faculty of Law
University of Otago

This is a thin book in more senses than one. Its length is about the same as a longish journal article, except that it

could never pass muster as one. This is because it has no particular thesis or argument except the somewhat thin unifying theme that because courts decide cases, they will inevitably wield some influence over the outcome. Moreover, the book contains no footnotes or endnotes. This, as it turns out, is no drawback, since no secondary sources are cited. This might seem a surprising omission given the sizable literature on adjudication under the Employment Contracts Act (ECA),[1] but the authors are evidently not interested in undertaking a serious and sustained analysis of their ostensible topic. It is somewhat disconcerting, there, to be informed in the book's foreword that this work had been commissioned by Treasury and that 'the overall research programme of which this publication forms a part was designed with the aim of enhancing the quality of policy advice at the disposal of the New Zealand Government' (p.ix).[2]

The book is particularly disappointing because the other books in this series are superb, and the authors of

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[1] See in particular the *Symposium on New Zealand's Employment Contracts Act 1991*, (1997) 28(1) *California Western International Law Journal*, which also contains a useful annotated bibliography on the subject.

[2] Jack Hodder also co-authored (with Joanna Holden and Sarah Coleman) a report for the Department of Labour entitled 'Review of the Institutions and the Employment Contracts Act 1991 – The Meaning of "Unjustifiable Dismissal"' (November 1997), which overlaps with the topic presented in this book. The Department of Labour commissioned that report in part to ascertain whether the specialist employment institutions were properly interpreting the ECA at a time when there was some pressure to abolish the Employment Court (see Terms of Reference in Schedule 1 of the report).

this book are well respected and knowledgeable in their field. It is also disappointing in that the authors do not clearly nail their colours to the mast: the reader is simply not told what they are setting out to prove. This is frustrating, because there are hints here and there that the authors are taking a line that is critical of the Employment Court's jurisprudence for its 'pro-employee' or 'activist' tendencies, and that they would favour a more purely contractual approach, as espoused by Richard Epstein, the Business Roundtable and others of the so-called 'New Right'. The reader, however, is left hungering for the authors to take a position – any position – so that at least there is some point of reference, whether one agrees with the position taken or not. Even the jeremiads launched against the specialist employment jurisdiction by the Business Roundtable are better, since they at least have an argument.[3]

What the reader of a book on the judicial influence upon a particular area of the law expects is first, to be informed of the methodology that is proposed to be used for dealing with the subject, and why it is

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[3] See *The Labour/Employment Court: An Analysis of the Labour/Employment Court's Approach to the Interpretation and Application of Employment Legislation*, New Zealand Business Roundtable & New Zealand Employers' Federation, December 1992; Charles W Baird, *The Employment Contracts Act and Unjustifiable Dismissal: the Economics of an Unjust Employment Tax*, Wellington: New Zealand Business Roundtable, 1996; Richard Epstein, *Employment Law: Courts and Contracts*, Wellington: New Zealand Business Roundtable, 1996; Colin Howard, *Interpretation of the Employment Contracts Act 1991*, New Zealand Business Roundtable & New Zealand Employers' Federation, 1995.

appropriate; and second, to be convinced that judges either are or are not exerting an impermissible (or even undesirable) influence on the law. This book falls down on both accounts.

The methodology is vague seat-of-the-pants stuff. The authors state in the book's introduction that they will proceed by 'analysing the language, reasoning and decisions' of the relevant courts (p.3). How will they do this? What are they looking for? There is a literature on this very subject, but of course it is ignored.

Faced with an immense volume of court decisions that are relevant to their proposed enterprise, the authors tell us that they will deal only with what they deem to be "the more important of the reported decisions"(p.3). The authors thus do not look at any of the many decisions that go unreported in the *Employment Reports of New Zealand*, or even inquire into the basis of why some decisions are reported and others not, or why 'less important' decisions should be ignored. We are simply expected to trust them to single out the 'more important' of the reported ones. The authors explain that one criterion they have used for determining these is that 'they illustrate significant aspects of the judicial application of the ECA'. The circular logic is not reassuring.

Then there follows a brief section entitled 'The Basis for Comparison' (p.4). This informs the reader that although it had been intended to use the common (judge-made) law of contract as the basis for analysing the judicial decisions under the ECA, that plan turned out to be inappropriate as a general basis for comparison. The answer was to supplement this with 'a more notional "free contracting" approach of the kind

which may not now be fully available even to major parties entering, enforcing and disputing commercial contracts' (p.5). In other words, the authors propose to use non-existent and undefined 'ought to be' law as a standard of comparison for measuring how judges actually go about their business in the employment law sphere.

If this sounds dubious, it does not really matter because the reader will see very little trace of any kind of methodological framework in the rest of the book. It is clear that the author's idea of 'analysis' is to sum up in a nutshell what a court held in particular cases. Indeed, after the first three short chapters, which are introductory in nature ('Introduction', 'The Judicial Influence: A Summary', and 'Specialist Institutions'), most of the book is comprised of dreary case summaries of 200 to 400 words. The range of topics covered span the main areas of employment contract law as decided in the Employment Court and Court of Appeal. After a perfunctory introductory paragraph or two in each chapter or section, however, case summaries are presented one after another.

These case summaries lead nowhere and prove nothing. For example, in the section headed 'Offers and Representations', the first line or so of the first three paragraphs on p.28 begin as follows:

> 'In *O'Malley (No. 2)* (1992), Judge Palmer granted a permanent injunction ...'

> 'In *Eketone* (1993), the Court of Appeal rejected a claim ...'

'In *Harawira* (1994), Judge Finnigan reversed an Employment Tribunal decision ...'

If this sort of 'analysis' rivets the reader, then there are the sections with such titles as 'Leading Court of Appeal Decisions' and 'Illustrative Employment Court Decisions' to look forward to that contain further case summaries. The book even abruptly ends with a case summary rather than a proper conclusion ('In *Nedax Systems* (1994), Chief Judge Goddard declined an employer's application for an interim injunction ...'). If nothing else, the book is admirable for its dogged stylistic consistency.

In short, for the reader with a real thirst for summaries of the 'more important' cases until 1997, this is the book to get. What else will the reader get out of this book? The layperson may be able to pick up a smattering of out-of-context employment law as decided by judges who largely seem to know what they are doing under the ECA. The specialist reader, however, will only get disappointed.

Mason Durie, 1998 **Whaiora: Maori Health Development**. Second edition, Auckland, Oxford University Press, 244p.

Reviewed by Patricia Laing
Social Work
Victoria University of Wellington

Mason Durie has played an extraordinary role in constructing Maori health as we know it. In this second edition of *Whaiora: Maori Health Development* he continues this activity. He reconstructs the history of Maori health in Aotearoa/New Zealand, gives his account of recent health developments, and thus sets the scene for his vision of the future. He wonders why there has not been a great deal of rejoicing about Maori health gains, over what he describes as 'an unparalleled success story' (p.216). The fact that morality rates have never been better is a reason which does not convey 'the struggle or enjoyment of day-by-day existence' (p.216). Going beyond 'mere survival' and 'improvements in standards in physical health...at the expense of the other dimensions of health' (p.217) belongs to the future. Standards of health that encompass wairua (the spiritual dimension), hinengaro (the mental dimension) and whanau (the family dimension) are what the future of Maori health promises.

The development of more encompassing health standards, Durie believes, is essential to further health gains for Maori. This is also the justification for the recruitment of a Maori workforce (p.205). A very important theme that is developed more strongly in this edition than the first concerns the scope of Maori health. Durie says (p.182):

> The health sector does not have a monopoly on policies which affect health. Most of the social policy areas, but especially housing, employment, welfare, education, and income maintenance, are critical for determining health status. Health authorities have a role to play in advocating that all policies should be assessed for their health impact. A refocused health service as a way of improving Maori health status, for example, may be less important than policies of full employment.

This approach is central to Durie's Maori health development.

Durie has an all-encompassing understanding of the implications of the application of the Treaty of Waitangi, biculturalism and the health reforms to Maori health status and development. His perspective arises from extensive participation on government committees, commissions and as a consultant who advises government. He has prepared numerous papers offering guidelines and frameworks intended to shape the health services to which Maori will have access. Durie has continued the process of constructing Maori health as the health reforms and subsequent restructuring relocated and redistributed power within the health sector. From a reading of his book one can certainly appreciate the scope of Maori health and health initiatives. Also evident is the way Maori have adapted their strategies as purchasers and providers have shifted and changed.

Whairoa: Maori Health Development has a significant biographical dimension from which Durie distances himself. Continually reading what the author has to say about Durie in the third person grates. This

book provides perhaps the only comprehensive account of Maori Health and development by one of the key players, an insider in more settings than Maori. It offer an opportunity for reflection on his position in these processes which is not taken. Durie talks about Maori health in a post-colonial world but he does not reflect on the implications that might have for the way he presents his account. Despite repeated references to the distinction between Maori and Iwi, and to the diversity among Maori, this construction of Maori health reads as a universal Maori perspective. Maori health is indeed complex as Durie points out. However, the lack of reflection on his part in the construction of Maori health, and the influence of his medical training is gaining the expert position that he holds leads to a selective and politically positioned account.

The argument for the central importance of health gains for Maori is the same one that Sir Maui Pomare used when he sought to establish the hold of medicine over Maori which, whether he knew it or not, was a part of the process of colonisation. Durie minimises Sir Maui Pomare's and Sir Peter Buck's participation in the suppression of tohunga when he says (p.44 they 'have reservations about traditional and not-so-traditional Maori healing and were favourably disposed to the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) (see Dow, 1995:65). Durie (p.45) acknowledges that 'Notwithstanding the Suppression of Tohunga Act and Kenana's arrest in 1916 Maori healers remained powerful political figures none more so than Tahupotiki Wiremu Ratana.' Durie emphasises what the healers, including Te Puea Hereangi, had in common with Pomare and Buck, the medical doctors. Significantly Te Whiti o Rongomai is absent from this discussion. He and Pomare stuggled

over which vision of the future Maori would follow. Durie does not engage with Malcolm Voyce's (1969) paper that provides an account of the prosecutions of tohunga under the legislation on witchcraft transplanted into New Zealand law. This paper indicates clearly why tohunga went underground.

At points in Durie's account there are moments of contention that are not explored. For instance, when Durie describes the establishment of the Maori Women's Welfare League and its relationship to the Women's Health League, he bases his interpretation of events on Michael King's (1991) biography of Whina Cooper rather than including the perspective set out in Rangitiaria Denan's (1968) autobiography. Her Women's Health League perspective is quite different from Whina Cooper's. He criticises (p.67) the medical anthropologists for reinterpreting Maori concepts of illness into 'mental and psychic realms, scarcely relevant to the vast majority of human illnesses and hardly applicable to contemporary times'. Apparently he does not realise that this was a deliberate ploy on Sir Apirana Ngata's part to keep the expert healing knowledge of the tohunga alive in the face of the colonising onslaught of Western medicine (See Ngata and Sutherland, 1940).

Durie's account similarly minimises the differences between Western medicine and traditional healers today. He emphasised the recognition that the health sector gives to Maori accessing traditional healers. Since the first edition he has been involved in constructing a framework within which all traditional health, not just Maori, might be considered (p.208). If there had been a more explorative approach to the history of the relationship between Maori traditional healing and Western medicine it would be easy to

understand why some healers and their clients disagree with Durie's position. As Durie notes (p.209):

> Not all healers, or their clients, are keen for the formalisation of healing services. Some fear that their autonomy will be lost and the nature of healing methods changed, simply to accommodate official requirements. Nonetheless, so they can be part of the publicly funded health system and more accessible to clients, a degree of formalisation is necessary, and many other healers have recognised that point. The retention of a special character and a high level of autonomy need not be scarified, provided the indicators used to measure activities and outcomes are appropriate.

There is a huge literature in medical anthropology that documents the way in which Western medicine is implicated in colonisation, particularly the suppression of traditional health (see the extensive work of Joan and John Comaroff for instance). My reading of the anthropological literature provokes me to ask, What is happening here? On what account is formulation necessary? Who are the healers who recognise the point? Who decides what measures and outcomes are appropriate? Where does the responsibility for choosing healing services rest? In what cultural contest will traditional healing practices be assessed?

As with the Tohunga Suppression Act (1907) and the Quackery Prevention Act (1908) the *Framework for Purchasing Traditional Healing Services* has significant implications for alternative therapies such as naturopathy, Reiki and reflexology which are among a number that Maori healers draw on in addition to traditional practices.

Durie's *Whaiora: Maori Health Development* provides the only comprehensive account of health services for Maori and as such it is crucial reading. A critical read is necessary to ensure that the unquestioning acceptance of Durie's attempt to incorporate traditional healing practices into the Western health sector does not lead to a renewed suppression of them. This critical reading is important since Durie identifies a future in which standards of Maori health will encompass wairua, hinengaro and whanau, key aspects of traditional healing.

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Steven Webster, 1998 **Patrons of Maori Culture: Power, Theory and Ideology in the Maori Renaissance.** Dunedin, University of Otago Press, 296p. $39.95

Reviewed by Dr. Patricia Maringi Johnston,
Department of Maori and Multicultural Education,
Massey University.

Patrons of Maori Culture is a collection of eight essays written by Steven Webster between 1984 and 1994. The collection is grouped into three central themes for discussion: 'culture' (Chapters one and two), 'history' (of Anthropology), (Chapters three through five), and 'university' (Chapters six through eight). The book begins with an introduction section that attempts to weave together various thoughts and research across those three themes. This review briefly examines those themes in terms of their contribution to defining Maori culture and a Maori Renaissance.

Drawing from his own research and participation as an outsider, Webster's anthropological studies of Maori culture purport to take into account a '*special regard to the political economic context which historically undermines, promotes, or holds this culture in place*' (p.7). His intention – through the books title of *Patrons of Maori Culture*, is to invoke a 'wider context of power, inequality and patronage in which every culture must be understood' (p.7). The chapters on culture 'are devoted to an introductory exploration of the contemporary ambiguities of the notion of Maori culture' (p.19), whereby Webster alludes us to some of the contexts within which struggles over representations, and different

theoretical positions relating to Maori culture, is played out, particularly within anthropological circles. While he alerts us to the constraints and 'politics' associated with defining Maori culture (and later Maori Studies), he neither identifies nor establishes clear links as to how those contexts 'politically' operate to marginalise Maori points of view, or indeed, how he operates peripherally within those very frameworks himself as a person in a position of power to create, define and represent Maori culture in specific theoretically viable ways. Chapter Two for example, is based on Webster's observations of four Maori who visit Rapanui (Easter Island) and from these observations makes generic assumptions about the inter-relationships between Maori and Rapanui culture. More importantly however, is that while initially his role is one of spectator and holiday-goer, he soon develops himself into a different role; one of theorists and expert on the events that are taking shape.

The chapters on culture further examine specifically the notion of a Maori Renaissance tracing there beginnings to as early as the 1920s with the development of 'Maoritanga'. He raises questions in regard to the existence of a 'paradox': '*Maori cultural efflorescence links with Maori social deterioration*' (p.13), a theme that is prevalent throughout the book. Webster draws links to increasing Maori schizophrenia and drug and alcohol disorders concurrent with the Maori renaissance of the 1980s (p.117), drawing attention to many Maori being seemingly far worse off, even with the existence of the renaissance.

Furthermore, *Patrons of Maori Culture* highlights the development of Maori culture as 'inventive' or constructed (p.229), serving more the '*beneficiaries...its opportunistic patrons, Maori as well as Pakeha, than the*

majority of Maori themselves' (p.19). However, such 'inventiveness' or 'constructions' can arguably be positioned as a product of particular political and historical contexts. For example, assimilatory education policies and curriculum endeavoured to divorce Maori from their cultural roots by banning cultural practices and the speaking of Maori language in schools (Simon, 1990). Such links between the decrease in Maori cultural practices and government policies of the times, has resulted in resistance by Maori formulated into the development of a new political consciousness (Greenland, 1991), of which the reclamation of culture forms but one part. An analysis of such developments in *Patrons of Maori Culture* is divorced from wider Maori political, social and economic factors that an in-depth analysis of *Power, Theory and Ideology in the Maori Renaissance* would have alluded the reader to.

Webster's critique of anthropology is superb as he clearly articulates and outlines who has been involved in shaping wider theoretical positions and understandings of Maori culture. It is crystal clear from *Patrons of Maori Culture* that anthropologists have described us according to their own theoretical belief systems (see p.115), and those positions have impacted on how Maori have been viewed by the world. One particular example is whether or not Maori groups form or constitute haapu. Webster (p.127-134) argues that they do, but the point is that regardless of whether or not Maori see themselves as such, is inconsequential until proven so by anthropologists.

A second equally powerful observation that arises from reading *Patrons of Maori Culture* is the number of anthropologists who have made their careers from

studying Maori. The term study, in this instance is unquestionably 'Microscope-ic'; while reading this book, I often felt like an insect pinned to a piece of card, observed by some 'all seeing eye' through the lens of opposing but nevertheless, ever present theoretical position. I am reminded of a quote from Edward Said (1985) who, in describing how definitions of a people referred to as 'Oriental' is contained within and represented by dominating frameworks, states that the Oriental is depicted as:

> ...something one judges (as in a court of law), something one studies and depicts (as in a curriculum), something one disciplines (as in a school or prison), [and] something one illustrates (as in a zoological manual) (p.40).

Substituting the term Maori for Oriental brings the analogy a lot closer to home – in fact, far too close for comfort. Often, the haunting words that speak back to me from *Patrons of Maori Culture* position Maori as the object, the subject, the studied, the illustrated but never as the people, the subjugated or the colonized.

Patrons of Maori Culture *contains an excellent analysis and critique of Social Anthropology at the University of Auckland, including a well documented chronology of who was involved, how they were involved and why. That critique documents a thorough history of the development of Maori Studies, initially through the Department of Anthropology, and later, as a 'stand alone' Department in its own right. The politics associated with the development of Maori Studies, its associated Departmental Heads, the building of the marae and whose interests influence and are best served by all these developments, is well documented.*

Patrons of Maori Culture: Power, Theory and Ideology in the Maori Renaissance outlines a range of positions that are both controversial and thought provoking. The book does not provide a clear framework of power or ideology, any connection is left largely to the reader to make. It provides examples that are contestable and some of the analysis is open to challenge. The historical documentation of anthropology and the development of Maori Studies are superb, however, the notion of a Maori Renaissance is still a problematic construction. The existence of a renaissance continues to be promoted through theoretical paradigms that locate Maori as Subject, Object, Studies, positions that take for granted the promotion of Maori culture as an invented modern re-construction that has done little to improve the life chances or choices of Maori, at all.

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Linda Tuhiwai Smith, 1998 **Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples.** University of Otago Press, Dunedin, 208p. $39.95

Reviewed by Hine Waitere-Ang
Te Uru Maraurau:
Department of Maori and Multicultural Education
Massey University

When I was a student within education traversing the terrains of academia, I waded through numerous courses and their associated reading lists. However in seeking positions that acknowledged and validated indigenous points of view, no list or library shelf seemed quite so bereft of space as did those of indigenous peoples' voices, speaking on behalf of themselves. Currently as a lecturer involved in teaching, researching and compiling reading lists myself, I write this review appreciative that finally we have a book dedicated to exploring the complexities of research and indigenous peoples combined. The publication of Linda Smith's seminal book, *Decolonising Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, makes a significant contribution to methodological discussions involving indigenous peoples by drawing from and grounding the issues within the narratives of groups who have historically constituted the object of study. Finally we have a book in which Smith presents arguments that not only locate researchers in the research text, (beside the indigenous researched 'other') but also one that encourages the space for indigenous peoples to identify their own research priorities and to theorise their own lives.

Decolonising Methodologies has a two pronged focus. The first half of the book works to deconstruct and contest colonial and imperial-centric logics of inquiry and

their universalising tendencies. Smith's counter narrative of 'research', 'researchers' and the 'researched', challenges the reader to consider each phenomenon as a socio-cultural construct within the Western archive. By examining the public body of knowledge on indigenous peoples, Smith reveals an interconnected audit trail of traveller's tales, scholarly and imaginative works called to the service of imperial and colonial interests. We are reminded however, that talking back and providing a counter narrative to Colonial an Imperial views of the word (antithetic to indigenous epistemologies by itself) does little to prevent people from dying. Rather, for Smith, talking back provides the context in which indigenous research interests and priorities contest space and struggle to be heard. In the latter chapters of Decolonising Methodologies, Smith maps out a number of research approaches and processes emerging out of indigenous communities focused strategically on self-determination, social justice and emancipatory goals. The shift in focus centres the development of research conceptualised and carried out by indigenous people researching 'in', 'with', and 'for' indigenous communities that is built on a foundation of respect, ethics and utility.

While few articles or papers emerging from indigenous peoples' conferences are included in academic refereed journals, or placed at centre stage, they do exist, albeit as appendages often difficult to find in larger texts that attempt to meet the needs of all 'others'. For those who persevere and hear an indigenous critique of research, many have:

> ...openly challenged the research community about such things as racist practices and attitudes, ethnocentric assumptions and exploitative research,

> sounding warning bells that research can no longer be conducted with indigenous communities as if their views did not count or their lives did not matter (Smith, 1999, p.9).

Equally, rarely in a book about methodologies do we encounter words and phrases linked to research methodologies that jar the detached researcher into confronting the lived realities of researched peoples that are evoked as a consequence of research practices. Words that include, amongst others:

> 'Dying', 'Disqualified from Civilisation and Humanity', 'Extermination or Domestication', 'Painful Struggle', 'Silenced', 'Ridiculed', 'Condemned'

signal that this book can not simply be considered just another methodological text. The aloof stance encouraged within scientific paradigms and practised by researchers who assume that applying the word 'science' as a prefix to the study of peoples lives somehow mystically makes their inquiries objective, neutral, and therefore equally applicable to all are challenged by Smith to think again. Instead, working through the mystique of research Smith confronts the reader with the messy social, political, economic and cultural realities of unequal interests being served through research processes.

Debates about neutrality in research are not new however; by and large methodological controversies are considered matters of internal academic debate, infrequently if ever, discussed in the site of study. In contrast, Smith sets herself the difficult task of engaging in and making what has hitherto been considered matters of the academic accessible to a wider audience.

Rather than being drawn into an examination of any one discipline Smith draws the reader out into an account of research derived from Colonial and Imperial-centric logics of inquiry and the ways in which discourse about the indigenous inferior, deviant and pathological other is made both possible and sustainable. The logics of inquiry extend from basal assumptions about the nature of reality (ontological positions), the ways of knowing that reality (epistemology), and the disputational contours of right and wrong (axiology) that frame the research process. Each frame predisposes the research product to particular outcomes conducive to supporting the epistemological commencement point. How indigenous peoples see themselves are rarely given expression in such schema. Conversely Decolonising Methodologies provides such an expression.

It is here that Smith opens up a discussion about indigenous approaches and methodologies emerging from indigenous communities that interrupt the existing logics of inquiry and disrupts current codes of research practice toward a paradigm inclusive of respectful, ethical, sympathetic and useful modes of conduct. It is a space where indigenous peoples' priorities and problems are contemplated; contextualised within the specificities of manifest differences and convergences bound in the politics of survival, recovery, development and self-determination. The indigenous research agenda comprises programmes and approaches grounded in the decolonisation politics of indigenous peoples' movements. Goals of self-determination and social justice manifest across terrains of the psychological, social, cultural and economic. Both states of being (survival, recovery, development and self-determination) and processes (decolonisation, healing, mobilisation and

transformation) are figuratively represented through the metaphoric use of ocean tides with the inward and outward flow of ideas, reflections and actions.

Combining research and the indigenous researcher side by side with notions of:

> 'Resistance', 'Decolonisation', 'Hope', 'Self-determination', 'Social Justice', Enabling Processes', 'Transformation'. 'Cultural Growth and Development'

although not usually considered within the research terminology of Western science entices otherwise sceptical communities to re-engage in something (research) that has for many come to mean little more than blasphemy. It is with a sense of hope and ideas about the potential of research guided and controlled by communities that provides the motivation for a growing number of indigenous peoples to reconsider their positions on research. Freed from paradigmatic exercises in which claiming 'authority over' is an anticipated outcome, the researcher is open to the humbling experience of deeper understanding.

I would recommend the use of this book to any individual or group, indigenous or non-indigenous researcher and lay-person alike either actively engaged in research or consumer of it to read and reflect on the issues raised. At the very least it challenges us to think about this thing called research, our place in it as researchers and the researched, whose ideas, like experiences and realities we interpret in research outcomes. I want to finish this review where I began and thank Linda Tuhiwai Smith for making such an evocative contribution to scant library shelves. It is a contribution that not only stands on its own merits, but also

encourages further dialogue from others within a framework that acknowledges an indigenous voice.

Martin Tolich and Carl Davidson, 1999 **Starting Fieldwork**, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 233p. $34.95.

Reviewed by Maria Hilder
Faculty of Foundation Studies
International Pacific College
Palmerston North

Starting Fieldwork is an extremely readable introduction to the why and how of qualitative research methods. As the authors point out in the Preface, 'there are few places where those starting out in it (qualitative research) can turn for advice on *how* to begin' (p.vii). Indeed it was numerous questions about the basic issues presented in this book which led the authors to ascertain that there was a gap in the literature available to inexperienced researchers which needs to be overcome. What is even more valuable for New Zealand students is that a number of examples cited (such as The Unfortunate Experiment which is used as an example of ethics) are set in New Zealand and deal with New Zealand research, some of which is quite widely-known. The majority of the text is couched in an almost 'chatty' style in which the authors reveal many of their own past problems and errors as they pass on commonsense suggestions and advice to students on what to do or not to do. For example, chapters 6-10 are described as being 'the steps that Martin Tolich wishes he had when

he began his research' (p.185) and 'at times the book has been confessional, disclosing a number of errors made in our careers as fieldworkers' (p.174). This has the effect of bringing the book closer to the experience of the novice researcher for whom it is intended and, indeed, it seems an excellent text for inexperienced New Zealand students exploring qualitative research.

The book is divided into eleven chapters, which are in turn subdivided into two parts. The first five chapters, comprising Part One, deal with theoretical and background issues to fieldwork such as origins, uses and value of fieldwork, where and how to begin, differences between quantitative and qualitative research, assumptions that a fieldworker may unknowingly bring to the research resulting in biased results, ethics issues (including confidentiality issues in a small country) and how to arrange access to potential subjects. Part Two gives a very good introduction to the actual techniques of fieldwork and leads on to the production of the final product. Chapters 6-8, in particular, give a wealth of handy hints on what to do and what to avoid in the interview situation, how to take notes and how to handle the resulting data so that the research yields the most valuable results.

That 'The *Starting Fieldwork* manuscript grew out of the authors' study guide for extramural postgraduate students and their own research' (p.177) is both obvious and valuable for several different reasons. The very clarity of the text suggest the type of knowledge which can be gained in writing extramural study guides which are destined for many different readers from a variety of backgrounds who are studying in many different settings with no guaranteed access to certain study facilities. The text explains extremely clearly each point that the

authors wish to make by means of excellent setting out and many appropriate examples. Each chapter has a short introduction in which an explanation is given as to the construction of the chapter and how it relates to the other chapters in the book. The chapters are then broken into subsections so that there is scarcely ever more than two sides of print on each precise point which aids the readability, especially for inexperienced researchers. This also makes it easier to zero in on a specific point via the index. Not only are the recommended methods clarified but the pitfalls are also usually explained. A feature that is increasingly used in the latter half of the book is greyed boxes containing major points or examples which, consequently, stand out from the rest of the text. From chapter 4 on there is a section near the end of each chapter entitled *Take Off* which encourages the reader to apply the ideas in the chapter to his/her personal research. This very practical approach is yet another feature which should appeal to the inexperienced researcher. Each chapter ends with *Further Reading* so that the more experienced reader is also pointed in the right direction.

A very important point for the authors and one that is sure to be appreciated by readers is that research methods and theory are deliberately combined because they 'are inextricably intertwined and interdependent' (p.22). This results in many of the theoretical points not only referring to well-known authorities but also being illustrated immediately with an example which clarifies the situation. A case in point is the discussion in Chapter 3 on the difficulties for one who does not belong to a certain social group but nonetheless wishes to carry out research on it which is exemplified with reference to the authors as being white males and the problems that they

could face in carrying out research on non-Pakeha people, especially if they were female. Another excellent example in Chapter 8 (pp.143-7) serves to illustrate how coding can be used most effectively.

For this reviewer the most disappointing feature of the book is the paucity of advice and comment on how to deal with the rich data that qualitative research is renowned for. In comparison with the theoretical and practical suggestions for actual data collection the two chapters dealing with the final steps seem rather meagre although it must be acknowledged that some (rather basic) good advice is nonetheless offered on these points. Indeed, in pointing out that 'Atkinson (1990:177) claims there has been an imbalance in qualitative texts: far more has been written about the nuts and bolts of data collection than about how to present the final text' (p.167), the authors could seem to be aware of this very inadequacy. Yet, in naming their book *Starting Fieldwork*, it could be claimed that they never intended to cover the latter stages of research and the final paragraph of the conclusion points those with 'a sense of confidence and competence' to 'more advanced texts' (p.187). A similar note of surprise could be uttered over the authors' assertion that computers 'make certain aspects of the research process easier but they are not essential' (p.xi). While the absolute validity of this statement cannot be denied it is becoming increasingly rare to find researchers working without computers although the programmes that they utilise may be somewhat different. A further minor short-coming is that because the book has been written by two sociologists the fieldwork tends to reflect sociological qualitative fieldwork. Although similar methods are used in the many other disciplines for whom this book has been

suggested, there are variations which are not really acknowledged.

Nevertheless the book does offer a great deal of good advice to aspiring researchers. It has been proofread by a number of current or recent researchers and certain improvements have been made as a result. There are certainly many pointers in the book that the reviewer would have like to read before beginning her own research. It seems certain to be a valuable addition to the literature in this area.

Tim Maloney. **Five Years After: The New Zealand Labour Market and the Employment Contracts Act.** Institute of Policy Studies, Victoria University of Wellington, 1998, 128p, $30.00

Reviewed by Stephen B. Blumenfeld,
Industrial Relations Centre
Victoria University of Wellington

This study, published as part of Victoria University's Institute of Policy Studies' Income Distribution and Social Policy Programme and financed by the New Zealand Treasury, offers an analysis of changes in New Zealand's labour market following enactment of the Employment Contracts Act (ECA) in May 1991. This legislation, as the author acknowledges in the 'Forward' to this book, dramatically reformed New Zealand's industrial relations system. It also made fundamental changes to the way New Zealand's labour market operates. While maintaining certain statutory minimum

conditions, such as the minimum wage, statutory holidays, unpaid parental leave and equal pay, the ECA effectively decentralised wage negotiations by making trade union membership voluntary and removing the monopoly bargaining rights enjoyed by trade unions for most of the last century in New Zealand.

The author of this book, Tim Maloney, a labour economist at Auckland University, makes an important contribution to the debate surrounding the effects of the ECA. Comprised of eight short chapters, this study goes hand-in-hand with the author's previous work on the labour market impact of the New Zealand Government's social welfare reforms, published in 1997 by the Institute of Policy Studies under the title *Benefit Reform and Labour Market Behaviour in New Zealand*. Both are essentially econometric studies published in book form. As such, chapters found in both books include a literature review, a theoretical discussion of the issue, and presentation of results of an empirical investigation. The latter includes both aggregate and disaggregate regression analyses as well as an analysis of the robustness of these results using alternative measures of key variables.

Chapter 6 of the book under review offers an attempt to reconcile Maloney's findings with regard to employment growth in these two studies. In this regard, the author notes that the ECA and changes to New Zealand's social welfare programmes—specifically, reductions in the level of assistance provided under the Unemployment Benefit and Domestic Purposes Benefit—were implemented by the National Government within the six weeks of one another. Maloney's analysis suggests only one-third to one-half of the cumulative employment effects of these policy reforms can be

attributed to the ECA alone. That is, most of the growth in employment experienced in this country between the start of 1991 and the first half of 1996 is attributable to reform of New Zealand's social welfare system, and not to the ECA.

In the literature review of this book, Maloney considers research into the relationship between trade unions and labour market outcomes—in particular, employee earnings, the level of employment and labour productivity. The author concludes this by stating that, while the extant literature suggests several factors likely to affect this relationship, the theory is 'essentially agnostic to the effects of either unionisation or the ECA on employment, wages or labour productivity' (p.21). This is followed in subsequent chapters by a series of regressions estimating the labour market impact of the Employment Contracts Act.

Maloney's analysis suggests the primary artifact of the ECA has been to substantially reduce union membership density in the non-agricultural sector of New Zealand's labour market. This, according to the author, has resulted in an increase in both aggregate employment and hours of work in this country. No evidence, however, is found to support the claim made by others that the ECA has reduced hourly earnings of New Zealand workers. Maloney's conclusion is that the ECA significantly and substantially reduced the level of unionisation and, in turn, increased aggregate employment and time spent at work, while not exerting downward pressure on hourly earnings in New Zealand. In spite of this, evidence presented also suggests the ECA has reduced labour productivity and slowed growth of the New Zealand economy.

What this book fails to address are issues beyond simply the economic impacts of the Employment Contracts Act. In particular, what Maloney ignores in his analysis are those aspects of this legislation which have served to undermine many of the rights enjoyed by workers in New Zealand for nearly 100 years prior to its enactment in 1991. In addition to severely curtailing New Zealand workers' ability to impose economic sanctions, the ECA all but eliminated legal support for union organising and collective bargaining. There is, moreover, a relatively clear political consensus in this country that the ECA has had substantial effects on labour market outcomes. Whether these effects have, on the whole, been positive or negative would seem to depend more on one's political perspective and, perhaps, lot in life than on an understanding of neo-classical economics. Given the level and extent of debate on this issue in the political arena in New Zealand, Maloney's consideration of the economic theory of the impact of unions on labour market outcomes is somewhat disappointing. That is, as a reader, I would have preferred a political, as well as an economic, consideration of the ECA. At the very least, focus on the political debate would likely attract the attention of a broader audience to Maloney's consideration of this legislation and its effects.

Recent research has drawn attention to the negative social, as well as economic, consequences of declining unionisation, especially in labour markets where effectively no alternative conduit of collective 'voice'—e.g., mandatory works councils or board-level codetermination, as are present within the European Union—exists. In addition, a large body of research indicates that trade unionism offers employees much more than higher earnings, which Maloney finds have

been relatively unaffected by implementation of the ECA. To this end, trade unions have been found in other research to offer greater employment security, which reduces labour turnover in unionized workplaces, an artifact of trade unionism not addressed in Maloney's study. This reduction in turnover, in turn, offers employers the benefit of a more experienced work force and greatly reduces costs associated with recruiting, hiring and training.

Unions also frequently negotiate higher levels of training and, because their employees are less likely to find alternative employment at a higher rate of pay and, therefore, are less likely to leave their current jobs, unionised employers have greater incentive to invest in worker training than their non-union counterparts. This, then, suggests union workers are typically better skilled than their non-union counterparts. All of these factors contribute—either directly or indirectly—to higher labour productivity and lower production costs. Maloney's finding that the ECA, through the legislation's negative effect on unionisation, contributed to a cumulative decline in labour productivity would certainly seem to support this. Furthermore, the benefits of unionization have been shown in other research to be greatest when employers demand a skilled workforce, as would seem to be implied in the New Zealand Government's recent emphasis on policies directed at enhancing the 'knowledge economy'.

Another fault I find with this book is that much of Maloney's analysis relies on comparisons with Australia. For instance, he uses the change in real aggregate GDP in Australia as a proxy for the economic growth which would have occurred in New Zealand in the

absence of the ECA. The author's use of Australian GDP is based on the assumption that the Australian economy experienced the same international demand shocks and subsequent recovery as the New Zealand economy, and that 'major industrial relations reform did not take place in Australia over this same period' (p.55). Not only is this not correct, but most of the industrial relations reforms which have taken place in Australia—at both the federal and state levels—since 1991 were, at least in part, modelled after the ECA in New Zealand.

While I differ with Maloney on a number of points, I think his book makes a valuable contribution to the debate on the impact of the Employment Contracts Act in New Zealand. For one, this study is a serious piece of empirical work. As such, at the very least, it offers a valuable contribution to assessing the impact of the ECA on labour market outcomes in New Zealand. In spite of this, the jury is clearly still out with regard to the overall impact this legislation has had, and will have, on the economy and society of this country, both today and in years to come. What is clear, nonetheless, is that the ECA has had a devastating impact on trade unions in New Zealand. The challenge for New Zealand's trade unions in the post-ECA era essentially remains as it has been in the past, namely to provide a strong collective 'voice' to workers and other disadvantaged groups. Without any doubt, the ECA has made this task all the more onerous.

All citations found herein refer to the book under review.

NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

1. Two copies of manuscripts along with a disc should be sent to the editors for consideration. Authors should retain a third copy for their own reference during proof-reading. Copies submitted will not normally be returned. To facilitate 'blind' reviewing, the **title and name(s)** of its authors should be given on a separate sheet, and the **title only** should appear on the **first page** of the article.
2. While articles should not normally exceed 4500-5000 words, longer articles may be accepted in special circumstances.
3. Manuscripts should be accompanied by a short abstract (about 100 words) typed on a separate sheet of paper.
4. Manuscripts should be typed double spaced throughout on one side of A4 paper with reasonable margins all round (2 cms. Approx.). Please supply a disc along with details of the software used.
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6. Do not underline any words in the text unless they are to be printed in *italics*.
7. Type each table on a separate sheet with as few lines as possible, and indicate the placing of the table in the text. Use wide spacing in tables. Tables should be numbered in Arabic figures with a clear legend to identify the table.
8. Drawings (graphs, figures, etc.) should be on good quality white paper and on separate sheets.
9. References should normally be indicated by citing in parentheses the author's surname and the year of publication (together with page numbers where relevant, as given in the list of references or the bibliography at the end of the article. For example: 'it has been argued (Baker, 1948:26) that...' etc. The full list of references at the end of the article should be arranged alphabetically by author's surname. The following examples should be used as a guide, paying particular attention to the sequence of the items in the reference and to punctuation.

   Able, P. and Collins, S., 1961. 'Structuralism and the concept of class', **Journal of Social Class**, 24(3):138-159.

   Baker, R.S., 1948. **Sociology and Social Change**, London, Charles Publishing Co.

   Note that in the first example the words in the title are not capitalised (as they are for the title of a book, as in the second example).
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