

new zealand sociology

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volume 16 number 1 2001

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*Special feature*

SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN NEW ZEALAND

## Symposium: Sociolinguistics in New Zealand

Janet Holmes

Introducing New Zealand sociolinguistics to New Zealand sociologists

Donn Bayard

Language attitudes, ethnicity, and national identity in New Zealand

Richard Benton

Whose language? Ownership and control of te reo Maori in the third millennium

Mary Roberts

The effects of immigration flow on patterns of language maintenance and shift in two immigrant communities in New Zealand

Donna Starks and Zita McRobbie-Utasi

Collecting sociolinguistic data: Some typical and some not so typical approaches

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Looking for the origins of the New Zealand accent

Janet Holmes and Nicola Daly

Language and gender research in New Zealand

Allan Bell

Bugger! Media language, identity and postmodernity in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Koenraad Kuiper

Linguistic registers and formulaic performance

Margaret Franken

Getting personal: Language use in a call centre context

## Articles

Georgina Murray

Interlocks or ownership: New Zealand boardroom power

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(Over) working women: Gendering discourses of market governance in New Zealand

Ann Winstanley

Writing and reading in everyday spaces of home

Jo Barnes

The use of firearms in intimate murder-suicide in Australia and New Zealand

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## Editorial

In this issue we are renewing a proactive editorial policy first launched in *NZS 11(2)*, in which we published a collection of papers on the origin of sociology in New Zealand, and which was repeated in a brainstorming session entitled "The State of New Zealand Sociology: A symposium" in *NZS 14(2)*. That is, as well as publishing articles and reviews of books that have been submitted from the outside, the editors are taking the initiative by commissioning special features on topics we hope will be of interest to our readers.

The focus this time is on sociolinguistics which many of us have probably glimpsed out of the corners of our eyes, as it were, but with whose precise nature and methodology we may not be fully acquainted. The prefix "socio-" in its name is enough to signal the overlap between this field of enquiry and sociology: sociolinguistics investigates the cultural phenomenon of language within its social context.

New Zealand possesses an academic community of sociolinguists whose expertise is at the international cutting edge of their discipline. Dianne and Peter Beatson approached a number of these experts with the suggestion that they combine forces on a symposium on their subject for *NZS*. We are extremely grateful for the collegial friendliness which greeted our invitation and for the alacrity with which it was accepted and put into action, despite the many other claims on our contributors' time. Our particular thanks go to Janet Holmes for providing an introductory overview of the major strands in sociolinguistics. The brief our experts were given was to provide readers of the journal with the general "feel" for the discipline – what they are doing and why they're doing it – along with substantive examples of their own empirical work. All entered whole-heartedly into the spirit of the project, and we thank them equally whole-heartedly for providing this generously and meticulously presented introduction to the fascinating terrain where linguistics and sociology intermingle.

As well as the sociolinguistic symposium, this issue of *NZS* contains four general articles. Georgina Murray provides a detailed

analysis of the way class power coalesces at the apex of the socio-economic pyramid through the phenomenon of interlocking directorates. In particular, she enquires into which fraction of the capitalist establishment, industrial or financial, wields ultimate control, and whether this control is located here or overseas. Susan Copas's article also operates at the macro-economic level, but changes the focus from class to gender. She explores the implications of the neo-liberal revolution for the gender division of labour. Women have chosen, or been obliged, to join the paid work force in growing numbers, but still carry the main burden of unpaid domestic work despite the increasing devaluation of such work by the culture of the free market.

Ann Winstanley investigates the gendered nature of domestic life from quite another angle. Counterpointing material from New Zealand creative writers like Janet Frame with her own qualitative research, she analyses the socio-spatial dimensions of female experience within the ideologically constructed notion of "home", as this is mapped onto the material infrastructure of the "house". Her work demonstrates, amongst other things, the rich vein of insights into the phenomenology of lived experience stored in this country's creative literature, a vein that New Zealand sociologists could benefit from mining. Finally, Jo Barnes provides yet another (considerably grimmer) take on home life. Using empirical data from Australia and New Zealand, she analyses the gender rates of firearms-related murder-suicides. She places these at the extreme end of a spectrum of domestic violence, and demonstrates that the vast majority are committed by males.

As well as these refereed articles, we have opened an "Opinion" column in this issue, which we hope will become a permanent feature of the journal. Greg Newbold is the first to mount this unrefereed soapbox. Picking up on the symposium on the state of New Zealand sociology mentioned earlier, Greg evokes the vital connection between the academic work of sociology's founding grandfathers and the burning social issues of their times. He regrets what he perceives as the uncoupling of sociology and social reality amongst latter-day New Zealand academics, notably those of a postmodern disposition, and concludes with a call for a revitalisation

of the link between thought and action – a call, in other words, for sociology to demonstrate its relevance for contemporary social issues.

We hope that Greg's broadside will be the first of many we publish in this journal. This is part of our general ambition to make its relationship with readers more dynamic and interactive. Admittedly this interaction must be in slow motion, given that the journal comes out only twice a year, but within this limitation we want to make the journal more lively and personalised, to which end we would encourage you to mount our soapbox if you have personal opinions, critical commentaries or controversial polemics you would like to deliver. By the same token, we are happy to print responses to any of the book reviews we publish. As far as is practicable, we would like to develop a two-way relationship between the journal and the sociological community it serves.

## Looking Ahead

This issue of *NZS* marks a moment of transition, crystallising a number of changes which have been accumulating over the last two years. Brian Ponter and Mary Murray, who took over the editorship of the journal from Greg McLennan in the latter part of the 1990s, are now passing the flame on to another editorial generation, although Brian will still be actively involved as a member of the editorial board. We would like to take this occasion to thank them both on behalf of the New Zealand sociological community generally for the sterling work they have done over the last four years or so. We also express our gratitude to Heather Hodgetts, on whose shoulders has fallen the main burden of typesetting the journal and carrying out all the administrative work involved in the keeping of records, gathering of subscriptions, posting out copies and the like. Heather will still be performing the latter functions, but the lay-out will now be done by Anneke Visser of the Massey University College of Education.

That brings us to the new faces. As well as welcoming Anneke onto the team, we also say hello in this issue to two new associate editors – Mike Lloyd and Georgina Murray. (Mike was immediately

press-ganged into a major round of proof-reading for the present issue.) Sheryl Hann has joined the main editorial team, and devoted many hours to copy editing, despite the competing claims on her attention of a demanding new job. Many thanks to Dianne Beatson for the time, work and initiative she devoted to this issue as guest co-editor of the sociolinguistic symposium. Peter Beatson and Chamsy el-Ojeili join Brian Ponter as the official editors at this time of transition, and will take over the helm from *NZS16(2)*. Roy Shuker has kindly agreed to assume Peter's former job as book review editor.

The behind-the-scenes work of our referees deserves special acknowledgement. To preserve their anonymity, we cannot single out and thank each referee by name, but we are conscious of the amount of time and care they dedicate to what is, after all, the professional heart of an academic journal. We thank them on all our behalf for their unpaid, anonymous but essential contribution.

Finally, we are grateful to Lincoln Dahlberg for the thought and interest he has devoted over the last year or so to the revamping of the journal's overall format and presentation. This process began in Volume 15, and with the present issue the journal has now settled into its new shape. However, in line with our editorial desire to foster an interactive relationship with our readership, we would be grateful for feedback on its new appearance, and are open to suggestions for further improvements.

So much for the editorial line-up. What about the content of future issues? As noted at the start, while continuing our main function of publishing submitted articles and book reviews, we are going to play a more active, hands-on role in commissioning features on special topics. Chamsy and Lincoln are currently putting the finishing touches to the next issue, which will be devoted entirely to *Cultural Studies*. The first issue in 2002 will feature articles on ANT (actor network theory) with Mike Lloyd as guest editor: readers with expertise in this area are encouraged to submit articles. Beyond that, we have our own ideas for possible special issues, but are open to suggestions – and equally open to offers of guest editorship.

We are entering this new growth phase of the journal's life with a certain amount of optimism and excitement. However, we are afraid we must end on a cautionary note. It concerns finances (what

doesn't these days?). Henry Ford once wrote that if you make a product for a dollar and sell it for 99 cents, then so long as your advertising machine is effective and your sales are good... you'll go bust!

Well, the journal has not gone bust, but it is being sold (particularly to members of SAANZ) at well below cost price. We have been able to do this up till now by the invisible provision of a very large subsidy from the Massey University Sociology Programme. However, this Programme has now entered a new administrative structure and financial regime, and the journal from henceforward must pay its own way. The editors have decided that the journal account can support the deficit for the present volume, but as from Volume 17 in 2002, it is imperative for the very survival of the journal itself that its price should be put up to a realistic level. We do not intend to make a profit (and note in passing that most of the editorial work is done on an unpaid basis outside official work hours), but we simply can no longer sell the journal for much less than it costs to produce. There is a symbiotic relationship between the editors of a journal and their readers. On our side of the symbiosis, we undertake to continue fostering high professional standards, to ensure that in future the journal appears on time, and to be proactive in soliciting material. The other side of the symbiosis unfortunately but unavoidably requires realistic financial support from the New Zealand sociological community.

We apologise for ending this editorial with a sting in its tail! Having got these unpleasant financial matters out in the open, we will now sign off, with the hope that the contents of this issue provide you with stimulating reading, and that some of you may be moved to join us in person in future issues by submitting articles, acting as referees, mounting the Opinion soapbox, and writing or commenting on book reviews.

Peter Beatson



**SYMPOSIUM: SOCIOLINGUISTICS IN NEW ZEALAND**

**Introducing New Zealand sociolinguistics  
to New Zealand sociologists**

*Janet Holmes*

**Abstract**

Sociolinguists use language as a means of gaining insights into the way society works. This paper aims to provide New Zealand sociologists with a broad overview of the field of sociolinguistics with particular reference to New Zealand sociolinguistic research. Three areas of sociolinguistic research are addressed: firstly, macro-level sociolinguistics (sometimes called the sociology of language), secondly, micro-level sociolinguistics or social dialectology, and, thirdly, the area of style and discourse analysis. The first area, the sociology of language, includes research on language choice in multilingual communities, language switching, and issues of language policy and planning, such as the maintenance of migrant languages, and the revival of te reo Maori. The second area, social dialectology, examines the relationship between specific linguistic features of people's speech and social factors such as class, gender, age and ethnicity. Researchers on New Zealand English have made a substantial contribution to this area of sociolinguistics. Social constructionism is making an impact in social dialectology, as it has in the third area of style and discourse analysis. This area includes study of the discourse patterns of particular occupations, research on narrative and humour, and the use of discourse markers to express social identity.

**Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

Sociolinguists study the relationship between language and society. From the perspective of a sociologist, sociolinguists restrict the data

1. I would like to thank sociologist Pam Hyde, Tony Holmes, and the journal editors for feedback on an earlier draft of this paper.

from which they derive insights about society's workings to various aspects of language. From a sociolinguist's perspective, language not only provides an overwhelming range of routes to understanding how society works, but also comprises a fascinating object of study in its own right. In introducing the sociolinguistic contributions to this issue of *New Zealand Sociology*, I attempt a smorgasboard of sociolinguistic topics to give New Zealand sociologists a taste for what turns sociolinguists on, and I select New Zealand ingredients wherever possible. I have adopted an inclusive approach covering areas which uncontroversially constitute core sociolinguistics, namely the sociology of language (covering multilingualism, language maintenance, and language policy), and social dialectology, as well as areas which some would regard as less central, such as discourse analysis. All are represented in this issue of *New Zealand Sociology*.

The paper is divided into three sections, though the boundaries are to some extent an expository convenience, of course. The first section introduces macro-sociolinguistic research which focusses on social reasons for choices between languages in context, and patterns of language use; the second deals with micro-sociolinguistics, the detailed analysis of phonological and grammatical features of language varieties, and in particular the exploration of ways such variation intersects with social factors; the third section deals with the analysis of style and discourse analysis, indicating in particular how sociolinguists make use of such approaches. Additionally, research on attitudes to language forms a thread which weaves its way through each section. The goal has been to outline the range of material which New Zealand sociolinguistics have produced in a way which makes some sense to sociologists.

## **The sociology of language or macro-sociolinguistics**

The meaning of the term sociology of language can most easily be explained by referring to the topics included in this section, though its scope is in fact much broader.<sup>2</sup> The term generally refers to the

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2. The *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* provides a more extensive indication of its true scope.

work of sociolinguists who focus on social patterns evident in the ways people select from and make use of distinct languages, rather than focussing on micro-level specific features of a single language (the sphere of social dialectologists). However, it will be apparent that the distinction is often difficult to maintain.

### **Multilingualism and code switching**

Although it is easy to forget in a country as determinedly monolingual as New Zealand, much of the world is bilingual. In other places, multilingual communities provide a constant source of rich and diverse material for sociolinguistic research - research exploring patterns of language choice, reasons for switching between languages, constraints (linguistic, discoursal, social, psychological, cognitive) on mixing one language with another, sometimes in the same sentence, and research on the way languages in contact affect each other (or not), developing new varieties, and even new languages such as pidgins and creoles. In New Zealand, sociolinguistic research in this area concentrates, perforce, on examining the way members of recent immigrant communities draw on the languages or 'codes' in their linguistic repertoire.

The terms 'code' and 'variety' are terms used by sociolinguists to refer to any set of linguistic forms which are socially patterned, and they may refer to different languages, different dialects, different linguistic styles, and even different accents which contrast with each other for social reasons. In Wellington, for example, the linguistic repertoire of an older Greek New Zealander might include familiarity with two varieties of Greek (liturgical Greek used in church and informal, everyday Greek), as well as possibly two varieties of English (a more standard variety for use with strangers and bureaucrats, and a more Greek-accented 'ethnic' variety for use with Kiwi friends). Sociolinguists aim to establish the range of social factors relevant to the use of such codes, and their relative weight in accounting for code choice in different social contexts. Relevant social factors typically include the degree of acquaintance between participants (e.g. friend vs stranger), their role relationship (e.g. teacher-student), the social setting (e.g. home vs church), the kinds of networks they are involved in (e.g. open vs closed, rural vs urban), and, more recently, the kinds of social identities they are constructing

(see below for more on this topic). More recently, too, code choice has been recognised as a dynamic activity; speakers convey different social meanings by their active selection among linguistic alternatives. Sociologists interested in the way ethnicity is manifested in behaviour generally find such sociolinguistic studies have something to offer.

Code-switching and code-mixing are terms used for rapid switching between languages or varieties which typically occurs among bilinguals in informal situations (e.g. Li and Milroy, 1995; Auer, 1998). Recent research has focussed on interpreting the social meaning of conversational code-switching, and developing models to account for constraints on switches (e.g. Myers-Scotton, 1997). More interesting for sociologists, perhaps, are analyses of the social and pragmatic meanings of switches (e.g. Shields Brodber, 1992; Siegel, 1995). Analysing code-choice in Kenya, for instance, Myers-Scotton (1997) illustrates the sophisticated affective messages conveyed through complex and rapid alternations between two or three different codes, often within a very short exchange. Few communities in New Zealand have the levels of multilingual or bilingual proficiency which would make such subtle code switching an appropriate means of conveying social meaning. But this is a potential research topic among larger immigrant communities in cities such as Auckland. Recent research in this area considers how switches actively contribute to constructing a particular type of interaction, and to the dynamics of identity construction (e.g. Blommaert, 1992; Cheshire and Gardner-Chloros, 1997). From a sociologist's perspective, code switching is one means by which multilinguals make creative use of their linguistic repertoires to convey social meaning in specific social situations.

### **Language maintenance, shift and revival**

Language shift among members of immigrant groups from their ethnic language to the dominant language of the wider society is a sadly familiar pattern, and one which sometimes forms a component in sociologists' descriptions of New Zealand ethnic minority groups (Trlin and Spoonley, 1997). Sociolinguistic research worldwide over many decades suggests that this process of language shift is typically complete in three, or at most four, generations (e.g. Fishman, 1966,

1985, 1991), and local studies of a wide range of immigrant communities confirm its relevance in New Zealand (see Roberts, 1997; Roberts, this issue). Communities who manage to resist the encroachment of English (labelled 'the killer language' by some) beyond three generations are generally close-knit communities, who discourage inter-marriage with other groups, maintain strong cultural and/or religious practices, and often live in identifiable 'ethnic' residential areas, with shops and services oriented to their cultural, gastronomic and linguistic preferences.

A range of theoretical models has been developed to account for the relative survival rates of the ethnic languages of different immigrant communities in different countries, drawing largely on demographic factors such as population size and inter-marriage patterns (e.g. Fishman, 1985; Clyne and Kipp 1999), and including measures of attitudinal factors contributing to 'ethnolinguistic vitality, a concept developed by social psychologists (Giles and Johnson 1987). The relative chances of survival of different endangered languages have also been the topic of a good deal of international sociolinguistic debate (e.g. Mühlhäusler 1996, Crowley, 1999) and analysis, using measures which again will be familiar to demographers, such as the numbers of claimed users of a language, the range of social contexts of use, the political standing of the users, and status of the languages, together with other measures of linguistic attitudes drawing on standard social psychological approaches. A scale developed in the early 1990s, for example, identified the steps involved in taking a language from near language death through to language revival, a progression of obvious relevance to the situation of the endangered Maori language in New Zealand (Fishman, 1991, 2000).

Sociolinguistic surveys documenting the decline of te reo Maori, and its constantly changing status in New Zealand society, have been undertaken since the 1970s (see Benton, this issue). A substantial data gathering exercise was undertaken by the Maori Language Commission in conjunction with Te Puni Kokiri in 1995 (National Maori Language Survey, 1995), and another is planned by Te Puni Kokiri in conjunction with Statistics New Zealand in 2001. Te reo Maori has also been the focus of extensive language

policy discussion, especially since it attained the status of an official language in 1987. The question of what exactly 'official status' means has been just one of the many issues of interest to policy makers; this is an area where sociolinguists have long contributed internationally, as well as locally (see Benton, this issue; Spolsky 1996).

Language policy discussions to which sociolinguistic research can contribute in New Zealand extend beyond the place of te reo Maori in New Zealand society to include consideration of which languages should be taught in New Zealand schools, and to what levels, what degree of English proficiency should be required of New Zealand immigrants, in which areas interpreting and translating services should be funded by government, providing information on public attitudes to language (see Bayard, this issue), and language reform efforts, including sex-inclusive language forms. Research in these areas is possibly of interest to sociologists interested in ethnic, immigrant and other minority groups in New Zealand.

## **Social Dialectology**

### **Correlational approaches**

A second major area of sociolinguistic research - and one which has been especially fruitful in New Zealand - is generally labelled social dialectology or sometimes variationist linguistics. Social dialectologists are concerned with tracing the relationships between social factors, and, from a sociologists' point of view, very detailed aspects of linguistic variation. The pioneering research of the American social dialectologist, William Labov, determined the direction of social dialect research for several decades, both in terms of the research questions he considered worth addressing, and in relation to the innovative methodology and quantitative ('variationist') analytical techniques he developed (see Starks, this issue). His influential survey of the New York Lower East Side (Labov 1966, 1972a) demonstrated that linguistic variation was not random or 'free' as previous dialectologists had tended to assume, but rather patterned systematically according to factors such as the social class, gender, age and ethnicity of the speakers, and the formality of the style of speech they were using.

New Zealand social dialectology, with a methodology closely modelled initially on Labov's, began to develop in the mid-1980s with Bayard's (1987) pioneering Dunedin survey of 144 speakers of New Zealand English (NZE), mainly from the Otago and Southland area. This was soon followed by the Wellington Social Dialect Survey (Holmes, Bell, and Boyce, 1991), which involved interviews with 75 contributors from Porirua (about 20 miles from Wellington), representing a carefully pre-determined range of age groups and social groups, as well as including both female and male, Maori and Pakeha participants. In Christchurch, using linguistics students as data collectors, Elizabeth Gordon and Margaret Maclagan began to amass data on NZE in the Canterbury area, a corpus which now includes over 300 speakers (Maclagan and Gordon 1999).<sup>3</sup>

The basic sociolinguistic patterns which Labov identified in New York were replicated in many other urban speech communities all over the world, including New Zealand (Bayard, 1987; Holmes, Bell and Boyce, 1991; Batterham, 1997; Maclagan and Gordon 1999; see also <http://www.massey.ac.nz/~wwlingui/NZEnglish/home.html>). So, for instance, stable variables, such as the pronunciation of the final suffix in words like *swimming* and *talking*, tend to divide the community clearly into two major social groups, those who used *-in'*, and those who used *-ing*. Linguistic variables involved in change, however, are typically more finely stratified with a gradient pattern reflecting a continuum from the lowest to the highest social groups. In New Zealand the most extensive study of language change is the Marsden-funded Origins of New Zealand English project (see Gordon, this issue), which makes use of a corpus of broadcast archives that includes interviews with New Zealanders born as long ago as the late 19th century. The results of the linguistic analyses undertaken to date provide interesting insights into the way NZE has developed as a distinct variety over the last 100 years (see, for

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3. It is also worth drawing attention to two Corpora of New Zealand English available on CD Rom, each consisting of one million words of New Zealand English, namely the Wellington Corpora of Written and Spoken New Zealand English. These can be obtained from Victoria University, School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies. See School website or contact Corpus-Manager@vuw.ac.nz.

example, Gordon, 1998; Gordon and Trudgill, 2000; Trudgill, Gordon, and Lewis, 1998).

Analyses from many social dialect surveys have established that in most communities women lead sound change, whether towards the standard variety (e.g. the kind of English spoken in New Zealand by TV newsreaders) or towards the vernacular variety (what is usually described as a 'broad' accent). In New Zealand, for example, women are leading the rapid spread of the high rising terminal, a final rising pitch at the end of statements (Warren and Daly, 2000), as well as in the merging of the vowel sounds in words such as EAR and AIR so that they sound identical (Maclagan and Gordon, 1996). However, recent variationist studies indicate that in specific speech communities, variables such as class, ethnicity, social role and style often interact to modify such general patterns. (See Holmes and Daly, this issue, and articles in Bell and Kuiper, 2000). The exposure through detailed ethnographic study of the complexities underlying broad generalisations will be very familiar to sociologists.

Labov also used quantitative methods to collect people's subjective evaluations of different social accents that he played to them, a method which has been widely used since in language attitude research. Despite wide variations in the way people speak, attitude research has identified a startling uniformity of evaluative norms and attitudes to language among members of the same speech community. Using this approach, Donn Bayard and Robert Leek (see articles in this issue) have demonstrated that New Zealanders tend to downgrade New Zealand English accents, and especially what they identify as 'Maori English' accents, compared especially to American and even Australian English accents.<sup>4</sup> Sociologists will no doubt have some suggestions about possible reasons for this evidence of incipient racism and cultural cringe.

On the basis of his analysis, Labov suggested that the most useful defining characteristic of a speech community was precisely such shared linguistics norms. But the definition of a speech community has aroused just as much controversy in sociolinguistics as the problems of defining a community in sociology. Consequently, others have suggested a range of alternative criteria including shared

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4. For research on Maori English see articles in Bell and Kuiper (2000).



rules for using language, density of patterns of linguistic interaction, and shared patterns of linguistic variation. More recently, some sociolinguists have begun to explore the concept of the 'community of practice' as a useful concept in sociolinguistic research which moves the focus to the ways in which communities are constructed through shared goals, activities and verbal resources (see Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Holmes, 1999).

### **Social constructionist approaches**

Many areas of sociolinguistic research over the last couple of decades have been influenced by social constructionism. This is especially true of language and gender research (see Holmes and Daly, this issue) where sociologists such as Judith Butler (1990) and Chris Weedon (1987) have been particularly influential, and of conversation analysis with its sociological roots (see below). Sociologists will be very familiar with this approach. In sociolinguistics, it has had the effect of encouraging a shift from an approach which regarded language as reflecting fixed and stable social categories, such as social class, ethnicity and gender, to an approach which analyses language as a flexible resource used to construct particular aspects of a dynamic social identity at different points in an interaction. Talk is re-cast as a resource for actively creating different styles and constructing different social contexts and social identities. So, for example, at certain times during a romantic dinner, a woman may use linguistic forms which construct a 'feminine' identity, while chairing a Board meeting she may linguistically construct a statusful and powerful identity, and interacting with her children, or perhaps with certain subordinates, she may use linguistic resources to construct a 'maternal' identity. Even within one interaction she may use language to perform a range of social identities as she responds to the development of the discourse (see Holmes 1997).

### **Style and discourse analysis**

#### **Style in sociolinguistic research**

The influence of social constructionism is also evident in recent research on the sociolinguistics of style. As mentioned above, Labov

elicited a range of styles within the interview context by varying the interviewee's task. Subsequent research focussed on the influence of the addressee (e.g. Giles and Smith, 1979) and/or the 'audience' (Bell, 1984). Speech Accommodation Theory, later relabelled Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT), will be familiar to social psychologists. It focusses on the mutual influence of participants on a wide range of aspects of communication: so, for example, people may 'accommodate' to each other's non-verbal behaviour, speech volume, rate of speaking, prosodic patterns, vowel realisations, discourse markers, and even choice of language. This theory has been reasonably influential in sociolinguistics. Collecting social dialect data, for instance, the social dialectologist Peter Trudgill (1988) found he converged towards his interviewees' levels of final glottal stops for /t/ in words such as *not*, and in New Zealand, convergence in levels of the use of the discourse marker *eh* has been demonstrated between interviewers and interviewees (Meyerhoff, 1994). Allan Bell (1990, 2001, this issue) has developed some of the concepts in a distinctive direction, examining especially public responses to the language of the media, and introducing the notion of 'referee design' where the direction of the style change or accommodation is towards features of the speech of an influential out-group. The concept of 'crossing', is also relevant in this context, where speakers use outgroup linguistic styles for specific stylistic effects, or code switch into varieties not generally associated with their group in order to challenge or problematise group boundaries (Rampton, 1995).

Currently, then, sociolinguists tend to view style not so much as a response to an addressee or audience, but rather as a matter of the way an individual chooses to present herself in everyday interaction (see Bell, this issue). Style emerges from 'practice', the individual's on-going performance of her complex of social identities in particular socio-cultural contexts. Penelope Eckert's analysis of American adolescents' stylistic 'performance' in the school context, for instance, demonstrates that style is not just a matter of speech, but also involves 'dress, attitude and action' (2000, pp. 211ff). Their choice of linguistic variables, however, affects every utterance. They are constantly manifesting a particular style (e.g. 'flamboyant' or 'conservative'), just as they are on-goingly involved in the

performance of their particular social identity in the school (e.g. as 'jock' or 'burn-out').

Another productive approach to the analysis of style is exemplified in Kon Kuiper's research (see Kuiper, this issue) which explores the extent to which distinctive styles or 'registers' are shaped by the functional requirements of particular occupations. Kuiper demonstrates the ways in which the social and linguistic features of occupational styles are inseparable from the social contexts which produce them. More specifically, his research has consistently related the structure and uses of oral formulae to their social functions, and in some cases to their socio-political functions and ideological underpinnings (Ji, Kuiper and Shu, 1990). Adopting a similar critical discourse approach, Franken's analysis of the discourse of women employed in call centres (see Franken, this issue) illustrates the relationship between the functional and formal features of the language used by customer service representatives, focussing especially on positive politeness features identified in their talk. With its focus on one type of organisational discourse, Franken's work also links to the wide range of research currently being undertaken on workplace language, much of which has been undertaken within a discourse analysis framework see Holmes and Stubbe, forthcoming).

### **Discourse analysis**

The boundaries between stylistics (as practised by sociolinguists) and discourse analysis are very fuzzy, but it is probably worth stating that the kind of discourse analysis (DA) that sociolinguists engage in is typically rather different in its level of analysis from the Foucauldian approach most commonly adopted by sociologists, though there is clearly potential for fruitful interaction as some discourse analysts have demonstrated.<sup>5</sup> Sociologists examine written and spoken language from a Foucauldian perspective in order to explore such questions as whose ideas are in circulation, and how power relations are evident in the social behaviours of different classes, genders, ethnic groups, and so on. Sociolinguists similarly use DA in order to identify the ways in which social phenomena

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5. See van Dijk (1995, 1996); Fairclough (1995, 2000), for example.

emerge from or are instantiated in spoken interaction, but their focus on the linguistic features of the discourse is generally much more specific. The way an oral narrative is constructed, for instance, may provide evidence of the salience for the interlocuters of a particular ethnic or gender identity (e.g. Labov, 1972b; Schiffrin, 1996; Holmes, 1997; Cheshire, 2000). Discourse markers, such as end tags (*and stuff, and everything*), can be used in ways which reflect or express social group membership (e.g. Huspek, 1989; Stubbe and Holmes, 1995; Bell, 2000). Conversational analysis (CA) is an even more specific, distinctive approach to the analysis of discourse which will be familiar to many sociologists. Based on a model of communication as jointly organised activity like dancing, or joint musical performance, it rejects the typical transmission model of communication. Rather CA is concerned with how participants produce joint achievements such as conversational closings, storytelling, disputes, medical diagnosis, the mutually dependent roles of interviewer and interviewee, and so on. CA focusses on how interaction unfolds as a sequence of actions by different participants, with the significance of an utterance or gesture highly dependent on its position in a sequence, as well as being jointly negotiated. Sociolinguists make use of this approach to illuminate ways in which people actively and on-goingly construct relevant social identities in interaction (e.g. Stubbe et al., 2000 p. 42; Holmes and Stubbe, forthcoming).

Lane (forthcoming) has used a discourse analysis framework to investigate attitudes to Maori. Using the notion of 'interpretative repertoires' (Potter and Wetherell, 1987, p. 149), he identifies recurrent themes in a set of letters to newspaper editors opposing Maori. He examines the argument structure of the letters, and the common devices used to express opposition, and plots how these are used to devalue Maori. Other sociolinguists focus on the social context in which interaction takes place, and the relevant backgrounds, knowledge and experience of the participants. This more ethnographic approach, generally identified as interactional sociolinguistics, is associated with the sociolinguist John Gumperz and his associates. One example of recent work in this area is the exploration of workplace interactions between managers and

workers, with a particular focus on areas of miscommunication and potential misunderstanding (e.g. Roberts, Jupp and Davies, 1991). In New Zealand, this approach has provided a valuable framework for some of the analyses undertaken by the Wellington Language in the Workplace Project, which currently has a database of more than 1500 interactions recorded in New Zealand workplaces (Holmes, 2000).

## Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to provide New Zealand sociologists with a broad overview of what sociolinguists do, and in particular what areas New Zealand sociolinguists are currently researching. Given, space constraints, the review has necessarily been selective. Recent introductory textbooks (e.g. Romaine 1994; Wardhaugh 1998; Holmes 2001) and collections of readings in sociolinguistics (e.g. Trudgill and Cheshire 1998; Coupland and Jaworski, 1997) provide further resources for those wishing to learn more about sociolinguistics in general. Two collections of sociolinguistic material on New Zealand English (Bell and Holmes, 1990; Bell and Kuiper, 2000) provide more detailed information on research undertaken by New Zealand sociolinguists. And of course, many of the topics are discussed in more detail in the articles on New Zealand sociolinguistic research in this issue.

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## Language attitudes, ethnicity, and national identity in New Zealand

Donn Bayard

### **Abstract**

As the papers in this issue demonstrate, most sociolinguistic research is devoted to the study of language behaviour. However, attitudes toward language and language varieties also have much to tell us about society, and the study of language attitudes has a history as long or longer than quantitative sociolinguistics. This paper focuses on three areas: first, the folklinguistic myth that New Zealand English (NZE) has clearly defined regional accents (in addition to the Southland dialect) is disproved using the matched guise technique. Secondly, the persistence of racist stereotypes once a person is identified as Maori either by accent or physical appearance is explored. Finally, I look at evidence for a continuing Kiwi sense of inferiority about the NZE accent vis-à-vis not only Received Pronunciation, but American and Australian as well. I conclude by speculating that US media influence is partly responsible for this continuing 'cringe', and that Maoritanga and Maori contributions to NZE vocabulary offer a more stable, reliable base for a growing sense of national identity and pride than sporting achievements.

### **Introduction: attitudes, stereotypes, and myths**

The Maori language is a phonetic one with no background, and may justifiably be regarded as pidgin English (Letter to the Editor, *Otago Daily Times*, 24 December, 1986).

Maori English generally carries an unmistakable accent, and the lower the speaker in the socioeconomic scale the worse the English is...And even among better educated Maori speakers, the inability to reproduce exactly the diphthongs and triphthongs which are such an essential characteristic of English, invariably reveals their origins (Editorial, *Otago Daily Times*, 3 June, 1991).

There is a correct way to speak, let us do so. The Dutch influence is broadening the 'a' to 'i' and should be eliminated. The North Islanders have cleaner vowel sounds and are more understandable (Letter to the Editor, *Otago Daily Times*, 3 August, 1992).

We have a world-ranked golfer called Moikoow Keamboow, a company advertising truck spears, cars with ear cundushunung, chuckuns that lay eeegs, coows that produce moowk, chuldren attending skoows, and a TV advert with children screaming "Mam theers noe tawlut paypah" — just a few examples of rampant Newzild.

Oi piersunly thunk Muster Trudgoow shood lusun cloyslie toi thuh apporlung why theet meany peepoow insust on spooking bufore crutusoyung thoyze of us who heeve problums wuth ut. Hard to read? Even harder to listen to — let alone understand!! (Mark Bezzant, Letter to the Editor, *Listener*, 5 May, 2001).

Most of the articles in this sociolinguistics symposium are devoted to language *behaviour* in New Zealand; this contribution focuses rather on Kiwi *attitudes* towards language, and what these attitudes tell us about contemporary society in Aotearoa. Although all four of the above quotes are linguistic nonsense, they are widely held to be true. Many such beliefs are directly related to two important areas of contemporary society, ethnic relations and national identity, and these are the main areas I will consider here.

Waitangi Tribunal claims and 'Closing the Gaps' have led to much debate on the nature of 'race' relations in New Zealand today.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the millennial year has seen considerable debate about our place in the world: the ties with Mother Britain are well and truly severed, but are we to be an Asian-focused South Pacific nation or an antipodean reflection of America like Australia? Attitudes relevant to these two questions can be roughly grouped into two areas. First there are *overt* attitudes which are culturally scripted and widely accepted by a majority of New Zealanders; the sort 'everybody knows' to be the truth. Some examples follow:

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1. Following the practice of the *American Anthropologist* and other anthropological journals, I place 'race' in quotes to emphasise that it is a social construct and not a biological reality.

1. the All Blacks are the world's greatest rugby team;<sup>2</sup>
2. you can tell an Aucklander from a Cantabrian by their accent;
3. so much intermarriage has taken place between Maori and Pakeha that there are no 'real' Maori left (hence Waitangi claims are a nonsense);
4. te reo Maori is a 'Stone Age' language with no relevance to the modern world;
5. Maoritanga is 'divisive' and detracts from the goal of 'One New Zealand', unified and harmonious - the way New Zealand used to be until the unrest caused by the activities of Maori stirrers and wet-eyed Pakeha liberals;
6. American and Australian accents are loud, harsh, and ugly; and
7. there is a 'proper' way to speak, as represented by the BBC accent and the Queen's English.

These overt, culturally scripted attitudes, or *myths* (to give them their proper term) are easily studied through the popular press and statements of politicians and public figures. Over the past 30 years I have collected a considerable database (now almost 120,000 words) mainly devoted to examples of ethnicity and 'race' myths like three through five above (Bayard, 1998). It is startling to see the persistence of myths like the initial settlement of Aotearoa by the peaceful Moriori; the equation of 'blood' and 'race' with ethnicity; and the belief that 'Pakeha' means 'white maggot, white pig', or some other pejorative term.

### **'Othering' and covert stereotypes**

It is also interesting to see the covert meaning of the term 'New Zealander' as shown in frequent examples of 'othering' (Riggins, 1997) in the popular press (emphasis added).

*Maori* are stretching the patience of *New Zealanders* to the limit  
(Attorney General Paul East, *Otago Daily Times*, 9 February, 1993)

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2. For some quantitative evidence supporting the importance of this myth in New Zealand, see the NZE website page <<http://www.massey.ac.nz/~wwlingui/NZEnglish/blacks.html>>.

*New Zealanders* are strongly opposed to returning land or fishing rights to Maori tribes to make up for past injustices. ... Not surprisingly, however, *Maori people* disagree.

(Article, *Otago Daily Times*, 11 March, 1991)

You should ask to speak to Ted Foy, a *New Zealand born Chinese*, who is a goldmine of information on everything Gum Sam stocks.

(*Food and Wine Lover's Guide to New Zealand*, 1990, p. 8)

It detailed the experience of an *Indian* man who had been *born in New Zealand* and spoke with a *New Zealand accent*.

(Article, *Otago Daily Times*, 11 March, 1991)

A *third generation New Zealand Chinese*, she learnt to cook while working in her parents' restaurant, August Moon, in the early 1980s.

(Article *Otago Daily Times*, 25 October, 2000)

While (Jonathan Lemalu) may not yet be a household name, it is obvious from talking to the New Zealand-born Samoan that major success is on the horizon.

(Article, *Otago Daily Times*, 14 December, 2000)

Examples such as the above make it quite clear that 'New Zealander' functions primarily as the Pakeha word for 'Pakeha' (Bayard, 1995, pp. 152-60); as Wetherell and Potter put it, "Over the last hundred years or so... British migrants have come to recognise themselves as, pre-eminently, *the New Zealanders*... In fact, for many of those we interviewed it was ambiguous whether Maoris are New Zealanders at all" (1992, p. 119; emphasis in original). This is of course part of a world-wide phenomenon often directed at immigrants (as in the right-wing xenophobic movements in Europe), save that in New Zealand it is directed toward an indigenous minority by the descendants of immigrants.

However, such *covert* attitudes and stereotypes are far more accessible using techniques developed in the 1950s and 1960s by social psychologists of language like Wallace Lambert and Howard Giles (Giles and Powesland, 1975). This technique involves having listeners rate different taped voices on a number of personality trait scales having to do with general dimensions like power/status/control and solidarity/attractiveness/affiliation. A number of

variables can thus be tested for their salience in triggering less conscious stereotypes: gender, phonological accent ('Crocodile Dundee' versus a BBC voice, Fred Dagg versus Dougal Stevenson versus a CNN American accent, etc.); and paralinguistic features like speech speed and intonation. Ideally such experiments should employ the *matched guise* technique, where a skilled mimic reads a passage in first one accent, then another (separated by one or more dummy voices); this eliminates one source of confusion by ensuring similar reading speed and vocal timbre, but runs the risk of using a stereotypical imitation of one or more accents rather than the genuine article. In any case, mimics skilled enough to imitate more than one accent are hard to find, which makes the technique impractical when investigating a range of different accents. Hence I and many other researchers prefer to use genuine accents as used by different speakers, while attempting to control as much as possible for paralinguistic variation in speed, hesitancy, and other features.

It is this technique which has formed the basis of much of my linguistic anthropological work since the mid-1980s. It is sociolinguistic in that it tests the social salience of some of the phonological variables analysed by myself and other contributors to this symposium (eg, Bayard, 1987; Holmes, Bell and Boyce, 1991; Maclagan and Gordon, 1996). In contrast to much of the social psychological investigation of accent attitudes in the past, this sociolinguistic analysis has allowed the fairly precise definition of the accents used and the variables in them which are presumed to be salient. However, in my case such research is conducted with social goals in mind rather than linguistic ones. For full reviews of accent attitudinal research in New Zealand see Bayard (1995, pp. 97-112) and Bayard (2000a). Here I will discuss briefly only three aspects of the implications of this research for New Zealand society: a) imagined regionality; b) 'Maoriness' and its implications; c) what New Zealanders think of their own accents when placed side-by-side with other national accents.

#### **a) Presumed regional variation in New Zealand**

One of the more enduring folklinguistic myths which have intrigued linguists here for many years is the firm belief in distinct regional

variants of the New Zealand English (NZE) accent: Auckland, Taranaki, East/West Coast, Canterbury, etc. In fact, all linguistic research to date suggests there is only one variant of NZE: the Southland dialect spoken in southern Otago and Southland itself, distinguished by its famous 'rolled' -R.<sup>3</sup> There are some well-known regional differences in vocabulary: pottle vs punnet, crib vs batch, flagon vs peter and the like. But no clearly definable differences in sound have been discovered other than Southland. Despite this, belief in distinct dialect regions in New Zealand continues unabated. Gordon (1997) carried out a study providing informants with maps of the country and asking them to draw in dialect regions; no consistent pattern emerged aside from the Southland region. But as Bauer says, "non-linguists do not believe it. Dunedin people are frequently heard to drawl; Wellingtonians to have 'clipped accents' and Aucklanders to sound like Australians. No research has been done to see whether people can be identified as coming from different regions by speakers who make such claims" (Bauer, 1994, p. 412).

Such research has now been carried out, as a by-product of investigating evaluative reaction to the Southland postvocalic /-r/ in the first matched-guise experiment conducted here (Bayard and Bartlett, 1996, summarised in Bayard, 1995, pp. 108-10). While the 83 university students were very accurate in identifying the male and female r-pronouncing guises as coming from Southland, those who attempted guesses on the regionality of the other four voices used (including the two non-r-pronouncing guises) scattered them at random all over the country, from North Auckland province to Southland. Variation in NZE is almost all social rather than regional; it is due to factors like socioeconomic level, gender, age, and ethnicity (Bayard, 1995, pp. 60-86). It seems fairly safe to conclude that real regional phonological variants will have to wait for another few decades or so to develop. While this myth is intrinsically interesting, I think its relevance to most sociologists is to show the persistence of a folk belief in the absence of any evidence (or stimulus) to support it. Fortunately it is a benign myth, unlike the next to be discussed.

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3. In fact the /-r/ sound is not rolled, but is an approximant /r/ similar to that made by North American speakers.

### **b) Being perceived Maori**

While the age of 'Hori' jokes and haka parodies is hopefully long past, and the overt received belief is that New Zealand is largely free from racial prejudice, aside from a few skinheads and Maori radicals, it is clear that considerable covert prejudice against Maori and Pacific Islanders persists in addition to the unconscious exclusion of these ethnicities from being '*real* New Zealanders'. This first became apparent to me in my 1986 study of accent evaluations by Otago students. One of the eight voices I used - a broad-accented, slow and hesitant reader - was consistently rated at the very bottom of the scale, more importantly, she was assumed by 11% of the students to be Maori or Polynesian; as one student commented, "God help us if we all sound like this!" (Bayard, 1990). This pattern was repeated even more strongly by two single-sex high school samples obtained in 1987 (46 boys) and 1989 (57 girls); 17% of the boys and a startling 42% of the girls assumed this speaker was Maori or Polynesian; under the open-ended 'job' question were such guesses as 'scummy job, on the dole, street kid, glue sniffer'. A 1996-97 retest of 271 Otago students saw the percentage of Maori ascription drop from 11% to 9% (Bayard, 2000a).

By this stage in our growing sociolinguistic knowledge of NZE we in fact have a clear idea of what constitutes a 'Maori' NZE accent (eg, the late Billy T. James in 'Te News' mode). These include features like syllable timing, devoicing of final voiced obstruent consonants (so that 'bridge' becomes 'britch', etc.), a frequent use of the 'eh' particle, and different intonation patterns (see King, 1993; Holmes, 1997).<sup>4</sup> However, the speaker in question here had none of these features whatsoever; she was an ethnic Pakeha judged to be Maori solely on the slowness and hesitancy of her speech. I was able to replicate this result using a set of twelve voices each speaking the same short passage. I was able to obtain brief evaluations of 559 Otago undergraduates, asking them simply "is the speaker a New Zealander? If so, is s/he Maori or Pakeha? If not a New Zealander, where do you think the person comes from?" The results are

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4. But note that none of these features is unique to Maori speech; it is rather a matter of probabilities. Many Pakeha speak 'Maori NZE', while many Maori speak mainstream general NZE.



presented in full elsewhere (Bayard, 1995, pp. 144-48), but it was clear that slow, hesitant broad NZE accents were likely to be perceived as Maori even if they had no phonological features of Maori NZE at all. More importantly, it was quite clear that 'Pakeha' was significantly positively correlated with the overall ranking of the 12 voices on a 'New Zealander' scale; 'Maori' was negatively correlated with ranking as a New Zealander, although not significantly so.

The experiment was replicated by Robert Leek at Auckland University in 1990 using 15 voices and 239 student listeners, with very similar results (Bayard and Leek, 1992; Bayard, 1995, pp. 148-52). In 1995 he carried out a retest using my twelve original voices and 160 student listeners with even more similar results (Bayard and Leek, 1996). In all three cases, it was apparent that Pakeha ascription was positively correlated with being a New Zealander, thus providing a good degree of quantitative verification of the 'othering' phenomenon discussed above. Leek found significant negative correlations not only between ratings for Maori and Polynesian ethnicity and education, class, and income - reflecting present social reality - but also for intelligence and self-confidence (Bayard, 1995, p. 150). As I concluded, "in many cases New Zealanders cannot accurately distinguish Pakeha from Maori and Polynesian New Zealanders on the basis of accent ... However, they *think* they can", and once they do, ratings on all power variables drop significantly (Bayard, 1995, p. 151). Judging from an admittedly small subsample (24) of Leek's informants, Maori and Polynesians share this negative evaluation of themselves. Like other minorities (e.g., African-Americans; Sniderman and Piazza, 1993), they appear to be burdened with a negative self-image - not surprising given decades of criticism by the Pakeha majority.

The impact of actual Maori NZE accents versus Polynesian physical appearance has recently been tested by an experiment carried out with 164 Otago high school students (Holmes, Murachver and Bayard, fg.). Holmes selected eight individuals from a total sample of 80 people videotaped reading a short passage designed to illustrate features of Maori NZE if they were present. He then assembled a stimulus tape with male and female speakers

in each of four conditions: Maori appearance plus Maori accented-NZE; Maori appearance plus 'standard' NZE; Pakeha appearance plus Maori accented-NZE; and Pakeha appearance plus 'standard' NZE. After pre-tests, the high school students were exposed to either the video plus audio track, or the audio track alone. The results were consistent with similar studies carried out in New Zealand over many years: "Empirical research, which began in the 1950s, has consistently demonstrated that Maori in the past and today are generally viewed as troublemakers, lazy, unintelligent, dirty, aggressive, easygoing and friendly, whereas Pakeha are generally regarded as successful, hardworking, intelligent and self-centred". To summarise:

Speakers who looked Maori and sounded Maori were rated significantly lower on the variables of earnings, education, social class, intelligence and desired closeness, than the other speaker combinations. Furthermore, on these same variables, speakers who looked Pakeha and sounded Pakeha were generally rated more favourably (but not always significantly so) than the other speaker combinations. From these findings it can be concluded that the amplifying effect of accent on the evaluative effects of appearance was particularly prominent with the status variables (Holmes, Murachver and Bayard, forthcoming).

This depressing finding shows that little has changed in the past half-century in terms of unconscious stereotypes. As the study concludes, such stereotypes are particularly harmful in three areas of society: schooling, where Maori children may be fitted to the stereotype rather than to their actual abilities (cf. Bayard, 1995, pp. 161-62); employment, where Maori and Polynesians would often be disadvantaged in an interview situation; and relations with the police, where studies have shown police were significantly more likely to prosecute a male Maori than a non-Maori male from the same social class.

While attitudinal studies such as these can offer no answers to this problem, they can at least convince the public that the problem exists; only when institutional racism and the presence of such unconscious stereotypes are accented can we begin to move toward

eradicating them. Many others have documented the overt and covert media images and practices which reinforce and strengthen institutional racism (e.g. Spoonley and Hirsh, 1990; Walker, 1990; Spoonley, 1993); techniques like accent evaluation can demonstrate the presence of the unconscious stereotypes fostered by such media emphasis on 'race'. Only when both stereotypes and their expression in the media are eliminated can New Zealand begin to achieve the society of multicultural equality it claims to aspire to.

**c) What Kiwis think of NZE in the world context**

Give 'em a taste of Kiwi, show 'em we're the best;  
Give 'em a taste of Kiwi, we're better than the rest.  
(Television New Zealand sports promotion jingle, 1990)

In terms of national image, we can again look at overt and covert ways that Kiwis view themselves. The overt picture is well-known; as expressed in the promotional jingle above, Kiwis are 'better than the rest' at a host of activities, from climbing Mt Everest to winning rugby and yachting cups. While unequal in population and financial resources to countries like Australia and Britain, 'Kiwi ingenuity' - with the help of some No. 8 wire - will usually pull us through. To some extent this is reflected in our attitudes toward accents and speech as well:

We are not Americans, and I know I for one do not like the way this country is trying to carbon copy itself with American influence. Be it trendy or not, I totally disapprove of foreign newsreaders. Give me the warm voices and sincere faces of people like Karen Sims any day; they are New Zealand's 'real people' (Letter to the Editor, *Otago Daily Times*, 12 September, 1984).

The corollary of this is that American (and Australian) accents are harsh and unpleasant. Certainly when I first immigrated here from America in 1970 I often felt self-conscious about my own North American accent.<sup>5</sup> When I began to carry out accent evaluation

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5. This dislike was made explicit when I was recording a radio talk for BCNZ in 1976; I felt I had to apologise for my accent and was told by the technical adviser that there were even worse ones than mine around Otago University!

studies in 1986 exploring Kiwis' attitudes to the range of broad, general, and 'cultivated' (near-RP)<sup>6</sup> NZE accents as compared to Australian, RP, and North American accents, I was not at all surprised to find that the 86 Otago students surveyed rated the RP voice highest in traits like *education, occupation, income, and 'class'*. This pattern is found throughout the Anglophone world; even in America RP voices outrank American ones in *power/status* variables (Stewart, Ryan and Giles, 1985). What did surprise me greatly was the fact that North American (in this case Canadian) and Australian accents ranked above all NZE voices in *solidarity* traits like 'sense of humour', 'likeability', and 'pleasantness of accent' (Bayard, 1995, pp. 98-107). This goes against the usual pattern found in the UK and America where the local accent ranks above the prestige standard in such traits.

I repeated this experiment using the same eight voices with a wide range of different age groups, ranging from high school Fourth Formers to rest home residents. The same general pattern emerged; indeed, a retest on Otago students ten years after the 1986 experiment (Bayard, 2000a) showed that preference for the North American and Australian voices had actually increased. Even though the female NZE voice was rated a little higher in the power variables than it was in 1986, it was still well below North American and Australian voices in traits like 'pleasantness of accent', 'likeability', and 'sense of humour'. However, there were serious problems in terms of confounds with the eight-voice stimulus tape I used (Bayard, 2000a, pp. 304-6), and I welcomed the opportunity to investigate further with the collaboration of Ann Weatherall (Victoria University of Wellington) and Cynthia Gallois (University of Queensland). We used a new set of eight voices: four middle-of-the-road accents representing New Zealand, Australian, Southern English English, and Inland North American norms, each represented by male and female speakers. We were also able to compare the reactions of 257 New Zealand university students with 99 Queensland students and 53 students at Cleveland State University, Cleveland, Ohio. The New Zealand results confirm my earlier research: the two NZE voices were rated low in all 22 traits tested (with the exception of the female

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6. 'Received Pronunciation': the BBC 'Standard English' accent.

NZE speaker in solidarity traits, where she was third, below the two American voices). The Australians rated their own voices much higher than the Kiwis did theirs, but still below the two American voices. The Americans rated their own accents tops in everything except income, where the Australian and English male were higher.

This research has since grown into an international, interdisciplinary study called 'Evaluating English Accents Worldwide'. We aim to investigate the reactions of the non-English-speaking world to these four 'Standard' accents in countries as diverse as Germany, Finland, Singapore, and Fiji.<sup>7</sup> One of the subsidiary goals of this programme is to ascertain the effect of the global media on attitudes toward the North American accents that are its medium. In earlier work I have pointed to the fact that American television programmes dominate the free-to-air channels in New Zealand even more than they do in other Anglophone countries, and postulated this as an important factor in producing the high ratings given to North American accents.<sup>8</sup> However, this is far from proven, and is probably a gross oversimplification. Data which the project has obtained from Finland and Sweden, where English-language programmes are subtitled rather than dubbed, rate US accents as highly as New Zealanders and Australians; but so do Germans (Bayard, Sullivan, and Schlichting, 2001), where almost all English-language shows are dubbed into German. Clearly much more research is required. However, there seems little doubt that American media influence has made a large impact on NZE vocabulary and ways of pronouncing certain lexical items (Bayard, 1989; Leek and Bayard, 1995).

But whatever the cause it does seem clear that while Australia has succeeded in shaking off almost all of its 'cultural cringe' New Zealand has a long way to go, at least as far as valuing one's own

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7. Unfortunately we were unable to include a South African English accent.

The results of the project to date are summarised on our website: <http://www.otago.ac.nz/anthropology/Linguistic/Accents.html>.

8. Only about 20% of programmes are locally made; this drops below 10% when news and sports programmes are excluded. In Australia government quotas require 55% Australian-made programmes. See Bayard (2000) and Bayard *et al.* (2001) for details.

accent is concerned. Two frequently encouraged strategies are advocated to 'build Kiwi confidence': sporting prowess (as in the jingle heading this section) and Maoritanga. The first has had sporadic success: the Rugby World Cup in 1987, two America's Cup wins, and the like; however, the downside of this dependence is apparent when an expected victory is not achieved or worse becomes an ignominious defeat. The loss in the Rugby World Cup not only to the French but to South Africa was even blamed for National losing the 1999 election! Certainly the mood of gloom that hung over the country was almost palpable. This also occurred to a lesser extent after the Sydney Olympics, when many were heard to complain about New Zealand's bad medal performance. But it seems to me unrealistic to expect a country with a population one-fifth the size of Australia to supply the same amount of medal-winning talent.<sup>9</sup> Athletic prowess offers a very undependable vehicle for national pride.

A somewhat more stable and reliable source of pride is Maoritanga as a symbol not only of Maoridom but of New Zealand as a whole. This is certainly the case as far as our common (but not to my knowledge official)<sup>10</sup> language is concerned. As I said in an article written for a Swedish English language and literature journal:

But NZE's future as a distinctive dialect seems to depend mainly on its relationship with the indigenous Maori language. ... Anyone watching New Zealand's millennium celebrations (noon on New Year's Eve in Scandinavia) could not help but be impressed by the overwhelming Maori content of the ceremonies: from prayers on the Chatham Islands to performances of haka (action dances with chanting) to Kiri Te Kanawa singing Maori songs, the input was almost wholly Maori. Maori expressions and words are becoming more and more common in NZE; ... Maori borrowings into NZE these days usually reflect cultural aspirations and moves toward biculturalism: rangatiratanga, 'sovereignty'; kaupapa, 'strategy, agenda'; tikanga, 'custom' and Maoritanga, 'Maoriness'. As the

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9. By way of comparison, Thailand, with 16 times our population, was delighted with its single medal.

10. Te reo Maori was made an official language in 1987; I know of no New Zealand law designating English as an official language.

Pakeha majority continues to shrink (from 90% in 1970 to 69% in 1996) in relation to Maori and other ethnic groups in New Zealand such as Samoans, Tongans, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Koreans, it is inevitable that more and more Maori vocabulary and idiom will enter NZE, and this can only be a good thing, enriching our language and hopefully pointing the way toward a bi- and multicultural future for Aotearoa New Zealand (Bayard 2000b, 12).

Countering this is a sort of Pakeha backlash rejecting Maoritanga as 'divisive', and urging us not to forget our European roots. Indeed, one retiring senior politician has recently called for New Zealand to accept its smallness and isolation, and learn to live with it by accepting globalisation and the diaspora caused by the 'brain drain' as enriching enough: "The reality is that we're small, we're isolated and we haven't a secure sense of nationhood" (Upton, 2001, p. 26). There is thus a fair division of opinion on the question of how to achieve a sense of national identity, and the criteria on which it should be based. A sociological study investigating the roots of New Zealand insecurity and the various beliefs about the best way to remedy it would be a fascinating undertaking.

## Conclusions

I doubt there will be much in the above of startling novelty to New Zealand sociologists; many of the results of sociolinguistic research serve to reinforce and elaborate on the findings of social scientists in other disciplines like sociology and anthropology. Like workers in these fields, sociolinguists follow a code of ethics which requires the results of their research to be funnelled back for use in the community which produced the data, and sociolinguists have been actively involved both overseas (eg, Labov, 1982; Rickford, 1997) and in New Zealand (eg, Bell, 1991; Holmes, 1991; Bayard 1995, 1998). Here most of our efforts are devoted to countering many socially undesirable folklinguistic myths.

Turning to the social sciences specifically, in addition to reinforcing, validating, and hopefully enriching their findings, I think sociolinguistics is of use to other social scientists in illustrating the value of both qualitative and quantitative studies. We are all

studying the same entity, society. Anthropologists do this for the most part by in-depth qualitative analyses. Most sociologists and social psychologists tend to rely on quantitative techniques. Sociolinguists use both sorts: the quantitative methods first developed by pioneers like Labov, Trudgill, Lambert, and Giles have been supplemented by the qualitative techniques used in discourse and textual analysis. My own work lies at the interface of anthropology/sociology, linguistics, and social psychology. I hope very much that this symposium on sociolinguistics encourages sociologists to use the data and outcomes of sociolinguistic research in their own studies of New Zealand society. I think they will find it a valuable addition.

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## Whose language? Ownership and control of te reo Maori in the third millennium

*Richard Benton*

### **Abstract**

This article explores a number of issues which have been brought to the fore by moves to support, maintain and revitalise the Maori language at the turn of the Millennium. The language is seen by many Maori as a key element in their cultural and ethnic identity. It has also become a symbol of a wider New Zealand national identity, while at the same time New Zealand English has become the vernacular of a majority of the Maori population. The question of who does and should have the last say on matters concerning the development and use of the Maori language and its elements becomes more acute as state agencies play increasingly significant roles in the regulation of linguistic norms (through control of vocabulary, curriculum, language policy and access to Maori-medium education). The cultural, economic and political dimensions of this question are by no means limited to a contest between the state and the Maori community, or non-Maori appropriation of a Maori cultural resource. Within the Maori community itself, there are potential and actual conflicts of interest or world view among bureaucratic and organisational elites along with generational and geographical groupings. The state has acted both as facilitator and obstructor in the revitalisation process: experience so far underlines a need for the recognition of local, grass-roots concerns, and a greater focus on conversation rather than words.

*I have a problem with the idea of ownership, but I like the question because it makes me think – who owns the air that we breathe? Maori belongs to those who are sustained by it – Tarete.*

*The Government caused its death, now they sell it to those who want to acquire it (Whau, in N. and R. Benton 1999, pp. 30-31).*

Ownership of a language is a complex affair, combining a number of different phenomena. At a personal level it may involve a feeling of identification - "This is my language." For groups, there may be

the assertion of a right to know and speak the language, which may or may not be prescriptive - "Our language, not yours" (*to matou reo*) as against "Your language and ours" (*to tatou reo*). There is also the question of who has a right to set the norms of grammar, style and vocabulary by which the correctness or appropriateness of usage can be assessed.

Michael Clyne (1993, p. 357) notes that "some nations and cultures show strong proprietorship over their languages. Others see their language as part of their contribution to civilisation." In his discussion of 'ownership' of the German language, he argued that, while German is indeed seen by them as a 'shared' language, there are within the German-speaking community groups who consider the language to be more 'theirs', and who regard themselves therefore as empowered to set the norms for what constitutes the 'real' German language. English is another shared language with multiple ownership, more diffuse than German but with some varieties nonetheless (usually, those whose speakers dominate education and government) being more equal than others when it comes to setting the norms which separate standard from non-standard usage. Both German and English are 'pluricentric' languages - i.e. there are several centres which set norms accepted as 'standard' even by those who do not abide by them. Languages may have a single normative centre (the French Academy, at least, would no doubt like to say this is the case for French), but still be shared and actively propagated across political and ethnic boundaries. Other cultures may be much more conservative about the degree to which outsiders are welcomed as speakers of their language, with some (e.g. certain Aboriginal Australian groups) refusing to allow non-members to learn their language or particular aspects of it.

Maori have traditionally been very willing to share their language with outsiders, and Maori itself has been a pluricentric language probably from the beginnings of its evolution into the "various dialects and idioms" (as Section 51 of the Maori Affairs Amendment Act 1974 put it) which now constitute the language as a whole. However, the right to know is no longer uncontested, and the right, or, more importantly, the power to set the norms has certainly drifted

away (at least momentarily) from the speech community at large, or its traditional elites, with the establishment of the Maori Language Commission and the assumption by the education system of the key role in facilitating Maori language acquisition among the young as Maori-speaking neighbourhoods have disappeared (cf. R. and N. Benton, 2000).

Language is studied, experienced and used in many different ways. An especially significant attribute of language as a social and cultural phenomenon is the capacity of particular languages to become resources, exploitable by speakers and non-speakers for a variety of ends. Christina Paulston (1985, p. 15), for example, stresses that:

Language can be seen as a resource which is available to ethnic groups in their competition for access to the goods and services of a nation.

This view draws attention to the economic and political value of language in particular conflict situations, and to the transitory nature of such value: once the economic or political goals have been achieved (or the language loses its effectiveness as a means for obtaining them), a minority language is likely to be discarded in favour of another more obviously associated with economic success, power and prestige (cf. Paulston, 1985, 1988).

However, the encoding of collective experience, world view, and cultural priorities and preoccupations is another aspect of language-as-resource which is somewhat more enduring. If it were not, the study of languages like Ancient Greek, Latin, Sanskrit, Classical Arabic, Ancient Chinese and so on would not be so important to the political, philosophical, cultural and religious heirs of the ideas and traditions first expressed in these tongues. In a defense of bilingual education, Lily Wong Fillmore summarises what many advocates of language maintenance would regard as the justification for this kind of intervention:

What is lost in surrendering the native language may be the connectedness with primary group and community that gives an individual the personal stability for coping with adult

responsibilities and opportunities. In the long run, however, the greatest loss may be to the society. ... The learning of English will give [non-native speakers] access to the opportunities offered by the society, but if the unique resources that their cultures have given them are lost in the process they will have less to give back to the society as adults (Fillmore, 1986, p. 680).

It is within the framework of language-as-resource that questions of 'ownership', and therefore also of control, inevitably arise. The controllers are not necessarily the owners, although the owners will normally consider that they should also be in control, and they are likely to feel aggrieved if they are not.

The simplest way to resolve ownership may be to say speakers of the language own it. In the case of Maori, such a simple definition is highly problematic. The Maori language is commonly regarded as essential to Maori identity and cultural survival: in the 1991 High Court judgement on the disposal of Crown-held broadcasting assets, for example, this proposition was accepted by the Court as a matter "of common knowledge and commonsense" (McGechan, 1991, p. 60). There are at least 600,000 people of Maori descent in New Zealand, most of whom identify themselves as ethnically Maori - in fact, many regard themselves as being New Zealand citizens of Maori nationality. However, at the 1996 census about a fifth of these people reported that they could carry on a conversation about everyday things in Maori (Statistics NZ, 1997, Table 18), which means that there are a large number of absentee owners who still feel that they have a stake in this resource. Indeed, the results of earlier sociolinguistic research imply that the number of fully fluent speakers of Maori may be somewhat exaggerated by the Census results (cf. Benton, 1997; Te Taura Whiri i te Reo Maori, 1998).

The reliability of the Census figures notwithstanding, it is very likely that within a generation *speakers* of Maori will mainly be people who have learned Maori as a second language, or whose socialisation through Maori as a first language has been in families where the Maori-speakers had acquired their own knowledge of the language as adults. For them, nonetheless, the language has been perceived as 'he taonga tuku iho', an inheritance handed down to them by their ancestors. The sense of ownership has clearly been extended

by non-speakers of the language to themselves: as one of the people interviewed in the 1970s sociolinguistic survey put it, "I've been brought up in the Pakeha world. Now I'd like to learn my own language" (quoted in Benton, 1988, p. 16).

Twentieth-century Maori is a single language with a number of dialects and subdialects: there is a north/south and an east/west split (cf Biggs, 1968, p. 65), with local and regional variations within these which become more or less important as circumstances change. Dialect differences, or, more accurately, fears that one major dialect would dominate the school curriculum, caused serious problems for editors of school publications in the 1960s. These were resolved or at least lessened by recruiting writers from various districts and encouraging them to write in their native idiom. These old anxieties are giving way to unease about the influence of second language learners on the future development of the Maori language, as against the 'true' native speakers who have remained in close touch with the spoken language all their lives, with 'returnee' speakers - those who were native speakers of Maori as children, but rarely used the language as young adults living in urban areas - coming in between. This has had the very positive effect of leading to an upsurge in interest in local vocabulary and idiom, with substantial work going on in the compiling of regional and tribal resources, including dictionaries, in several parts of the country.

As schooling in Maori, rather than just the study of the language as a subject, has become an option, questions of ownership have become highly significant. Five major educational movements have the revitalisation of the language in a setting *outside* the home as their focus:

1. Bilingual Schools
2. Reo
3. Kura Kaupapa Maori
4. Iwi wananga
5. Maori language departments of universities, teachers' colleges, polytechnics and private training establishments..

With about a third of Maori preschoolers attending kohanga reo, this movement has a very big stake in the control if not the ownership

of the language. In clientele and staffing, these are indubitably Maori institutions.

Even if the rolls of bilingual schools, Kura Kaupapa Maori, and immersion classes are all added together, only about 20 percent of all Maori school-age children are currently receiving a significant portion of their formal education through Maori. Access is limited by government regulation and the scarcity of government-funded resources. The overwhelming majority of Maori children still are unable to receive Maori-medium education, so if Maori people collectively own the language, many owners still have a long way to go to get access to their resource in formal education, let alone to be able to control its apportionment.

Another grassroots agency is Te Ataarangi, a movement which may have as many or more active members as Te Kohanga Reo (many people are involved with both movements). Te Ataarangi has placed a great deal of stress on the revitalisation of the language within the family as a whole, and has spearheaded the search for approaches to teaching language which would enable adult Maori to acquire the Maori language and use it actively in the home and neighbourhood.

The Maori Language Commission, a guardian of linguistic vitality and purity appointed by the government and responsible to the Minister of Maori Affairs, is also a major shareholder in the language. In addition to examining and licensing interpreters and undertaking promotional activities, the Commission has expended much effort on creating new technical vocabulary to meet the needs of both the bureaucracy and the education system, and on purging the written language at least of unnecessary English-derived forms. In what appears to have been a relatively successful move (undoubtedly because so much written material is issued by bureaucratic and educational agencies), it managed within a few years of its establishment to change the names of the months from the words used since the 1840s to older terms derived from the pre-European Maori calendars. The problem here is that these words are not simple equivalents (or at least were not, until the Commission decided the matter differently). Until 1990, Pipiri was the name for the first month of the Maori year, starting when the constellation of



Matariki (the Pleiades) first appears on the horizon. This is around the middle of June. The decree declaring it to be the solar month of June is, in reality, the colonisation of the old calendar by the new, as a sesquicentennial gift perhaps to the nation.

There has from time to time been concern expressed about who coins new terms. At a meeting of the Maori advisory body to a government agency in 1991, for example, it was noted "that some Pakeha used various Maori words for translation, some of which were inappropriate", and the body resolved that the agency's Maori members "in conjunction with the Maori Language Commission provide a correct list of translations for key words" (NZQA, 1991, p. 12). The Commission itself has also come in for criticism for some of its own coinages, including the changes to the calendar.

A further matter of contention has been the spelling system (not that this is unique to Maori – competing orthographies exist for English, Galician, German and many other languages). The competing standards are for how vowel length (or gemination) is marked: the 'double vowel' (as in *Maaori*), the macron (e.g. *Māori*), and no marking at all (*Maori*). All have very long histories, native speakers of the language generally marking 'long' vowels only when uncertainty might result otherwise (either because the word is new (e.g. *Keepa*, the Maori form of the English surname 'Kemp'), or not to do so in a certain context could result in ambiguity, as for example between *ata* 'slowly, carefully' and *ata* 'morning'. This mixture of practices has been with the language since pre-Waitangi days. Literacy was acquired very rapidly by Maori, largely through self-help methods, after a standard orthography was devised in consultation between Professor Samuel Lee of Cambridge University, the missionary Thomas Kendall and the Maori leaders Hongi Hika and Waikato, in 1820. However, with Maori re-emerging as a language in and of education in the 1950s, a concerted effort was made to ensure that 'long' vowels were marked consistently in written Maori. Two norms were set in competition with each other – the 'double vowel' being advocated on practical and scientific grounds by scholars at Auckland University, and a competing standard using the macron adopted by the then Department of Education (for school publications), and, later, by most other tertiary

institutions and also Maori agencies along with the Maori Language Commission (see Biggs, 1968, pp. 79-81 for an account of the genesis this controversy). Native speakers generally continued as they had before, preferring macrons if what they wrote was edited for publication, but considerable resentment was felt by some leading members of the Kura Kaupapa Maori movement about “being dictated to by linguists” when their pupils were marked down in public examinations for following the community standard of marking vowel length only when they felt it really mattered<sup>1</sup>.

There is a danger that in becoming preoccupied with such activities and details the means can become fused with the end. As Johannes Fabian puts it in his book *Language and Colonial Power*, the concerns of the academy (and in this respect the Commission is just one of a number of agencies which assume the role of the academy) can be focused on *using words* (or spelling them) rather than on speaking: that is, on exerting power rather than on facilitating dialogue.

Coining aside, there are questions, sometimes of social as well as academic import, as to who owns particular words and who controls their use. For about twenty years, the Maori research section of the New Zealand Council for Educational Research compiled and maintained a database of ‘new and technical vocabulary’ in as non-judgmental a way as possible. The compilers nonetheless were acutely aware that such lists by their very existence can take on a normative function and become sources either of control or of misinformation (indeed, of both at once!). Certainly, the entries for mathematical terms compiled from lists circulated by teacher groups before the Maori Language Commission consulted Maori-speaking mathematicians and intervened with its own suggestions, were more likely to confound rather than to inform. There were, for example, at one stage at least five competing equivalents for the formal expression ‘acute angle’: *koki iti* [little angle/corner], *koki koi* [sharp angle], *tahapa* [at an acute angle, e.g. a sharp bend in a river], *tuke koi* [sharp bend/angle], *koki tahapa*. The Commission settled on *koki* as

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1. Personal communication from Kathy Dewes, Ruamata Kura Kaupapa Maori, Rotorua.

the preferred term for 'angle' in mathematical contexts, with *tahapa* as the preferred technical equivalent of 'acute'.

In such cases there seems to be a perennial conflict between the 'owners' of a concept (in the example just cited these would have been the orthodox mathematicians in the Eurasian tradition), and various speakers and semi-speakers with equally varied claims or pretensions to ownership or control of the language through which the concept is to be expressed.

The water can become even muddier when there is a vagueness and overlap within and between concepts being compared in both languages. So far, all the dictionaries of Maori published in New Zealand have been bilingual – that is, they have given equivalent words or explanations in English for the Maori entries. Many are essentially bi-directional word lists, that is, they comprise lists of Maori words with English glosses, and English words with Maori glosses. The most comprehensive of these dictionaries currently available is P. M. Ryans's *The Reed Dictionary of Modern Maori* (1995).

However, even with bilingual dictionaries, there are different orientations possible. That is, definitions and other information included in the dictionary can be arranged from the point of view of speakers of one or other of the languages concerned. For example, the purpose of the 'Maori' dictionary may be to enable English-speakers to understand Maori concepts in basically English terms, and to convey their ideas using Maori words, by giving lists of equivalents without too much concern about what the wider meanings of these terms actually happens to be. In such a dictionary the meanings of words are generally conveyed in fragments, matched to fragments of the other language. The Williams dictionary is more holistic in its approach, but is fundamentally written from the point of view of the English-speaking user. The Ngata dictionary, although an English-Maori one, is sometimes quite clearly interpreting English terms from a Maori perspective.

A good example of this conceptual conflict and how it is dealt with is the treatment of the term and notion 'insect'. In educated English, the term insect has come to mean a member of a certain class of creatures which, in their adult form, have exactly six legs; there is (traditionally at least – *cave scholas!*) no corresponding class in Maori. The Ngata entry reads:

*insect* pepeke, mu. According to Pakeha, a fly is an insect but a spider is not, as it has two legs too many. Ki te Pakeha, he pepeke te rango, ko te pungawerewere ehara, notemea e rua te hipanga atu o ona waewae.

Cross-referencing this information in Williams<sup>2</sup>, one will find:

**Mu** ... *Insects*. Koia nei te timatanga o nga mea katoa i te ao nei, ahakoa tarutaru, rakau, kohatu, nga ika, nga manu, nga ngarara, nga papa, nga puwerewere, nga mu, nga purerehua.

**Pepeke** ... Insect, beetle. ... **Aitanga pepeke**, the insect family.

Ryan glosses 'insect' as *ngarara* (defined in the Maori/English section as 'reptile, monster, creepy, insect, organism, bacteria, computer virus'), *pepeke* (the closest definition in the Maori/English section is 'frog'), and *mu* ('insects' in the other list). Biggs has *muu* and *peepeke* as general words for 'insect', with separate entries for 'insect (grublike)' - *ngaarara*, and 'insect family' - *aitanga-a-peepeke*, *aitanga-a-punga*. Referring again to Williams, one will find:

**Ai** (iii) Progeny, descendants. ... In poetical expressions, Te aitanga a Punga, *insects*, etc. [no cross-reference under **Punga**]

**Ngarara** ... 1. Reptile, monster. ... 2. Insect. ... Often regarded by the Maori as the cause of pain or disease. [Hence perhaps some of the entries in Ryan's list]

Thus from flitting around in several available dictionaries we may have a vague feeling that the English concept of 'insect' is not quite duplicated in Maori, and that, conversely, there are Maori ways of classifying members of the order Insecta (and other creatures) linguistically and conceptually that are different from those employed in English. The remark about spiders in the Ngata definition is one clue, but the 'Pakeha' opinion referred to there is the result of the convergence of English vernacular usage with specialist zoological classification, no doubt as the result of formal

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2. In quoting from Williams, and other sources, the orthography of the original is retained. Thus there will normally be no macrons on examples given by Williams, while vowel length will be indicated by repeating the appropriate character in those taken from Biggs.

schooling. The primary definition of 'insect' in Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary (Kirkpatrick, 1983), for example, is flexible enough to include the Maori one, if only spiders are in question (but we have no way of knowing whether this is so from what we are told by the major works we have consulted):

**insect** ... a word loosely used for a small invertebrate creature, esp. one with a body as if cut into, or divided into sections; a member of the Insecta (*zool*) ...

A monolingual dictionary — one in which both the head-words and the definitions are in the same language — would most likely be one interpreting the language to its own speakers, or in Maori terms to learners of the language, and thus perhaps be oriented to a Maori world view. (In 2000 the Maori Language Commission began planning a monolingual dictionary of Maori.) In such a dictionary, one might expect a fuller definition of terms like *pepeke* and *ngarara*, without deference to English norms. However, because so many of the potential users of such a dictionary would be students, it is not at all unlikely that, just as scientific terminology has had an impact on English vernacular usage, the same conceptual frameworks may, through a dictionary, impose themselves on Maori. For example, the official term laid down in the Ministry of Education's draft Maori Science Curriculum for 'insect' (in the sense of a member of the scientific class *Insecta*) was *ngarara* (Ministry of Education, 1994). A definition in Maori of *ngarara* to indicate the 'scientific' meaning of the term would simply reinforce the colonisation of the language by Linnaean typology, just as the adoption of lunar month names for solar months has obscured the representation in the language of a traditional Maori (and Polynesian) view of the passage of the seasons. Again, words would have displaced conversation.

The disjunction between the concept and its interpretation in the 'other' language can flow in either direction — that is, the representation of Maori ideas in English by English speakers is far from straight forward. A Hawaiian example parallels a problem likely to be encountered also in New Zealand, with the added bonus of an overt statement of ownership thrown in for good measure. In 1990 there was the verbal equivalent of a low-yield nuclear explosion

in the University of Hawaii's Manoa campus paper and the public press in Honolulu over statements made by a University of Hawaii philosophy student concerning the word *haole* as used by Hawaiians to refer to non-Hawaiians of 'Caucasian' ancestry. In her responses to the student's claims that *haole* was a derogatory term and should not be used to categorise people who are not comfortable with it, the Director of the University's Center for Hawaiian Studies noted that:

Hawaiians have an ancestral claim to use their language in their own ancestral place. (*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, Nov. 17, 1990)

She stated in her opening salvo in what became a media war (I have 88 pages of press reports from 5 September 1990 when the student's article appeared, to December 12, when the controversy was still simmering but had gone off the boil):

Mr Joey Carter's dilemma of whether or not he is a haole ... can easily be answered. If he is white (or 'Caucasian' as he prefers), then he certainly is haole.

This word is one of the few surviving Hawaiian language descriptions in common use in Hawaii. And it has survived despite official suppression of my native Hawaiian language by an all-Haole English-speaking American government in 1990. (*Ka Leo*, September 19, 1990)

This of course broadens the scope of the question from who owns the Maori (or Hawaiian) language, to who determines how the words from that language should be used when they appear in other linguistic environments. In other words, English is now also a Maori language, and Maori may increasingly wish to exercise normative control over its Maori-derived content, at least within New Zealand.

Although Maori certainly wish to control *their* linguistic resource, it is clear that much of the real control of the language resides with the 'Pakeha', that is, with members of the New Zealand political and bureaucratic elite, irrespective of ancestry. Some of those whose linguistic ineptitude may worry the Maori Language Commission constitute the New Zealand Government, of which the Commission

is, technically, an agency. The government began exercising this control shortly after the turning over of administration of the country to the British Crown in the 1840. By the 1850s, monetary sanctions had been employed to ensure that schools provided access to English, rather than Maori, as a vehicle for intellectual development (see Barrington and Beaglehole, 1974; Benton, 1981). Both moral and physical sanctions were used later to ensure that English became the language for social interaction also, at least within the school grounds. In the aftermath of the Second World War, urbanisation of rural Maori was actively promoted by the central government, and government housing policy carefully prevented the re-establishment of Maori-speaking neighbourhoods in the larger urban areas. The educational response to the Maori language could be read as one of intermittent support hampered by chronic ineptitude; but such a generous judgement should be tempered by Charles Perrow's (1986, p. 13) observation that there is a strong possibility "that what we see as incompetent performance or policy really reflects what some leaders wanted all along".

A series of judicial hearings (e.g. Waitangi Tribunal, 1986; Fisher, 1990; McGechan, 1991) has established that the Crown has Treaty responsibilities towards the maintenance of the Maori language, and that these extend to ensuring that the language and its speakers are seen and heard on television and radio as well as in courts of law. A 1991 High Court judgement discerned a high measure of willful ignorance behind government inaction in the past:

In particular, [the Crown] had left itself inadequately aware of the important assistance which broadcasting could give to the survival of Maori language, protection of which was a Treaty obligation. (McGechan, 1991, p. 71).

and warned also that this protection must go beyond the archaeological: "A survival like Church Latin is not a survival" (McGechan, 1991, p. 59). Ten years later, however, Maori is still almost completely absent from national television, although, following a struggle between Maori broadcasters and government broadcasting interests throughout the 1980s, there are

Maori-operated radio stations in major urban areas and a number of regional locations partly supported by government funds.

However, government and business control of Maori extends well beyond the control of education, housing and the media. It may take the form also of appropriating aspects of Maori material culture (as in the souvenir industry and the design of corporate logos), to the appropriation of the language itself. At least one other Polynesian language, Hawaiian, has suffered the same fate. At the 1991 Pacific Science Congress I was able to use drinking cups and table napkins emblazoned with 'In Celebration of Aloha -- Sheraton's Hawaii'; language, culture and land, neatly packaged for the tourist. Language, culture and ideology are neatly appropriated by the New Zealand education system in the legal definition of 'wananga' in the 1990 Education Amendment Act. A Wananga is defined in section 162b (iv) of the Act as an institution characterised by teaching and research and developing knowledge regarding ahuatanga Maori (phenomena pertaining to Maori) according to tikanga Maori (Maori ways of doing or regarding things). The problem here is that Maori themselves, independently of any European-imposed educational system, have had institutions called 'Wananga' for centuries. Now, however, it is illegal for a Maori to establish a Wananga (or at least to call a wananga a Wananga and claim that it is a regular tertiary institution) without submitting to an elaborate accreditation procedure determined by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority.

As well as reserving, appropriating and redefining words, the bureaucratic elite may also exercise control over the mode of expression. There are now many government agencies (the exceptions would be few) and non-government organisations which have Maori names, displayed along with the English versions in bilingual signage. In many cases, however, it would be practically impossible to guess what the institution's functions might be from the Maori name, although the English name is quite matter of fact. Ray Harlow gave some amusing (and disquieting) examples of this in his 1997 paper 'Covert attitudes to Maori', including one from his own experience, which serves to explain many of the other apparent anomalies:



Some years ago, I was asked for advice on a Maori name for the Southland Museum. On suggesting *te Whare Taonga o Murihiku* [the Treasure House of Southland], I was told this would not do, the Maori name had to be poetic.

Even when there is the appearance of more Maori control, ownership may be concentrated in an elite, in the interests of a higher agenda. This in effect has happened with the Kura Kaupapa Maori, not because the Maori people organising such schools planned it that way, but because it is the non-Maori bureaucracy, not the local Maori community, that still determines whether, where and how many such schools will be established. Indeed, there is a clear and present danger that this most innovative and effective means for revitalising the Maori language may also become an equally outstanding example (on more than one level of metaphor) of what Pierre Bourdieu found to be the case with museums and art galleries in another part of the world:

The museum gives to all, as a public legacy, the monuments of a splendid past.

...This is false generosity, because free entrance is also optional entrance, reserved for those who, endowed with the ability to appropriate the works, have the privilege of using this freedom and who find themselves consequently legitimised in their privilege, that is to say in the means of appropriating cultural wealth, or, to borrow a phrase from Max Weber, in the monopoly of the handling of cultural wealth and of the institutional signs of cultural salvation (awarded by the school) (Bourdieu, 1990, pp. 214-5).

There are thus many social forces and counter-forces evident in all aspects of Maori language ownership, control, maintenance and revitalisation. Many paths, however, seem to lead away from Maori concerns to a non-Maori centre. The locus of the centre remains elusive. Will ownership, control, and actual use of the language eventually be evident within the Maori community as a whole? Joshua Fishman (1971, p. 330) thought that by "judiciously contrasting groups, socio-cultural processes and types of contact situations" we might eventually be able not only to understand these processes better, but also influence them in the direction of diversity

rather than homogeneity - to convert the blender into a salad bowl, at least. His subsequent research resulted in a book (Fishman, 1991) which was realistic about the difficulties and yet saw grounds for hope that effective counter-measures could be taken, making language shift neither desirable nor inevitable. This was followed ten years later by a series of case studies (Fishman, 2000) in which scholars from areas where notable efforts to revitalise endangered languages which had formed the subject matter of the earlier work were taking place. In many cases, the earlier hopefulness seemed to have been well-grounded, sometimes much more so than would have been anticipated a decade earlier. Other scholars, looking at the same kind of data, have concluded that such efforts to reverse language shift in places like Ireland (and, I suspect New Zealand also) are "a waste of energy and money" (Paulston, 1990, p. 14).

One indication that in New Zealand, at least, the people concerned consider their time and money well-spent may be the revival of serious interest in the regional variation which marked Maori speech (without getting in the way of wider communication) a few generations ago. While a growth of idiosyncratic variation appears to be a mark of impending language death (cf. Dorian 1981, pp. 146 sqq), an interest in and loyalty to a local dialect can be a positive sign of renewed vitality. Indeed, it is a very important aspect of 'ownership' in the personal sense. In relation to German, Clyne (1993, p. 365) notes the need for standard varieties of the language, but goes on to observe that the "persistence and resurrection of regionalism and regional varieties ... emphasises the importance of identifying with your 'own' language variety."

The greatest danger to the survival of Maori in the new millennium is not so much a question of ownership in itself as whether the controllers of the language nurture its speakers on a varied or restrictive diet. Sir James Henare is said once to have heaped generous praise on a group of University students who greeted him with well-polished formal oratory. However he ended by telling them there was only one fault with their performances – they were like the droppings of a rat that had eaten only one kind of food!<sup>3</sup> A danger which faced an earlier generation – the alienation

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3. I am indebted to Tukaki Waititi for this anecdote.

of women by the hegemony which men exercised over the language (see Benton, 1980) has probably receded greatly because of the leading role women have taken in the kohanga reo, Ataarangi and other revitalisation initiatives.

Maori in the year 2001 is definitely a pluricentric language, belonging to a *Kultur*nation, but with a *Staats*nation lurking in the background. The two are not conterminous: the State is predominantly non-Maori in culture, yet as long ago as 1978 had staked a claim to Maori as a new badge of a greater New Zealand (or Aotearoan) identity:

In times past the Maori language belonged to the Maori people alone...Today, Maori language is one of the two official languages of Aotearoa (New Zealand). Be strong in the teaching and learning of it. (Maori Language Week Broadcast in 1978 by Hon. L W Gandar, Minister of Education, quoted in Benton, 1984, p. 30)

Nor is the Maori *Kultur*nation confined to Aotearoa: it has itself established colonies across the Tasman, as witnessed by the establishment of kohanga reo and other groups actively promoting the language and culture among Maori emigrants to Australia. Thus Maori, like English and German, has national and international roles, with strong local variation and loyalty. But unlike German and English, normative control of the standard varieties of the language rests at present only partly with members of the Maori speech community or *Kultur*nation.

The quotes at the beginning of this account were taken from an interview with a young couple who were active participants in the effort to make Maori once again a pervasive community language. One of them had a broad and inclusive vision for the language; the other felt that the market forces governing so much of New Zealand life were wresting the language away from its true owners – and with it also the livelihoods of Maori people. Whau (not his real name) felt strongly, for example, that non-Maori who became fluent speakers and taught the language were taking jobs that rightly belonged to Maori, thus in effect selling the language back to the dispossessed. Thus at the beginning of the Third Millennium the Maori language is a sign of contradiction, for some he taonga tuku

iho, for others a taonga riro atu. Only a radical transformation of the cultural and economic order in which the language, its speakers, owners and controllers are enmeshed will justify Tarete's generous optimism, and enable Whau to share it unreservedly.

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## **The effects of immigration flow on patterns of language maintenance and shift in two immigrant communities in New Zealand**

*Mary Roberts*

### **Abstract**

This paper examines some of the immigration and settlement processes that affect language maintenance and shift, and suggests that in the case of the Cantonese and Gujarati communities in New Zealand there is a significant difference in outcomes in these respects. Survey respondents from both communities had very similar aims, but their communities are in a different stage of the language maintenance and shift process. The immigration and settlement history of the two communities is described, and it is concluded that the different patterns of immigration flow from Gujarat and Canton to New Zealand are the most important (though not the only) factor in the different language maintenance and shift outcomes.

With few exceptions, studies of minority immigrant groups in their new country show that there is a decline in the use of the original language of the group (Clyne, 1985; Chumak-Horbatsch, 1987; Holmes and Harlow, 1991; Bennet, 1992). This decline may be fast, slow, steady or erratic but, in general, it is considered to be inevitable (Baetens, Beardsmore and Willemyns, 1986, p. 125; Veltman, 1986, p. 178). Those groups that successfully hand on their language to the new generation and to the generations succeeding them are regarded as the exception, and even within such groups the demands of the new society always involve *some* contraction of the domain of the original language even if only in dealings with new society members.

Despite the general pattern of language use decline, we know that within that pattern there are many different ways for an immigrant group and individual immigrants to react to the circumstances of being in a new country and having to deal with new language and customs. This paper examines some of the immigration and settlement processes that affect language

maintenance and shift, and suggests that in the case of the Cantonese and Gujarati communities in New Zealand there is an interesting difference in language maintenance and shift outcomes that is largely due to one overriding factor.

The first section of this paper demonstrates that the respondents from both communities had very similar aims for community and language maintenance. The second section of the paper shows that, at present, despite having similar aims for language maintenance outcomes, each community is in a different stage of the language maintenance and shift process. The third section outlines some of the immigration and settlement history of the two communities and notes the similarities and differences of those histories. The fourth section discusses immigration flow from Gujarat and Canton to New Zealand and suggests that different patterns of immigration flow are the most important (though not the only) factor in the different language maintenance and shift outcomes within each community.

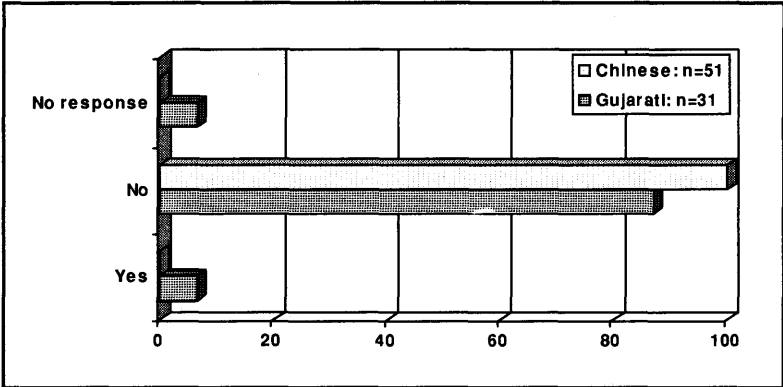
The Cantonese and Gujarati data considered in the paper were collected in questionnaire and interview based research that I conducted in Wellington over the period 1988-1993. Fifty-one New Zealand born Cantonese respondents were interviewed (Roberts, 1990). Thirty-four New Zealand born Gujarati respondents replied to a postal questionnaire in English and/or were interviewed (Roberts, 1999). The interviews with both sets of respondents were all in English and all conducted by me.

### **Desire to maintain language and identity within the community**

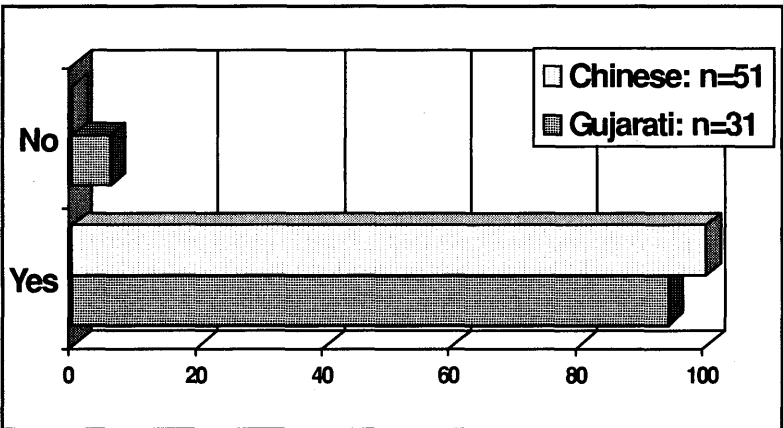
Most respondents reported that they wished to maintain their language and ethnic community identity in New Zealand. The graphs below show the strong positive responses to questions about language maintenance and maintenance of ethnic identity in New Zealand.



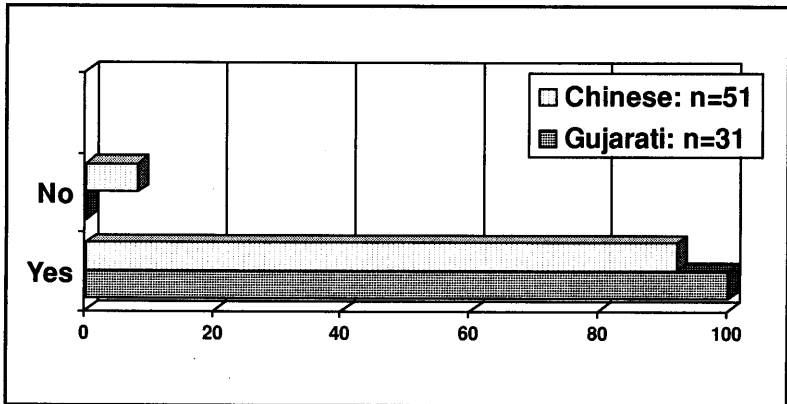
**Graph 1: Should Indian/Chinese people see themselves simply as New Zealanders - expressed as percentage**



**Graph 2: Should Indian/Chinese people see themselves as part of an Indian/New Zealand or Chinese/New Zealand community - expressed as percentage**



**Graph 3: Is it important to keep Cantonese/Gujarati as a living language in New Zealand - expressed as percentage**



It is apparent that respondents from both communities express similar strong desires to maintain their language and ethnic identity but that the language maintenance rates, at least at this point in each community's existence in New Zealand, are rather different. Jamieson's (1980) research on immigrant communities in Newtown, an ethnically heterogeneous suburb of Wellington, also identified discrepancies between the stated desire for language and cultural maintenance and the rate of language maintenance achieved. Immigration and settlement processes as well as other factors such as ethnic identity survival strategies are all influential in these matters for any immigrant community: some of the more crucial of these factors are examined below.

### **Language proficiency - self report data**

The first section of this paper compares various indicators of language proficiency to demonstrate that the New Zealand born Gujarati Indian respondents have higher levels of Mother Tongue

(MT)<sup>1</sup> proficiency than New Zealand born Cantonese Chinese respondents. The answers for the Cantonese have been re-adjusted from the answers to a slightly different scale of questions.<sup>2</sup>

Most (89%) of the New Zealand born Gujarati respondents who answered the question on oral Gujarati language skills (out of 34 who were asked) considered themselves to be 'fluent' or 'fairly fluent' speakers of Gujarati. Amongst the Cantonese however only 63% thought that they were 'fluent' or 'fairly fluent' and of those only 4% rated themselves as 'fluent' (compared to 41% of the Gujarati speakers).<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1: Self report speaking abilities of New Zealand born Gujarati and Cantonese respondents**

Speaking ability	Gujarati		Cantonese	
	N	%	N	%
Fluent	12	41	2	4
Fairly fluent	14	48	30	59
Not very fluent	3	11	19	37
Comprehension only	0	0	0	0
No ability	0	0	0	0
N=	29	100	51	100

1. Here I am using mother tongue (MT) to mean the language spoken by the original immigrants from each group to NZ. That language may not be the actual MT, in the sense of the language first spoken, of each individual member of the group, but I am regarding it as the MT language of the group as a whole irrespective of the actual MT of any given individual.
2. The Chinese respondents were asked to rate themselves on two five-point scales, one for speaking skills and one for comprehension skills. The possible answers for each scale were; very good, good, fair, limited, no ability. The Gujarati respondents were asked to rate themselves on a single five-point scale that combined speaking and comprehension skills. The possible answers were those shown in Table 1. A similar difference exists between the questions asked about literacy skills (Roberts 1990, Roberts 1999).
3. It should be borne in mind that there are cultural and individual differences in the responses to self-report questions.

Literacy skills were limited in both groups but more limited amongst the Chinese. Roughly equal proportions of respondents in both groups had no MT literacy skills at all (35% of the Gujaratis and 43% of the Cantonese).

Some respondents indicated that they could read but not write in their heritage language. This response was uncommon amongst the Gujarati respondents (6.5%) but 27% of the Cantonese respondents selected that option. In many cases this meant that they could read a handful of characters. The far higher proportion of Cantonese respondents choosing that option may in part be due to the greater learning burden involved in learning to read and write Chinese (Cheng, 1978, p. 377).

Only 30% of the Cantonese respondents could both read and write Chinese, whereas 58.5% of the Gujarati respondents could both read and write Gujarati. When we look at how the respondents rated their reading and writing skills the difference is even more dramatic: 35.5% of the Gujaratis could read and write 'easily' or 'fairly easily' whereas only 7% of the Cantonese speakers could read and write 'fairly easily'. None of the Cantonese respondents could write 'easily'.

It seems that New Zealand born Indian or Chinese respondents were roughly equally likely to be illiterate in their heritage script. If respondents *were* literate, then the Gujarati respondents were likely to achieve a higher level of literacy than the Cantonese respondents.

**Table 2: Self report literacy abilities of New Zealand born Gujarati and Cantonese respondents**

Can write	Gujarati		Cantonese	
	N	%	N	%
Easily	2	6.5	0	0
Fairly easily	10	29	3	7
With difficulty	8	23	12	23
Can read only	2	6.5	14	27
No ability	12	35	22	43
N=	34	100	51	100

Why, despite professing similar goals for MT maintenance in New Zealand, do the Gujarati and Cantonese respondents report such differences in their ability to speak and read and write their community MTs? Below I outline some of the immigration and settlement processes that appear to have influenced both communities.

## **Immigration and settlement processes**

### **Cantonese Chinese community immigration history**

The Chinese community in New Zealand falls into at least two broad divisions. One is what I call in this paper the traditional source Cantonese Chinese, the other is made up of more recently arrived immigrants of Chinese ethnicity who come from a range of Chinese speaking areas, including Taiwan and Hong Kong. My comments in this paper apply exclusively to the first group. This group is divided into three main dialect groups (Roberts, 1990).

The first Chinese arrived to work for gold in Otago in the 1860s. The Chinese population swelled to a peak of 5004 (9 women and 4995 men) in 1881 (Beatson and Beatson, 1990, p6). After 1881 and the passage of the 1881 Immigration Restriction Act which imposed a poll tax on Chinese entering the country, the population dropped to just over 2000 in 1916. Since 1916 the population has been rising slowly, more or less steadily, with the 1996 census showing a population of 70,227, although not all of these are traditional source Cantonese.

The Chinese community in New Zealand was essentially a sojourner community of men until the Second World War. Women only started to arrive in any numbers during WWII when they were allowed into the country as part of a family reunification programme to allow them to escape from what had become a war area. They had to post a bond to guarantee their return and the return of any children born during their stay in New Zealand, but this condition was waived after WWII ended and civil war continued in China.

The history of Chinese immigration to New Zealand obviously affected the patterns of language maintenance and shift within the community. Until WWII there was little need to think in terms of handing on the language to a New Zealand born population of

Chinese children because most of the men returned to China to marry and have families, and their children were raised in China, while the father returned to New Zealand, often followed later by his son/s. As a result of the changes in China in the years following the Communist government's accession to power in 1949, contact between the New Zealand and Cantonese communities largely ceased. There was no opportunity for re-establishing that contact until the political situation in China changed in the mid to late 1970s. At that stage some New Zealand Chinese families and individuals took advantage of the changes to reopen contact, but the former strong links between the New Zealand Chinese community and Canton appear to have been broken by this time for most families.

### **The Gujarati Indian community immigration history**

Most (nine tenths according to Pearson, 1990, p. 85) of the Indian population of New Zealand until 1987 were from Gujarat or descendants of immigrants from Gujarat. Since 1987 there has been a substantial increase in the Indo-Fijian population in New Zealand and the total population of people of Indian descent in New Zealand now stands at 38,403 (1996 census).

The Gujaratis began arriving in New Zealand in the early part of this century and, like the Cantonese, the new arrivals consisted largely of sojourner men. The pattern of migration to New Zealand and elsewhere was one of chain migration of men who saw themselves as sojourners earning money to send back to improve family life at home and expecting eventually to return to Gujarat. Many of them did return home to marry and settle, and by the 1920s their sons were coming to New Zealand to perpetuate the pattern.

The link with Gujarat continues to this day. Strong family ties in New Zealand and India and between the two countries have made linguistic and cultural maintenance a necessity for most individuals and for the community as a whole

### **Factors affecting Gujarati and Cantonese settlement in New Zealand**

The Cantonese and Gujarati immigrants to New Zealand began arriving in New Zealand at a time when hierarchical racist

distinctions were freely made by a large part of the New Zealand population (see, for example, Beatson and Beatson, 1990, pp. 27-36; Pearson, 1990, pp. 92-100; Ip, 1990, pp. 14-22) and this affected their attitude to cultural and linguistic maintenance.<sup>4</sup> The Chinese and Indian settlers in New Zealand were exposed to New Zealand racist attitudes, and these attitudes and the actions they led to are still resented today. Indeed, even today, neither community is free from racist reaction from members of the wider community.

I think how long do we have to be here 'til we can have that acceptance ... we're seen as a law abiding well-behaved community and yet we *still* get attacked. So what does it take - for us to be part of the people here. We've lived here *so* long. (woman commenting on racially motivated attacks on Indians in New Zealand. (Under the Carpet. *Inside New Zealand*, TV3 Documentary, 1994)

The sense of being, in some ways, a beleaguered minority led to both communities focusing strongly on the family and the community as sites of cultural and linguistic maintenance. In one way, of course, this was natural - after all it was the family and community who had the resources, in terms of language and culture, to foster maintenance. However, it would be true to say that both communities felt that they could make no claims on the wider society for assistance in their endeavours and that, to some extent, these endeavours were not exactly concealed, but certainly not trumpeted to the wider community.

New Zealand's strong commitment to and preference for racial and cultural homogeneity may have influenced the Indian and Chinese communities to keep their efforts towards language maintenance quiet. The attitude of the host community also affected the size of the immigrant communities. Almost certainly the concept of New Zealand as a racially and culturally homogeneous society (with all the various caveats that were made to accommodate Maori within this definition), and the attendant legislation and policy

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4. It would not be accurate to give the impression that all New Zealanders were implacably opposed on racist grounds to the arrival of Chinese and Indian settlers - but many were and this has left its mark on both host and immigrant communities.

aimed at achieving this goal, led to smaller Chinese and Indian communities than would otherwise have been the case.

The Gujaratis have, as mentioned above, maintained strong links with their country of origin. but this has not been possible for the Cantonese Chinese. Generally, in the Gujarati community, people hope to take their children back 'home', at least for a visit - possibly for some education and possibly also to find a spouse.

One of the things that was noticeable in gathering the Cantonese and Gujarati data was the relative lack of social range amongst the immigrants to New Zealand, at least in the early days. In those days most of the immigrants were from small peasant backgrounds. No members of the upper reaches of society, no urban business people or professionals, no intellectuals and no religious leaders came to New Zealand in these groups. To some extent, as emigration from Gujarat has continued, this pattern has altered within the Indian community, but the truncated Chinese emigration has meant that there has been virtually no new inflow from the original areas of immigration.

The effects of a given social milieu have been most marked in the Chinese group - where it has interacted with the virtual cessation of immigration. The limited social group from which the Cantonese immigrants were drawn meant that substantial parts of Chinese culture were largely unknown in the New Zealand community.

Cantonese immigration to New Zealand started earlier than Gujarati immigration, but it fell dramatically at the turn of the century, at about the same time that Gujarati immigration started. In both cases early immigration was almost entirely male, and the gender imbalance does not begin to be righted until 1945 in the case of the Chinese community (Pearson, 1990, p. 84) and 1951 in the case of the Indian community (Pearson, 1990, p. 87).<sup>5</sup> As communities consisting mainly of families rather than sojourner males, the two communities would appear to be of roughly similar age, although the Chinese community undoubtedly contains some members whose family histories in New Zealand go back much further than

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5. Separate figures are not available for the Cantonese and Gujarati members of the Chinese and Indian communities, but until the 1960s the Cantonese and Gujaratis were heavily predominant in their respective groups.



those of members of the Indian community. The Indian community (mainly Gujarati) was always smaller than the Chinese community (mainly Cantonese), but both have been, until recently, small in absolute terms.

Given the uncertainty regarding community size as a factor in language maintenance and shift (Fishman, 1966, pp. 210-11; Clyne, 1985), it is hard to know whether the size of the two communities has affected language maintenance and shift, and even harder to know if the comparatively small difference in community sizes would have affected their comparative rates of language maintenance and shift.

**Table 3: Chinese and Indian population in New Zealand  
1945-1991**

Speaking ability	Chinese			Indian		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1945	3414	1526	4940	1130	424	1554
1956	4026	2705	6731	1895	1256	3151
1966	5700	4583	10283	4199	2644	6843
1976 <sup>1</sup>	7576	6809	14385	5136	4111	9247
1986	9906	9600	19506	6384	5742	12126
1996 <sup>2</sup>	33909	36318	70227	19614	18789	38403

1. Figures 1945 –1976 taken from Pearson 1990, pp. 84, 87.

2. Figures 1986 – 1996 taken from Statistics New Zealand Te Tari Tatau 1997, pp. 21 - 23.

Since the arrival of substantial numbers of Chinese and Indian women, and with the gradually increasing prosperity of the two groups, the Indian and Chinese residential clusters that used to exist in Wellington have, to a large extent, dispersed. Dispersed population is cited by Li (1982) as one factor in reduced language maintenance in the Chinese community in the U.S.A, and it was certainly mentioned by several of the Cantonese and Gujarati respondents as a reason for the impracticability of school-based language maintenance classes.

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There is no theological link between either of the languages under discussion and the particular religions associated with their speakers in New Zealand, nor was religion mentioned by any of the respondents as a reason for desiring one's children to speak the MT. One difference between the two communities is that the Chinese largely converted to Christianity in New Zealand (although Chinese born people in New Zealand tended to maintain a variety of Confucian practices that might more accurately be termed culturally rather than religiously important), and the Gujarati community has remained Hindu.<sup>6</sup> Although this might seem like a significant difference in attitudes to culture maintenance, I do not think that it is. Suffice it to say that from a language maintenance and shift point of view, the course of action undertaken by each community did not make any practical difference as observant members of each community continued to use their own language for religious worship.

The Gujarati men who came to New Zealand at the turn of the century did not, as did the Cantonese, come for gold; but once the gold mining period was over, both communities have had broadly similar employment histories in New Zealand. It was hard for Chinese and Indian men to find employment (Pearson, 1990, pp. 78-79, 88), which led to self-employment in jobs requiring low capital start up costs and using skills that the men already possessed. Market

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6. This statement is based on a combination of personal knowledge, questionnaire responses and census data. Twenty-four of the 33 Gujaratis who were asked about their religion (this group is different from, although it overlaps with the NZ-born respondents cited in the body of the article) said that they were Hindu and appeared to regard this as the norm for Gujarati Indians in NZ - many of the homes I went into had small Hindu shrines set up. Most of the traditional source Chinese community, if they profess any religion at all, are Christian. The 1991 Census figures reflect only specifically Christian denominations - all other religions are subsumed under 'other'. Seventy-five percent of Indian census respondents gave 'other' as their religion and I am assuming that this means 'Hindu' for the bulk of the Gujarati respondents. Ten per cent of Indian census respondents belonged to one of the Christian denominations. Twenty-five percent of the Chinese census respondents were Christian but the bulk, 45%, were of 'no religion'.

gardens and greengrocers were favourites with members of both communities (Pearson, 1990, pp. 73-93). Since WWII members of both communities have moved into professional and managerial positions (Thomson, 1993, p. 39)

The two communities under consideration share many similar experiences in their immigration and settlement histories in New Zealand, but there are also some substantial points of difference. Below, I outline some of the main points of similarity and difference, and then go on to consider the different immigration flows from Canton and Gujarat to New Zealand. My argument is that this difference in immigration flows is the single most important (but not the only) factor in the different language maintenance and shift outcomes in the two communities.

### **Points of similarity**

- Both were and are small communities.
- Both were initially male sojourner communities.
- Both faced and still face discrimination from non-Asian New Zealanders.
- Both communities initially drew their members from a very limited social milieu.
- Both had initial periods of residential contiguity but are dispersed today.
- Both have formed a range of ethnic associations, many of which are still strong today.
- Both have provided regional MT language education for their children.
- Respondents from both communities reacted strongly and positively to questions of language and identity maintenance.
- Both groups have roughly similar employment histories in New Zealand.

### **Points of difference**

- The Cantonese community has, in some form, been in New Zealand 40-50 years longer than the Gujarati community.
- Although both communities are small in absolute terms the Cantonese community has always been somewhat larger.

- The Cantonese community speak three main dialects of Cantonese held by some speakers to be mutually unintelligible. The Gujarati speakers speak one language.
- The Cantonese community uses a non-alphabetic writing system for its MT. Gujarati is written with an alphabetic system.
- Members of the Indian community were never legally disadvantaged as were members of the Chinese community were.
- Contact with the homeland was never broken in the case of the Indian community, but was severely disrupted in the case of the Chinese community.

It is clear from the information in Tables 1 and 2 that Gujarati Indians are more likely than Cantonese Chinese to speak their MT to a level that they consider fluent or fairly fluent, and that if they have some MT literacy skills they are much more likely than their Cantonese counterparts to be able to both read and write. The question addressed here is:

Given the many similarities between the two communities, given that respondents from both communities have high and positive responses to questions about language and ethnic identity maintenance, why does the Gujarati community appear to have a markedly higher level of MT language maintenance?

### **Patterns of immigration flow**

The flow of immigrants to New Zealand is, in my opinion, the single most important factor in the language maintenance histories of these two communities. In discussing this flow I shall be relying on data collected on external migration from 1921 to 1970. During that 49-year period an almost unbroken set of figures was collected on various aspects of external migration.<sup>7</sup> In 1971 the categories under which external migration data were collected were changed and many categories, including the one I rely on for the statistics

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7. No relevant figures were gathered during the war years of 1942-44, inclusive.

presented below, were discontinued. In the discussion that follows the data is drawn from a category originally defined as 'Race Alien Arrivals and Departures by Race and Country'. In 1932 this was changed to 'Arrivals and Departures of Persons Other than European by Race and Country'. This category allows us to consider Chinese immigrants from China and Indian immigrants from India, while excluding immigrants of those races who came from other countries (e.g. Fiji, Hong Kong or Singapore). I should point out here that this table does not record purpose of visit. All arrivals of members of a particular race are recorded, including those who arrived for purposes other than settling in New Zealand. For convenience I refer to the people listed as 'immigrants' but it should be borne in mind that a few of them may not have intended a lengthy stay in New Zealand. Where I want to make it clear that settlement in New Zealand was not necessarily the aim of those represented in the figures, I use the term 'movement'.

Indian immigration to New Zealand has been fairly steadily increasing from a low point in 1922 of 15. Apart from a post war dip in 1945/46 to 11, the recorded number of Indian immigrants to New Zealand was never to fall so low again. Between 1960 and 1970, the numbers range from 252 to 321 per annum. As well as a slow and steady increase of overall numbers, Indian immigration from India shows a fairly steady increase in the proportion of female immigrants. In 1922 one (roughly 7%) of the 15 immigrants was female, by 1932 22% (of the 36) were female and in 1951/52, for the first time, the proportion of female Indian immigrants from India rose to 40%. In the period under consideration female immigration was never to exceed 53.51% (and only in that one 12 month period, 1957/58 was it to exceed 50%) but from 1949/50 to 1969/70, female immigration was not to drop below 29% of the total immigration of Indians from India.

The Chinese community in New Zealand does not demonstrate this pattern of slow and fairly steady increase in immigration numbers. Rather, Chinese immigration to New Zealand is a pattern of highs and lows. From 1921 to 1938/39 numbers fluctuated from 65 to 198 Chinese immigrants ex-China, per annum. There is no particular pattern discernible, although a run of relatively low immigration numbers from 1930 to 1935/36 seems to coincide with

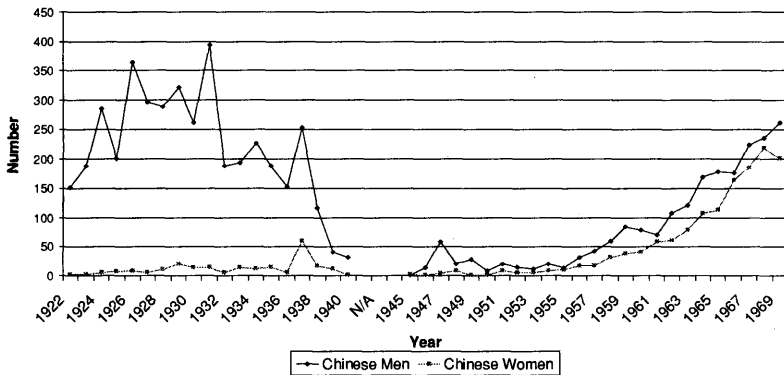
the Depression. In 1939/40 came the humanitarian policy of allowing wives and families from war areas in China to enter New Zealand, and in that 12 month period the single largest intake, in the period under consideration, of Chinese from China was recorded - 627 - 52% of whom 329 were female. The civil war period in post-WWII China saw a return to pre-war levels of Chinese entry to New Zealand, followed by a leap to 206 in 1948/48 and 390 in 1949/50. 1949 was, of course, the year that the People's Republic of China was established. There is fairly steady immigration of over 100 people per annum from 1950 to 1955/56. A large proportion of these immigrants are women and many of them were wives and/or daughters of men who were residents of New Zealand (Sedgwick, 1982, p. 455). Political uncertainty in China was, as in 1939/40, causing whole families to migrate. The numbers rise to 217 in the 1956/57 period (1956 was the year of the ill-fated '100 Flowers Movement') and after that fall steadily, reaching a low of three in 1965/66 (when the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution was in full swing), the lowest figure in the 49 years under consideration.

The other important figure is that of 'NZ residents returning' to New Zealand. These figures were kept, on a racial basis, from 1922-1970, and from them we get some idea of the ebb and flow of Chinese and Indian people going back to the homeland and then returning to New Zealand. These graphs can only be suggestive. We cannot know that all New Zealand residents of a given race, returning to New Zealand were, necessarily, returning from a visit 'home'. The graphs do, however, bear out strong anecdotal evidence that many visits home were made. The figures become harder to interpret after WWII. From the middle 1950s on, the drop in immigration ex-China and the political situation there seem to make it increasingly unlikely that many Cantonese returning from China are represented in the growing 'New Zealand Residents Returning' figures. Rather these would seem to represent Chinese people returning to New Zealand from a variety of other destinations.

In the case of the Indian community, increasing movement of Indians from Fiji rather than India makes it somewhat harder to interpret the figures. In the 1960s, many Indo-Fijians entered New Zealand. It appears that most of them were on short-term work

permits and did not become New Zealand residents but despite extensive inquiry, it has not been possible to establish this as a certainty. Nonetheless it seems likely that, despite the rise in Indian movement to New Zealand from Fiji, we can discount most of these people when it comes to the New Zealand Residents Returning figures. The figures appear to represent then, largely Indians-ex India and lend support to the community anecdotal evidence that many people (in the early days, especially men) returned to India for visits home.

**Graph 4: New Zealand residents (Chinese) returning to New Zealand** (This graph refers to Table 1 in Appendix 1.)

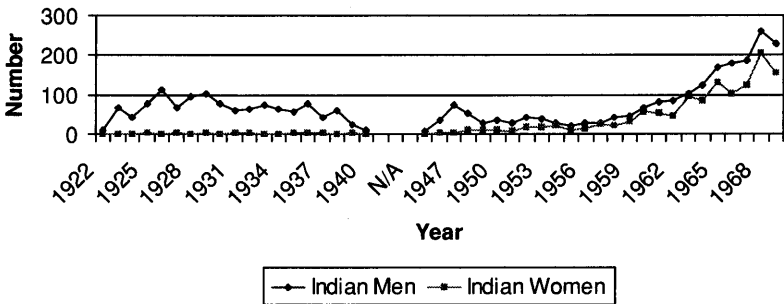


We can see that until WWII there was a large (given the overall size of the Chinese population in New Zealand) and steady stream of Chinese men returning to New Zealand every year. These men (and a handful of women) were vital in maintaining the links between New Zealand and Canton. In the 1950s however, after a brief post-war revival, these contacts more or less ceased.

The Gujarati community however, shows the same pattern of visits 'home' and, apart from the war period, they have been able to be assiduous in maintaining links with their homeland. The continued Gujarati links with India have led to:

- a high rate of marriage between New Zealand and Gujarati born people;
- many people returning or intending to return to Gujarat for one or more visits; and
- a continued influx of new immigrants who have tended to be drawn into the community and not to have formed a group distinct from the New Zealand born Gujarati community.

**Graph 5: New Zealand residents (Indian) returning to New Zealand (This graph refers to Table 2 in Appendix 1.)**



All these factors increase the number of reasons and opportunities for speaking Gujarati and would appear to be important in the comparatively high rates of language maintenance achieved by the Gujarati community. Conversely, it has been more difficult than for most immigrants for the Cantonese to keep in touch with their homeland, and there was a virtual cessation of contact between members of the New Zealand Chinese community and their villages of origin in Canton between the early 1950s and some time in the 1970s, a period of roughly thirty years, or one generation.<sup>8</sup>

8. It seems to me suggestive that the length of this break in contact should be thirty years, one generation. It would be interesting to know if there was some critical length of time after which community links with the homeland were effectively severed but before which they could be restored with relatively little effect upon language and cultural maintenance in the immigrant community.



Continued migration is acknowledged as a significant factor in the language and cultural maintenance endeavours of an immigrant community. As Trlin says in reference to the 'Yugoslav' community in New Zealand,

During their first few years in New Zealand, new arrivals refresh the community's knowledge of customs and revitalise use of the native language on a regular, daily basis. They update the New Zealand ethnic community with infusions, transfers from a language that is *not* static but dynamic and evolving. In doing so, they serve the interests of their ethnic community by contributing to the maintenance of the mother tongue ... and possibly serve the interests of New Zealand as a whole if effective communication promotes international understanding, trade and tourism. (Trlin, 1992, p. 22)

The Gujarati community has had the benefit of such 'revitalisation' whereas the Cantonese community has not. Pauwels (1988, p. 12) suggests that:

If migrant intake is completely halted, and with the passing of the elderly, communities whose Language Maintenance depends heavily on the presence of [communicative function] would almost certainly experience massive Language Shift.

In the case of the Cantonese Chinese, intake was never completely halted, nor have all the elderly passed away. Yet allowing for these differences, the case of the Cantonese Chinese in New Zealand seems to bear out Pauwels' prediction. Shift has not been 'massive', but it has been considerable, and it seems likely that it is related to the reduction of migrant intake.

The two immigrant groups considered in this paper have similar immigration and settlement histories in New Zealand and similar attitudes to both language and ethnic identity maintenance. The language maintenance outcomes in each group however have been strikingly different. When immigration patterns from country of origin to New Zealand are investigated, there are obvious marked differences between the ways in which the Gujarati and Cantonese communities were established in New Zealand. The Gujarati

community has a history of fairly continuous immigration to New Zealand, a steady development of their community in New Zealand and regular communication and contact with the original homeland. The Cantonese community has a history of wild swings in immigration numbers, correspondingly uneven development of their community in New Zealand and eventual cessation of communication and contact with the homeland. This marked difference in immigration flows has been the main contributor to the different language maintenance and shift outcomes that we see today.

**Appendix 1      Table 1: Returning Chinese residents**

Year	Chinese Men	Chinese Women
1922	152	3
1923	189	3
1924	286	7
1925	201	8
1926	364	10
1927	296	6
1928	288	11
1929	321	20
1930	262	15
1931	395	14
1932	188	7
1933	193	15
1934	226	13
1935	188	16
1936	154	6
1937	253	60
1938	118	18
1939	41	12
1940	32	1
1940-1944	N/A	N/A
1945	1	3
1946	15	1
1947	59	4
1948	20	9
1949	29	2
1950	10	2
1951	20	9
1952	16	6
1953	13	7
1954	21	10
1955	15	11
1956	32	18
1957	42	18
1958	60	32
1959	86	38
1960	79	41
1961	72	58
1962	110	62
1963	122	80
1964	169	108
1965	179	114
1966	177	164
1967	223	185
1968	236	218
1969	262	201

**Table 2: Returning Indian residents**

Year	Indian Men	Indian Women
1922	9	0
1923	66	0
1924	42	0
1925	78	3
1926	113	0
1927	68	4
1928	94	0
1929	104	4
1930	79	0
1931	60	3
1932	63	3
1933	73	1
1934	65	1
1935	55	4
1936	78	4
1937	44	2
1938	60	0
1939	24	2
1940	12	1
1940-1944	N/A	N/A
1945	7	0
1946	37	5
1947	73	5
1948	53	12
1949	28	10
1950	34	9
1951	29	8
1952	42	17
1953	40	19
1954	30	21
1955	20	12
1956	30	13
1957	30	26
1958	42	22
1959	45	33
1960	66	57
1961	82	53
1962	86	45
1963	103	97
1964	125	85
1965	169	129
1966	180	103
1967	188	123
1968	260	206
1969	228	154

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## **Collecting sociolinguistic data: Some typical and some not so typical approaches**

*Donna Starks and Zita McRobbie-Utasi*

### **Abstract**

This article provides a survey of some data collection techniques employed in the analysing of social variation and language use. An outline of the methodology applied in early dialect studies and sociolinguistic interviews will be followed by a discussion of polling techniques including new and innovative rapid surveys used in data collecting. In addition, some of the findings obtained through employing different methods will be presented to illustrate their effectiveness in identifying and describing social variables.

This paper explores the three main types of data collection techniques: surveys, interviews, and polling techniques. An examination of survey methods used by traditional dialectologists will be followed by a review of interview techniques employed by researchers working within the variationist paradigm.<sup>1</sup> Particular emphasis is given to the sociolinguistic interview, the mainstay of modern sociolinguistic research. In the final section of the paper there is a survey of recent polling methods used to collect data on the social dimensions of language variation.

### **Traditional dialectology**

From the beginning of the 19th century dialectologists have been working systematically on regional variation in language. Employing paper and pencil, and later tape recorders, researchers

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1. The variationist paradigm is one of the main paradigms in sociolinguistics. It has been developed on the basis of recognizing that variability in language is systematic (Labov, 1966, 1972). Research within this paradigm focuses on the relationship between variation in language and social factors, and on language change. The main paradigms in sociolinguistics are defined and described in Coupland and Jaworski (1997).

recorded differences in pronunciation, grammatical construction, and lexicon in the speech of rural inhabitants in France, Germany, England, Scotland, and America (Chambers and Trudgill, 1980, pp. 18-23; Petyt, 1980). Often, after decades of research, a monumental publication was produced which contained hundreds of dialect maps on which lines (called isoglosses) indicated the geographical limits of words, grammatical structures, and sounds. For example, although there are no current dialect maps of New Zealand or Australia, in the case of the former one could envisage such a map with isoglosses separating parts of Otago and Southland from the rest of the area: for example, the presence of post-vocalic /r/ in words such as 'car', the vowel sound in words such as 'can't, dance', morphological features such as the past participle after 'needs' and 'wants' (e.g., 'The cat wants fed'), as well as a few lexical differences such as 'bach' in most of New Zealand vs 'crib' in Otago and Southland (Bartlett, 1992; Bayard and Bartlett, 1996, pp. 26-27; Bauer, 1997; Gordon and Deverson, 1998, pp. 126-129).<sup>2</sup> Although no other dialect areas have been identified within New Zealand, Bauer and Bauer's (2000) current dialectology research on lexical variation may provide data for analysing additional regional variations in New Zealand English (see below).

Dialectologists employ two major techniques of data collecting, both of which involve 'direct probes' to elicit dialect forms (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes, 1998, p.21). Some of the earlier dialectologists used postal questionnaires mailed to selected individuals (e.g., teachers); others used the 'on the spot phonetic transcription' method, by travelling from one rural community to another to collect information (see Chambers and Trudgill, 1980, pp. 18-23; Milroy, 1987, p. 10). The questionnaires were very detailed, often taking days, sometimes even weeks, to complete. For example, the questionnaire for the *Dictionary of American Regional English* contained over 1,800 questions (Wolfram and Schilling-Estes, 1998, p. 126).

There are several features characteristic of traditional dialectology. Earlier research tended to focus on a few older (mostly

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2. There is considerable variability amongst Southlanders in the use of these dialect features. Many Southlanders use both the regional variant and the general New Zealand English form (Bartlett, 1992).



male) speakers (Chambers and Trudgill, 1980, p. 33) who lived all of their lives in the community in which they were born. The justification for this research attitude was the belief that these speakers had the 'purest, most vernacular' speech. However, because these speakers were living in rural areas, language use in urban centres was typically not considered. Another important feature of early dialectology was its theoretically biased approach. Dialectologists believed that through detailed documentation of the regional speech of older speakers living in isolated areas it was possible to show irregularity in language change (Kurath, 1972), thus refuting the then popular hypothesis concerning the regularity of sound change (the Neogrammarian Hypothesis).<sup>3</sup>

By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, dialect research had shifted from a diachronic to a synchronic focus. It has become concerned with the distribution and variation of certain lexical or phonological items in population centres, rural and urban alike. While the social background of the various dialect forms was also taken into consideration, this was only of secondary importance (Wolfram, 1997, p. 108). With increasing mobility and urbanisation, more complex dialectology methods have been devised. The *Linguistic Atlas of the United States*, for example, includes all population centres and represents individuals of different ages of three social types based on their social and educational backgrounds (Kurath, 1972).

### **The sociolinguistic interview**

A major shift in research techniques occurred with the publication of Labov's work on English in New York City (1966). His description of urban speech was based on a study of 88 individuals from a socially stratified random sample, consisting of male and female speakers from three age groups and four social classes (identified on the basis of education, occupation, and income). Labov showed that variation in the speech of the individual was a reflection of variation in the social group by illustrating how the most extreme case of stylistic variation in the use of /r/ by a single speaker was in

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3. In Labov (1994) there is an in-depth discussion of the Neogrammarian Hypothesis.

conformity with the overall pattern exemplified in group scores of the different social classes (summarised in Chambers, 1995, pp. 18-21).

Labov's work on language use in New York City provided a blueprint for current methods of investigating variation in language use. As part of his research on the Lower-East side of New York City, he developed the sociolinguistic interview, the corner-stone of sociolinguistic research today. The sociolinguistic interview aims at eliciting linguistic data in different speech contexts. It comprises an informal part (consisting of free conversation) for eliciting vernacular or local use, and a formal part (consisting of a reading passage, word lists and minimal pairs)<sup>4</sup> to elicit various degrees of formal or standard language use.<sup>5</sup> Labov (1966) identified nine contextual styles from casual to formal, and associated all nine types with channel cues (i.e., cues that signal change from one style to another). For example, by initiating a topic such as childhood games or traumatic life-threatening events the interviewer may achieve changes in the speech of the interviewee resulting in a less formal style, approximating or arriving at the desired more natural, vernacular speaking mode. The technique of inducing style change with this kind of prompt has been widely employed in sociolinguistic research (for example, Bayard, 1995; Holmes and Bell, 1988, Appendix).<sup>6</sup> Thus the sociolinguistic interview usually starts with an informal free conversation, followed by increasingly formal language tasks that demand more attention to language use on the

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4. A minimal pair represents two words of distinct meaning that differ in only one sound, i.e., 'pet/bet', 'bit/bet'.
  5. Labov acknowledged that it would not be possible to observe the use of the pure vernacular during an interview because of the formal nature of the setting. In a later publication (1972) Labov termed this situation the "observer's paradox" — a basic methodological concern of sociolinguistic research — denoting the dilemma as to how to obtain data on the way people speak when unobserved by the researcher who has to observe the speaker(s).
  6. For a detailed analysis of the sociolinguistic interview, we highly recommend Holmes and Bell (1988). This paper describes the interview schedule in the pilot sociolinguistic interviews for the Porirua study.

part of the respondent. The interviews often take up to two hours to complete (Holmes, Bell and Boyce, 1991).

Free conversation aims at eliciting 'natural speech', while the formal part of the interview is designed to elicit specific data that do not necessarily occur during the course of casual conversation. For example, as the vowel in the word '*fish*' occurs frequently enough in English speech, free conversation suffices should the linguist aim at examining this vowel.<sup>7</sup> However, certain other linguistic items may need careful interview design in order that sufficient data will be obtained for study. Word lists and minimal pairs may be so constructed as to contain multiple tokens of the linguistic variable to be investigated.

In a sociolinguistic interview there is usually a minimum of five speakers per cell, with studies typically ranging from 48 to 120 respondents per community (Wolfram and Fasold, 1974).<sup>8</sup> Earlier studies relied on random sampling for data collection (Labov, 1966), whereas later researchers have tended to use judgement samples (see Wolfram and Fasold, 1974, p.38), or networking (Milroy, 1987, pp. 35-36).<sup>9</sup> The sample is typically stratified on the basis of gender and age, and often includes social class (Labov, 1972; Trudgill, 1974) and/or ethnicity (Holmes, Bell and Boyce, 1991; Horvath, 1985). Of the social variables, age is often one of the most important. Bayard (1995, p. 65) claims that age appears to be the most important variable in New Zealand English, and Clarke (1991, p. 112) makes a similar statement about one variety of Newfoundland English.

An important feature to be acknowledged in connection with the sociolinguistic interview is the role of the interviewer. Some researchers have begun to explore the interviewer effect. For

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7. Bell (1997, p.248), for example, was able to elicit a minimum of 50 tokens per speaker of the short (i) vowel in words such as '*fish*' in only 15 minutes of free conversation.

8. Extraction of linguistic data from interviews is very time-consuming, making larger studies unfeasible. For a discussion of this, see Wardhaugh (1992, p.153).

9. The units of social networks are 'pre-existing groups'. Researchers, instead of comparing groups of speakers, study relationships of individual speakers with other individuals (Milroy and Milroy, 1997, p. 59).

example, Trudgill (1986) has found that he was accommodating toward the speech of his interviewees (i.e., his own speech tended to replicate that of his subjects); however, few researchers have been able to assess the role of the interviewer effect. Bell and Johnson (1997) devised a study to examine interviewer accommodation. In their study, four subjects, two Maori and two Pakeha, were interviewed three times. In the first interview, the interviewee was matched for gender and ethnicity with the interviewer. In subsequent interviews, interviewees differed from their interviewer in gender or ethnicity. This case study illustrated how the use of ethnic markers correlates with the gender and ethnicity of the interlocutor.

Although interview techniques in sociolinguistic research are acknowledged to be an effective tool for collecting sociolinguistic data, their limitations must also be recognised. Some types of linguistic variants are difficult or even impossible to collect by using the method of the sociolinguistic interview. For example, because certain vernacular forms may occur only in peer conversation, even minimal pair tests fail to elicit the forms the researcher may need to study in order to resolve an important theoretical question (Edwards, 1986; Milroy, 1987, pp. 51-54). An illustration of this is the study of the hypothesised merger of two vowels in Belfast inner-city speech where the distinction between the vowel of 'meet' and 'meat' is retained only in spontaneous conversation (described in Milroy and Harris, 1980). Further, while interview techniques work well for small samples, broad-based samples are difficult to administer through sociolinguistic interviews.

### **Polling techniques**

Research on language variation may necessitate the examining of broad-based samples across a speech community such as a city or even an entire state. Accordingly, a number of extensive large-scale data collection techniques have been developed. Some of these use a combination of short sociolinguistic interviews and more formal reading tasks. For example, for the past eight years, third-year undergraduate linguistics students at the University of Canterbury have each recorded half-hour interviews and word lists with two

subjects. These recordings were later analysed by a trained phonetician and incorporated into the ONZE (Origins of New Zealand English) database. The recordings provide real-time data on language change in New Zealand English (Trudgill *et al.*, 1998). In most broad-based research projects, data collection is restricted to formal reading tasks. For example, in their research on 'ear/air', Gordon and Maclagan (1990, p. 133; Maclagan and Gordon, 1996, p. 127) employed word lists and sentences as data collection methods in Christchurch classrooms. Every five years since 1994, 14- and 15-year-olds from four schools in Christchurch participated in their study. The results show that sound changes occur at different rates in different words. For example, although the change was complete for the word pair 'really/rarely' by 1983, the merger for other word pairs (e. g., 'hear/hair') was not complete until five years later (1996, p.133).

Ways of employing the word-list polling technique are illustrated by research on regional variation undertaken by Horvath and Horvath (2000). In their broad-based survey aimed at studying the loss of /l/ (described as *l*-vocalisation) in words such as 'call' and 'cold', people in public places were approached and asked to read from a word list. The researchers used this method to trace the apparent global loss of this sound in four cities in Australia and four in New Zealand (they are currently investigating *l*-vocalisation in England), and results indicate that this process appears to be more advanced in New Zealand than in some regions of Australia.

Postal questionnaires serve as another polling technique designed to survey numerous speakers across large communities using the written medium. Chambers (1998), for example, investigated regional variation within Canada by mailing out 2000 questionnaires to a large, heavily populated area in Southern Ontario, Canada, and the northern United States.<sup>10</sup> These questionnaires contained 11 demographic and 76 linguistic questions aimed at clarifying the use and pronunciation of selected lexical items. Pronunciation is communicated in the questionnaires by items prompting the speaker

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10. The study has been extended to other areas as well. For a survey in Quebec, see Chambers and Heisler (1999). The project website is [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~chambers/dialect.topography.html](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~chambers/dialect.topography.html).

to fill in the blanks: e.g., 'Does the ending of AVENUE sound like [ ] you or [ ] oo?'. Their findings based on the evaluation of the data in the questionnaires show pronunciation differences between towns on either side of the Canada-US border. Bauer and Bauer (2000) also employed a written postal questionnaire in their investigation of regional variation in children's vocabulary. They collected lexical items from Year 7 and 8 students at 150 New Zealand schools, focussing on words for common games and greetings, as well as words for feelings and behavioural stereotypes (Bauer and Bauer, 2000, p.8). The teachers recorded their students' responses and reported the findings to the researchers. A preliminary analysis of the children's playground vocabulary points to a potential dialect boundary between the north (as far south as the volcanic plateau), the large central region (which includes parts of the South Island), and the southern region comprising largely East Otago and Southland. This is illustrated in Bauer and Bauer's telling example of the catching game: "In the north, the game is usually called *tiggy*. In the central area (North and South of the Cook Strait), the game is called *tag*. In Southland and Otago, it is generally called *tig*."

A more recent form of postal questionnaire is the e-mail survey. Simon and Murray (1999), when studying different pronunciations of the vowel in the word '*suite*' in the United States, found that e-mail requests proved to be a convenient way of gathering a considerable amount of data in a relatively short time. They also found that respondents often were prepared to supply detailed responses over the Internet (for example, providing illustrations of the use of words in different contexts).

In-person and telephone polling techniques have also been widely used in sociolinguistic research (Labov, 1984; Milroy, 1987, p.73). *Telsur* is a large-scale telephone survey of speakers from all major urban centres in the United States and Canada (Ash, nd; Boberg, 2000, p.9). The number of speakers per centre varies with population size, but in all cases at least one female between 20-40 years of age was included. The telephone survey has been employed to create a dialect map of the USA and Canada which is scheduled to appear later this year (Labov, Ash and Boberg, forthcoming). These surveys allow the researcher to record actual sounds, rather than

written representations of them. The data has been analysed both impressionistically by listening to the tapes, and acoustically by focussing on the formant frequencies of the vowels.<sup>11</sup> The survey contained words that had sounds of particular interest. These include vowel mergers (such as the mergers of the vowels in word pairs like 'caught/cot' and 'pen/pin') and vowel shifts. An example of the latter is the *Northern Cities Chain Shift*, a vowel shift changing the quality of the vowels of younger speakers in Northern US cities.<sup>12</sup> Others such as Herold (1997) have used telephone surveys to investigate the effect of migration patterns on the spread of sound changes. Her research in small towns around Philadelphia provides detailed documentation on the geographical spread of the merger of the vowels in words such as 'caught/cot'.

A different large-scale polling technique was effectively employed by Bailey and Bernstein (1989). In addition to their own survey of 500 college and high school students from all parts of Texas, the researchers also availed themselves of surveys made by a state-wide polling agency — thus obtaining data from an additional 1000 randomly selected individuals — in order to gather information on the geographic and social motivation of the phonological changes under investigation (1989, pp. 7-8).

Another frequently employed polling method is the in-person rapid and anonymous survey where individuals are unaware that their speech is the focus of study. By conducting in-person rapid and anonymous surveys, it is possible to observe individuals in public places, like streets, malls etc., and to note aspects of their speech. There are two types of this technique - the elicited and the unelicited. In the unelicited type the researcher observes the set of speech events (a summary of this technique can be found in Gardner-Chloros, 1991). It was employed in Labov's study (1966) in which he examined a series of speech events in different settings, and in Gardner-Chloros (1991, 1997) in which the researchers recorded occurrences of code-switching in a Strasbourg department store. The

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11. Vowel quality is determined by the formant (or resonance) frequency pattern.

12. Information about this project is available on the University of Pennsylvania web-site ([www.ling.upenn.edu](http://www.ling.upenn.edu)).

second in-person rapid and anonymous survey is the elicited type. This is illustrated in Labov's classic study of language use in three socially stratified department stores in New York City (Labov, 1972, Chapter 2). In this study, Labov's questions posed to randomly selected employees triggered responses revealing of the use of the sounds under investigation. Additional studies using similar methods include the collecting of speech samples from the street: for example, Labov 1984 (in Philadelphia), Kontra 1995 (in Hungary), Lawson-Sako and Sachdev 1996 (in Tunisia), Bourhis 1984, Moise and Bourhis 1994 (in Québec). Because individuals are unaware that their interaction is the subject of study, the recordings are examples of 'natural speech'. The analysis relies on subjective assessments of the social characteristics of the speaker, and 'on-the-spot' phonetic judgements (see Labov, 1972, p. 61 for a critique of this method). In order to ensure accurate measurements, the linguistic variables selected for study need to be highly salient.

Another variation of the in-person rapid survey is illustrated in Starks (1998) in which the researcher polled over 1000 speakers on the streets of Auckland in the course of her investigation of the occurrence of an apparent shift in the pronunciation of the /s/ sound. In this study, the speech was recorded, and individuals were aware that their speech was under analysis. The study shows how the recorded rapid survey may be applied in the analysis of less salient variables in the community.

Rapid survey recording also facilitates a comparison between the speech of the interviewer and interviewee. McRobbie-Utasi and Starks (1999) illustrate, through an analysis of the pronunciation of one of the vowels in the speech of the interviewer, how the rapid survey can be used to analyse accommodation to different respondents during a brief encounter lasting less than a minute. For example, the findings showed that the interviewer tended to make slight adjustments according to the gender of the respondent: when a female respondent was interviewed, the vowel tended to be more centralised than when interviewing a male respondent. The results illustrate the usefulness of polling techniques for analysing both the interviewer and the interviewee.



## Conclusion

It has long been recognised that in any language there exists a great degree of variation.<sup>13</sup> Members of a speech community are aware and make use of the different possibilities that the variability of language offers. In acknowledging the role of variability in language, linguists aim at identifying and accounting for a systematic pattern that governs the occurrence of variants. This task can only be achieved by collecting representative data that reveal patterns of distribution of the variants under investigation.

The present study provides a brief survey of the most widely used techniques of sociolinguistic data collection. It discusses the approach of traditional dialectology, the use of the sociolinguistic interview, and the most frequently employed polling techniques including recent advances in rapid and anonymous surveys. The suitability of the various methods for studying variation in language are illustrated through their application in sociolinguistic studies.

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13. The linguist Edward Sapir at the beginning of the 20th century stated that ... "everyone knows that language is a variable" (Sapir, 1921, p.147).

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## Looking for the origins of the New Zealand accent<sup>1</sup>

*Elizabeth Gordon*

### **Abstract**

The discovery of an archive of recordings of old New Zealanders collected in the 1940s has enabled us to investigate the speech of the first generation of New Zealand born English speakers - something previously thought to be impossible. We are now in a position to address the question "Why does New Zealand English sound the way it does?" This paper looks at some of the findings from the analysis of 84 speakers in this archive and suggests some theoretical models of new dialect development. It also addresses the question of social influences on this development and shows how the processes of language change can be affected by social factors.

The study of New Zealand English (NZE) has advanced remarkably in the past decade, especially through the descriptive work of Janet Holmes, Allan Bell and Margaret Maclagan, the attitudinal studies of Donn Bayard, the work on registers by Kon Kuiper and the lexicography of Harry Orsman and Tony Deverson. However until recently there has been no detailed study of the origins of New Zealand English's most distinctive characteristic - New Zealand pronunciation - and no systematic study of the development of the New Zealand accent from the time of the first European settlement. No one has really been able to give a completely satisfactory answer to the question "Why is the New Zealand accent like it is?"

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1. This paper was written in connection with the Origins of New Zealand English project (ONZE) at the Linguistics Department of Canterbury University. ONZE has been funded by the New Zealand Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, by the University of Canterbury, and by the Marsden Fund of the Royal Society of New Zealand. The assistance of all the ONZE team is acknowledged - Lyle Campbell, Jen Hay, Gillian Lewis, Margaret Maclagan, Jenny Murray, Stacey Nicholas, Andrea Sudbury and Peter Trudgill. In particular I wish to thank Margaret Maclagan, Derry Gordon, Andrea Sudbury and Jenny Cheshire for their helpful comments on this paper.

In the past those interested in the origins of New Zealand speech could follow the somewhat pessimistic view of the New Zealand linguist George Turner who believed this subject could not be investigated. Writing about Australian English, he claimed that such a study was much more difficult than comparable phonological studies of ancient Germanic languages such as Gothic, Old English and old Norse because of the absence of relevant written examples of the language for study (Turner, 1960). Turner was referring to the fact that sound changes cannot be revealed through a standardised spelling system; he did not even consider the possibility of recorded data.

The question “why does New Zealand English sound the way it does” has intrigued many people, some of whom have been less reticent than George Turner when it came to offering their theories. Such factors as the climate, the economic depression and even ill-fitting false teeth have been held responsible (see Gordon and Deverson, 1998, p. 25). Others took a more moral stand and claimed that the accent had developed through the laziness of children (and even sometimes of their teachers) who could not be bothered to make the effort to exercise their lips and tongues. Others thought the accent came from associating with the wrong sort of people. School inspectors warned about the dire effects of ‘the home and the street’ (see Gordon, 1983; Gordon and Abell, 1990).

Some theories were based on the idea of a single origin for NZE. Arnold Wall, an Englishman who was Professor of English at Canterbury University College for many years, was convinced that New Zealand speech was a transported version of the London dialect of Cockney. More recently Australia has been suggested as the single main source of New Zealand speech (Bauer, 1994; Gordon and Deverson, 1998; Bayard, 2000). The close association between the two countries in the first years of European settlement, together with early comments on the similarity of the two varieties, suggested a common linguistic origin. Other theories have drawn inferences from current New Zealand speech. For example linguists have pointed out the similarities between the Scottish pronunciation of words like *fish* and the New Zealand pronunciation, often shown as ‘fush’ (see Trudgill, 1986; Bauer, 1997). It is a reasonable conjecture (as some have suggested) that the New Zealand variant could have

derived from the Scottish pronunciation.

In the end all of these theories are based on speculation and informed guesswork. Without firm data this is all that could be hoped for. However in the late 1980s the situation changed with the discovery of a remarkable collection of old recordings held in the Radio New Zealand Archives in Timaru. These recordings had been made in 1946-48 by the Mobile Disc Recording Unit of the New Zealand National Broadcasting Corporation which had travelled around parts of New Zealand collecting audio 'snapshots' of country towns and included over 300 pioneer reminiscences of old New Zealanders, some born as early as the 1850s (see Lewis, 1996).

The discovery of this archive meant that for the first time actual spoken data was available whereby sociolinguists could listen to the speech of those who were the children of the first European settlers in New Zealand. The Mobile Unit (MU) archive has formed the basis of the Origins of New Zealand English project (ONZE) in the Linguistics Department of the University of Canterbury. Because the recordings were made on soft aluminum-based discs which were in danger of disintegration, initially much time was spent making the data usable for research. Information about the speakers and their parents was also sought, together with information about the places in which they had grown up.

The use of recordings which were collected for an entirely different purpose raises some questions of sociolinguistic methodology. A serious consideration is whether the speech of someone aged 80 can truly represent the speech of people 70-80 years earlier. Until now it has been accepted without challenge that where people have remained in the same area or its environs for all of their lives, their basic phonology will not change. For a project which depends on the use of recordings of old people to determine the speech of people 70-80 years earlier, the question of the possibility of change in adult life is a crucial one. A study of individuals recorded at different stages in their lives is now being undertaken at the University of Canterbury to test this. The present view is that even if the old speakers have accommodated their speech towards that of younger New Zealanders, the descriptions of the speech of their old age will still be usable; it is likely that they will understate the original variety which might well have been more extreme.

Another potential problem with using the MU data for sociolinguistic research purposes is that the people who were recorded were chosen according to their availability and their ability to tell interesting stories and not according to a controlled and carefully designed sample. In some towns more than twelve people are recorded, but in others only one or two. While it is possible to compare speakers from different types of settlement in the South Island, the data does not allow us to carry out a similar comparison in the North Island. It would have been helpful if the recordings included a good sample of people born in each five year period so that chronological comparisons could be made. But the data only allows us to do this in some periods, and not in others.

When compared with data collected for present day sociolinguistic research, the MU data is not always ideal. Some recordings are not as clear as we would wish and we have not been able to find information about all of the speakers. However it is remarkable that such a collection of recordings even exists, and researchers must make the best of it that they can. It is because of this data that NZE is the only native speaker variety of English where there is now actual recorded spoken evidence of its entire history. Any theories developed from the analysis of the MU speakers will necessarily be stronger than those which were put forward before the data was found.

So far 84 speakers from the MU archive have undergone impressionistic phonetic analysis, ten speakers have been analysed acoustically, and a quantitative phonetic analysis of certain phonological variables is now being carried out. The analysis of speakers and variables is continuing but already certain features of early NZE speech are emerging. We are able to see a change from a period of initial variability to a period of levelling of dialect features and eventual focussing towards the new variety. We are also in a position to suggest some explanatory models for the new dialect formation and show the influence of social forces in this development.

One of the Otago towns where there is a reasonable number of speakers for analysis is Arrowtown. This was a gold-mining town with over 3,000 people in 1863, but by the time of the 1878 census, (which was around the time when a number of our MU speakers



were growing up), it had 350 people of whom 150 were New Zealand born. Those who were not New Zealand born came from Australia (33), England (34), Scotland (49), Ireland (49), China (20), and from other origins (15).

A characteristic of the very oldest speakers from Arrowtown is the high degree of variability in their speech, which is also a feature of other very old speakers in the MU archive - people born in the 1850s and 1860s. It is well known that children will quickly adapt to an existing speech community. (For example, New Zealand academics on sabbatical leave frequently report on the speed with which their young children were able to pick up a local British dialect and also the speed with which they lost it again when they returned to New Zealand). However in a dialect-mixture situation where there is no single peer-dialect for the children to acquire, the children have considerable freedom to combine features from different dialects present in the contact situation into new and sometimes hitherto non-existent combinations. So, for example, Mrs Ritchie, born in Arrowtown in 1863 combines Scottish features with some very non-Scottish features. Her accent is rhotic (which means she pronounces postvocalic /r/ in words like *cart*, *lord* and *purse*, and at the end of words like *floor*, *far* and *letter*). She uses the aspirated /hw/ in words like *which* or *whales*, (distinguishing them from *witch* and *Wales*). She does not distinguish the vowels of *good* and *food*. On the other hand she has very diphthong shifted and glide-weakened realisations of the diphthongs in MOUTH and PRICE<sup>2</sup> which are typical of the south of England generally.<sup>3</sup> This combination is exceptionally unusual.

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2. In this paper I am using key words from Wells' lexical set (1982) to refer to all words containing the relevant phoneme.

3. We use the term diphthong shift here to refer to realisations of /ai/ which involve a first element more back than [A]; realisations of /au/ with a first element fronter than [A] and/or closer than [a]; shift of /ei/ a first element more open than [e]; of /ou/ fronter and/or more open than [o]; of /i:/ more open than [ê]; and of /u:/ fronter and/or more open than [Û]. In glide weakening the second element of the diphthong compensates for diphthong shift by moving to a position where it more closely approaches the first, thereby reducing the distance between them: e.g. /ai/ [Aê > AE], /au/ [œÛ > œë].

Another feature of the oldest speakers is variability within their own speech. A single speaker might have two quite different realisations of the same vowel in the same phonetic context. The same speaker might alternate, for example, between typically Scottish and very un-Scottish pronunciations of the FACE, PRICE and GOAT diphthongs. Many of the speakers who are rhotic are not consistently so.

Arrowtown also provides examples of variability between speakers. Mrs H. Ritchie and Mr R. Ritchie were both born in Arrowtown in 1863; they went to school together and eventually became brother-and-sister-in-law. They lived close to each other, and remained in close contact all their lives. Yet they differ from one another phonetically and phonologically in a way which one would not expect in a stable dialect situation, and in a way that cannot be explained in terms of social class variation (see Trudgill *et al*, 1998).

A chronological study shows that those born earlier, as well as demonstrating variability, might have one or two features which have subsequently become part of the later New Zealand accent, but which were probably camouflaged by other dialect features. Those born later tend to have more New Zealand features and fewer British dialect features. There is pattern of inevitability whereby strongly marked<sup>4</sup> regional dialect features become levelled and fewer and fewer appear. Speakers born in Arrowtown in the 1860s are not recognised by New Zealand students today as 'sounding like old New Zealanders' whereas some of those born in the 1880s are, in spite of the fact that they do not have the salient features of present day NZE such as the centralised KIT vowel ('fush' for *fish*). By about 1900 the existence of a distinctive New Zealand accent was unquestioned. It was widely recognized and condemned as an 'undesirable colonial twang' (see Gordon, 1983; Gordon and Abell, 1990).

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4. 'Markedness' is a property which distinguishes forms which are the norm i.e. 'unmarked' from those which are not the norm i.e. 'marked'. For example *cup* pronounced to rhyme with *foot* would be unmarked in the North of England but marked in the South of England; the sentence '*How tall is John?*' is unmarked, whereas '*How short is John?*' is marked.

The story of the development of the New Zealand accent, therefore, is one whereby people from different parts of the British Isles and Australia came to live in a new country. In a matter of a few decades the speech of the New Zealand born had changed from one reflecting the regional British dialects of the original settlers to one where there was a distinct and recognisable variety used by New Zealand-born men and women in all parts of the country.

The processes whereby this happened are of great interest. Peter Trudgill, the British sociolinguist who has worked on the ONZE project since its inception, has developed a theory of linguistic determinism (see Trudgill *et al*, 2000). This hypothesizes that dialect mixture and new dialect-formation are not haphazard processes. Trudgill suggests that if we have sufficient linguistic information about the dialects which contribute to a mixture, and if we have sufficient demographic information about the proportions of speakers of the different dialects, then we should be able to predict what the resulting outcome of this mixture will be like. The linguistic determinism model predicts that majority forms will be retained and minority forms and marked forms will be lost.

For such a theory to be tested in the New Zealand situation we would need to have detailed historical information about where the earliest European settlers came from and in what proportions. This information is sadly missing. Almost everyone writing on early New Zealand history complains about the scarcity of data. Simpson describes the destruction in 1972 of the raw uncollated data on the original birth places of the population since the beginning of comprehensive census taking in 1857 as 'a breathtaking exercise in official vandalism' (Simpson, 1997, p. 8). Shipping records are not helpful. Akenson, whose main concern is Irish immigration, explains that because very few ships sailed directly from Irish ports to New Zealand those wishing to immigrate to New Zealand would have to leave from an English or a Scottish port. Up to 1873 the United Kingdom's Colonial Land and Migration Commissioners made annual reports of the number of individuals leaving the various ports in the British Isles but they did not provide any information about the national origins of those emigrants (see Akenson, 1990, p. 21). Also much immigration to New Zealand was 'step migration' whereby people first went to one colony and then on to another.

More migration to New Zealand was via Australia than directly from the British Isles.

Census figures indicate that the overall proportions of settlers coming from different anglophone areas to New Zealand in the period from 1840 to 1881 - the crucial period for the formation of New Zealand English - were as follows (McKinnon, 1997):

England	49%
Scotland	22%
Ireland	20%
Australia	7%
Wales	1%
N. America	1%

From the census figures of 1871 we know that the majority of migrants in New Zealand came from the British Isles, and from within the British Isles the English formed the largest ethnic group, although the Welsh were often conflated with the English (see Belich, 1996). Although this does not tell us where in England the immigrants came from, there is general agreement among historians that many more came from the south of England (see Arnold, 1981; Macdonald, 1990; Pickens, 1977).

The MU archive also gives us some clear linguistic clues. Although the overwhelming majority of arrivals spoke with some kind of regional accent, one prominent English phonological feature which is almost entirely missing from the corpus is the use of the FOOT vowel in the lexical sets of both FOOT and STRUT - ie *putt* and *put* sound the same in the North but different in the South. This feature was and is normal in middle-class as well as working-class accents in nearly all of England north of a line from the Bristol Channel to the Wash - an area comprising approximately half the geographical surface of England and containing approximately half its population. Only one of our 84 informants, however, has this feature. This must be ascribed to demographic factors. McKinnon (1997) shows that the major areas of immigration from England to New Zealand were Warwickshire, Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Devon, Cornwall, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Essex, Middlesex, and London

(although it is unclear whether these counties were the birthplaces or the last places of residence of the migrant men and single women). Of these areas, only Warwickshire has the north-of-England vowel system which could explain the lack of this pattern in our MU data.

A separate study of MU speakers of Scottish descent who maintained some Scottish features in their speech has shown how these features are all eventually levelled out and disappear over time, so that present day NZE has no evidence of them (Trudgill, Maclagan and Lewis, *fc.*). (It is now clear that the NZE central KIT vowel could not have come from Scotland, as some suggested in the past, because it is absent in the speech of these speakers.) This is very different from the vocabulary where a strong Scottish evidence can be seen still (see Bartlett, 1992; Bauer, 1997); for example the word *wee* for 'small' is a mark of all NZ speakers.<sup>5</sup> Even though Scotland was the origin of 20% of the immigrants, Scottish English was still a minority. It is interesting to see that in Southland where Scottish settlers were in the majority a partially rhotic accent has survived up to the present time (see Bartlett, 1992).<sup>6</sup>

If we look backwards from the end results (ie the distinctive New Zealand accent) we can use the linguistic determinism model to give an indication of the major dialectal input in its formation. The linguistic evidence suggests that the majority of immigrants must have come from the south of England. However this is all we can say; we can learn nothing about minority dialects or processes of change.

It is my view that the linguistic determinism hypothesis suggests one possible answer to the question "why is the New Zealand accent like it is?" But it cannot account for processes of language change that were already in motion at the time of the European settlement of New Zealand. One unexpected feature of early NZE pronunciation which the ONZE research has found in MU speakers in different parts of NZ is the presence of postvocalic /r/ in varying

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5. Pronunciation and vocabulary differ in the way in which they are subject to variation. For example there is a clear influence of the United States on NZE vocabulary, but not on New Zealand pronunciation.

6. Bauer 1997 gives the following figures for the population of Southland in 1861: Scots (47%), English (31%), Irish (7%) and Australian (13%).

degrees. This feature today is associated only with Southland; it has always been assumed that NZE in the rest of the country was non-rhotic. However we now know that the postvocalic /r/ existed throughout New Zealand - 77 of the MU speakers in the North Island and the South Island are rhotic to varying degrees and only seven speakers are completely non-rhotic. This suggests that the English transported from Britain must have also been rhotic to some degree, even though historians of the English language claim that rhoticity had disappeared in Southern England by the end of the 18th century (see Bailey, 1996, p. 100; Lass, 1992, p. 66; Strang, 1970, p. 112).

With the majority of the early speakers having some degree of rhoticity, according to the linguistic determinism hypothesis this would make it a majority feature which should have survived into the New Zealand accent. However the loss of postvocalic /r/ can be explained by another theory of language change known as 'Sapir's drift' (see Sapir, 1921; Trudgill et al., 2001). This hypothesizes that when a sound change is in progress it will inevitably work its way through to a conclusion. The loss of /r/ was a process which had certainly started in Britain, and although the early settlers still used it to varying degrees, the process of loss continued in the new country. It is highly likely that early Australian and South African English were also rhotic and the loss of /r/ continued there also. The theory of Sapir's drift can also account for the change in diphthongs known as glide-weakening (see footnote 3) which affected NZE and also Australian and South African English. It is highly unlikely that this feature was transported from one Southern Hemisphere country to another. While there was a regular interchange of people between Australia and New Zealand, we cannot say the same for these countries and South Africa. Its presence in all major varieties of Southern Hemisphere English is more likely to be the result of a sound change which continued in Britain and also continued when people left Britain and moved to different colonial destinations.

The theories of linguistic determinism and drift are both asocial and mechanistic. Given certain conditions we can predict a certain outcome. So the question can then be asked whether social influences had any effect at all on this process of new dialect development and language change.

When we analyse individual MU speakers we can see certain patterns, but it is also clear that the speakers are not all the same. Nor is there a neat and consistent chronological development of NZE across the board. For example when looking at speakers born in the 1870s who all have Scottish parents we can find some who have no trace of a Scottish accent at all and others who sound strongly Scottish. This can be seen clearly when we take speakers (all with Scottish parents) from Arrowtown and compare then in terms of rhoticity with similar speakers from the Otago town of Milton.

Percentage of rhoticity			
Milton		Arrowtown	
Mr Stewart (1876)	53%	Mrs Reid (1877)	10%
Mr Cannon (1876)	34%	Mrs Mackie (1877)	9%

The reason for the difference between the speakers in the table above must be a social one and relates to the type of settlement in which the speakers grew up. Arrowtown, as I have explained, had a very mixed population with people from England, Ireland, Scotland, Australia and China, and with no single group predominating. Milton, on the other hand, was settled largely by people from Scotland. The 1878 census shows that the total population of Milton was 1,161 of whom 544 were born in New Zealand; 293 were born in Scotland; 178 were born in England; 77 were Irish and the numbers from other countries were negligible. If you consider that probably the majority of the New Zealand born children in Milton had Scottish parents, then the Scottish influence would have been predominant.

Social factors always explain the anomalies among the MU speakers. For example Mrs Dennison who was born in Arrowtown in 1874 has over 70% rhoticity – far greater than anyone from the Scottish town of Milton. The probable explanation is that she was orphaned at a young age and taken in by a family living in the country for whom she worked as a nursemaid. So the Scottish influence came from that family and not from the town of her birth. Other speakers who do not conform to the patterns of those around them include a man with English parents who sounds Irish, who we have since found was brought up by an Irish washerwoman.

There is a third generation New Zealand woman, Miss Brenda Bell, who sounds like a member of the British gentry, and very different from other New Zealand speakers living in the same area. We have found that she grew up on an isolated farm and was educated by an English governess. Speakers brought up in isolated areas will be more likely to adopt the dialect patterns of their parents or caregivers than those who grew up and went to school in a town where there are people from different parts of the British Isles. Explanations for these and other cases can be found from a close-grained investigation of these speakers' histories and their social situations.

I would argue that the process of new dialect development, therefore, is affected by social forces, but the eventual outcome - the form of the new dialect - is not. The rate of development can be accelerated or inhibited by the social environment, and also by the social class of the speakers. The New Zealand accent appears first as a recognisable variety in the speech of lower class people living in settlements whose inhabitants come from mixed origins - towns like Arrowtown. People in more homogenous towns such as Milton took more than one generation to develop the New Zealand accent. People with money and influence, like Miss Bell, were more likely to look towards Britain for their way of life and their way of speech. Poorer people had to adapt to the colonial situation, because they had no other option, and they were the ones who first manifested the New Zealand accent when they spoke.

By the 1880s, the number of the New Zealand born had exceeded that of immigrants. The 1886 census shows that 52% of the European population was born in New Zealand (Graham, 1992, p. 112). In the two or three decades after the first settlement in 1840, the foundations of New Zealand society were laid down. We believe that the main period for the formation of NZE was between 1840 and 1880, ie between the birth of the first generation of New Zealand born anglophones and the arrival at adolescence of the second generation (see Trudgill *et al*, 2001). Subsequent immigrants would have been less influential as a result of what is known as the 'founder effect' whereby those who arrive first have the greatest influence (see Mufwene, 1991). This principle is recognised by Turner (1966, p. 6) who commented:



When a new form of language develops, the study of that language must give a disproportionate attention to the first generation of settlers; new things are named early and new ways of speech develop from a linguistically mixed community. Later arrivals, even if numerous, are less important because they are absorbed as newcomers and learn to conform, and indeed wish to conform.

We can argue that the development of the New Zealand accent was the result of predetermined factors whereby the majority immigrant accent won out in the end. It was also affected by processes of ongoing language change, begun in Britain and continued in the new land. These factors can be put beside influences of social class and early settlement patterns and the strong social pressure, especially among children, to conform. Once the accent became noticed it was received with dismay and outrage but this could not stop the processes of language change nor the strong social pressures on individuals to fit in.

When the Mobile Disc Recording Unit travelled around parts of New Zealand to collect pioneer reminiscences they were using a very new technology for their own specific purposes. They could have no idea that this material would later enable sociolinguists to undertake fascinating 'linguistic archeology' which not only throws light on the development of NZE but also helps us to understand the whole process of new dialect development.

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## Language and gender research in New Zealand

*Janet Holmes and Nicola Daly*

### **Abstract**

Explanations for differences in the ways women and men use language in social interaction have developed over the last 30 years along a route involving theoretical paradigms which are doubtless very familiar to sociologists. This paper outlines the progression from the 'deficit' model of the 1970s, where women's patterns of language use were compared unfavourably with men's, through the 'different cultures' model based on claims about different socialisation patterns of girls and boys, to the 'dominance' model, located in feminist arguments about women's oppression, and finally to the pervasive influence of post-structuralist and postmodern approaches in current language and gender research. The discussion is illustrated using New Zealand research on gender differences in the linguistic forms and pragmatic functions of language, in speech functions, social dialectology, and language maintenance and shift. Research in the area of sexist language is also briefly outlined. The paper considers the relative influence of quantitative and qualitative approaches in New Zealand language and gender research, and concludes with a discussion of the variable impact of social constructionism in the different areas surveyed.

### **Language and gender research in New Zealand sociolinguistics<sup>1</sup>**

The issue of whether women and men speak differently has been a hot topic in sociolinguistics since at least the 1970s when a provocative, controversial, and subsequently very influential, article entitled 'Language and woman's place' (Lakoff, 1973) appeared in an early issue of the first sociolinguistics journal *Language and Society*. Robin Lakoff argued that in western society a young girl is socialised to use 'a special style of speech', which Lakoff labelled 'women's language', a style which later justified 'others' (presumably men) in

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refusing to take her seriously as 'a human being' (Lakoff, 1975, p. 5), but one to which she was restricted if she wished to be considered polite, ladylike and socially acceptable. While Lakoff was, and still is, a committed feminist, her early description presented 'women's language' as deficient and unsatisfactory compared to the way men spoke. During the 1980s this 'deficit' approach to women's language was predictably challenged, and the history of language and gender research took a route which will be very familiar to sociologists, through cultural and social difference approaches, followed by 'dominance' or power models to post-structuralist and postmodern approaches. In this paper we briefly outline this progression, using New Zealand sociolinguistic research for exemplification.

### **Form and function in interaction**

The earliest published research on language and gender in New Zealand exemplified directions which have continued to be important through to the turn of the century. Although Lakoff explicitly acknowledged her ideas were speculative, and that the features of women's language she identified were based on intuition and casual rather than systematic observation, many subsequent writers treated them as definitive. However, in the early 1980s, Janet Holmes' corpus-based research on epistemic modality (ways of expressing degrees of certainty) in English provided data which led her to challenge Lakoff's claims that 'women's language' typically expressed uncertainty and that this suggested women lacked confidence in their own opinions. One of the features Lakoff suggested contributed to this impression was the tag question. More specifically, she suggested that women used tag questions expressing uncertainty more often than men. The material in Holmes' corpus demonstrated very clearly that this was not the case (Holmes, 1984). Consider the following three examples:

1. Husband to wife (the tag question is in italics)  
John: that lecture is at eight *isn't it?*
2. Teacher to pupil in classroom  
Teacher: here's a pretty one what's this one called Simon?  
Simon: mmm erm [pause]

Teacher: see its tail, look at its tail [pause] its a fantail *isn't it?*

Simon: mm a fantail.

3. Interviewer to interviewee on radio

Interviewer: you're just back from a fact-finding mission to Fiji Joan *aren't you?*

Joan: yes it was a very rewarding trip...

While the tag in the first question requests confirmation (thus indicating uncertainty), it is implausible to suggest that the tag questions in examples 2 and 3 encode uncertainty. In both cases the speakers know the answer to their questions. The tags are serving a different purpose: these are 'facilitative' tag questions, inviting and assisting the addressee to make a contribution to the interaction. So while Holmes' data indicated that in many social contexts women did use more tag questions than men, the function of women's tags was more often facilitative or invitational. This pattern was repeated for other so-called 'hedgies' identified by Lakoff, such as *sort of* and *you know*, suggesting that in everyday conversation women were generally more 'other'-oriented than men (Holmes, 1986; Holmes, 1995).

Investigating gendered patterns of language use in a range of countries and social contexts, other researchers identified similar patterns (see Coates, 1993; Talbot, 1998). The most widely adopted explanation was one which became known as the 'two cultures' model, popularised in Deborah Tannen's (1990) best-seller, *You Just Don't Understand*. Briefly, Tannen argued that women and men speak differently because they are socialised differently: from an early age girls learn to pay attention to the interactional needs of others and focus on what she calls 'connection' (cf Gilligan, 1982), while boys are encouraged to compete and assert themselves, so that 'hierarchy' and 'status' are more important aspects of their social relationships (Tannen, 1990, 1994). Consequently, in adulthood women and men find they have developed distinctly different cultures resulting in the misinterpretation of each other's communicative behaviour.

Tannen's work was widely critiqued by sociolinguists working in the language and gender area, (not always disinterestedly, perhaps, in the light of the outstanding success of her book!). One

recurring criticism was that she had under-represented the pervasiveness and far-reaching effects of male hegemonic power, the evidence for which was particularly apparent to researchers examining interaction in more public contexts than the personal relationships which were Tannen's focus (Henley and Kramerae, 1991; Troemel-Ploetz, 1991). While a 'cultural difference' explanation might seem plausible to account for contrasting patterns of talk in close relationships in private contexts, it was difficult to accept such an explanation for the extensive and systematic patterns of male domination of talk in status-influential contexts which was documented by other researchers. In public forums such as meetings and seminars, in conference discussions, in televised interviews, and in classrooms at all levels, researchers demonstrated that males typically appropriated most of the available talking time. Men also tended to interrupt more than women, and to provide less verbal feedback (see Holmes, 1995, ch. 2 for a summary and critique).

Some of this research, undertaken within what was labelled a 'dominance' framework, was initiated by sociologists and particularly by ethnomethodologists (e.g. Zimmerman and West, 1975), a group who increasingly influenced the direction of research in the field. Sociolinguists following up this research naturally focussed on more linguistically detailed analytical categories, showing that it was important to consider the function of language as well as the form. They noted, for instance, that some so-called 'interruptions' were supportive rather than disruptive in effect, and that verbal feedback could as easily shut someone up, as encourage their talk - tone, volume, pacing and placing were crucial. In New Zealand, the work of (then) graduate students such as Margaret Franken (1983), Maria Stubbe (1991) and Jane Pilkington (1992) illustrates these sociolinguistic approaches where the functions as well as the precise features of the forms researched were given attention.

### **Speech functions**

Another area of language and gender research with early roots in New Zealand sociolinguistics is the exploration of speech genres and speech functions such as gossip, compliments, and verbal abuse. As a graduate student in the 1970s, Deborah Jones undertook a study

of 'gossip' which became an international classic in the field, and has been much re-printed (Jones, 1980 is probably the most accessible). Jones identified several different types of gossip (house-talk, scandal, bitching and chatting), and her work was developed later by many others, including, in New Zealand, Jane Pilkington (1992, 1994). Other New Zealand researchers have contributed studies of gender differences in the use of jocular abuse (Hay, 1994), swearing (Limbrick, 1991) and insult (Kuiper, 1991), apologies and compliments (Holmes, 1995), narrative (Holmes, 1997a) and humour (Hay, 1995, 1996; Holmes, Marra and Burns, *fc.*).

The findings of these varied studies often confirmed stereotypes of women's and men's talk: e.g. men tended to swear more often than women, women paid more compliments and apologised more often than men, women used humour to reinforce personal relationships and to share personal information about themselves more than men, and so on. But they also indicated the limitations of the stereotypes by providing much more detailed data, and sensitive and sophisticated analyses of the complexities of gendered interaction. Contrary to the stereotype, for instance, Hay (1994) showed that, in some contexts women were more likely to use jocular abuse and vulgar humour than men. Limbrick (1991) found that in mixed-gender interaction women and men clearly accommodated to each other's norms for levels and severity of swearing. And Kuiper (1991) demonstrated the dangers of treating 'men' as a homogeneous group in his analyses of the formulaic exchanges of different male sporting teams (see also Kuiper this issue). Such studies demonstrated that the same functions might be achieved through very different means by both women and men in different social contexts and settings, and that contextual influences, including detailed attention to features of the preceding and following discourse, were crucial in accounting for the way gendered meaning was encoded in interaction. The stage was set for post-structuralism. Before following this thread further, however, it is useful to outline developments in three other important areas of language and gender research, namely social dialectology, language maintenance and shift, and sexist language.



### **Social dialectology: gender differences in New Zealand English**

Urban social dialectology developed from roots in regional dialectology in the USA in the 1960s and 1970s with social class as its primary focus, and (especially African American) ethnicity not far behind (see Holmes introduction to this issue). Gender or 'sex' (the term used at the time) was included largely as an after-thought; since the researchers had data on speaker sex, it was easy to compute this variable alongside others. Correspondingly, explanations for the sociolinguistic correlations established between social class and linguistic variation tended to be considerably more sophisticated and elaborated than those for gender and language. In one much-cited quotation, for instance, speculating on reasons for the higher proportion of standard or prestigious features in women's speech, (e.g. 'ing' rather than nonstandard 'in' at the end of words such as *walking* and *swimming*), Roger Shuy commented "women continue to be one of the mysteries of the universe!" (1969, p. 14). Since women were widely regarded as socially inferior to men, their 'superiority' in any area presented a puzzle to (predominantly male) social dialectologists. Similarly the widespread finding that women tended to lead sound change was manifestly difficult to account for, especially since the generalisation appeared to hold regardless of whether the change involved a prestigious speech feature or a non-standard feature (see, for example, Chambers, 1992; Eckert, 1989; Labov, 1990). Indeed many of the patterns of gender variation which emerged from social dialect studies were not predictable, and presented interesting challenges to sociolinguistic theory.

Social dialectology did not develop in New Zealand until the late 1980s, and gender was an important variable from the outset. The sociolinguistic gender patterns identified in overseas urban areas emerged reliably in Dunedin (Bayard, 1987), Christchurch (Woods, 1997; Maclagan, Gordon and Lewis, 1999), Wellington (Holmes, Bell and Boyce, 1991), and Auckland (Batterham, 1997). The rich and varied data which has been collected on gendered patterns in the use of New Zealand English includes consonants, vowels, and intonation contours, as well as grammatical features and pragmatic particles such as the widespread New Zealand *eh* (*really good eh!*).<sup>2</sup>

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2. Deverson (2000) provides a comprehensive list of research on New Zealand English.

Overall New Zealand Pakeha women of all social groups tend to use more standard forms of New Zealand English than men from the equivalent social backgrounds, and women lead every sound change identified to date, including the distinctive high rising terminal intonation contour heard at the end of statements (Britain, 1992; Warren and Daly, 2000; Daly and Warren, 2001). Particularly interesting is the fact that New Zealand Pakeha women's speech appears to provide a conduit for changes in New Zealand English which have their source in Maori varieties of English (Holmes, 1997b). Finally, it is worth noting that this rich area of sociolinguistic research has been important not only in providing information about features of New Zealand English, but also in contributing to attempts to unravel the complexities of sound change in linguistic theory more generally (see, for example, Labov, 1994; Trudgill, Gordon and Lewis, 1998). It seems possible that it may be of interest to sociologists as a source of indicators of social group membership or as an alternative potential means of tracing social influences in interaction.

#### **Language maintenance and shift**

While there are a number of studies of patterns of language maintenance and shift in New Zealand (see Roberts this issue), gender differences in this area have received relatively little attention compared to those surveyed in previous sections of this paper. Few researchers have explored the possibility that women and men may differ in the rate at which they acquire a new language, or retain an ethnic or minority language, or in the ways in which they draw on verbal repertoires in social interaction.

Overseas research identifies a range of gender-differentiated patterns of language maintenance and shift with explanations which encompass political, economic and cultural factors. In some language contact situations, it is suggested, men are more bilingual than women because men engage more than women in contact with outsiders (e.g. traders, colonisers). In some communities, women receive less formal education than men, and women are often excluded from full participation in crucial political and economic activities and thus from access to the full range of code variation (Hill, 1987). Conversely, in some communities, women have been the linguistic entrepreneurs and adopted the 'new' language more

quickly than men (for example Solé 1978; see also Gonzales Velasquez, 1992 cited in Freeman and McElhinny, 1996). Aboriginal women in Australia (Troy, 1987) and American Indian women (Medicine, 1987), for instance, were often assigned by their men the 'servile' role of making initial contact with colonists, and they consequently acquired English quickly. In some Scandinavian communities Aikio (1992) suggests that gender differences in the rate of shift from a traditional to a 'new' language can be explained in terms of the relative status advantages of the 'new' language for the women, an explanation which has also been proposed to account for the bilingualism of some Greek Australian women.

Women who belong to immigrant ethnic communities illustrate both these patterns. The first generation of immigrant women tend to maintain the ethnic language better than their menfolk. The second generation often lead in acquiring the new language. But this does not mean that they abandon the ethnic language; rather they are typically bilingual (Clyne, 1991; Pauwels, 1987). The New Zealand studies which consider this issue identify the same pattern. The women in the Wellington Cantonese Chinese community described by Mary Roberts (1991), for example, and in the Greek community studied by Maria Verivaki (1991), reported greater proficiency in the community language than their men. The same pattern was found in the Samoan and Gujarati communities researched more recently by Roberts (1999, this issue). And in New Zealand, as elsewhere, the second generation of ethnic minority groups are typically bilingual - proficient both in English and the ethnic language. There are no reported differences between women and men's proficiency in English, but where differences in proficiency in the ethnic or community language occur, it tends to be women who are maintaining the ethnic language most actively and effectively.

It is likely that there are a number of inter-related reasons which favour maintenance of the community language by women. Firstly, women's patterns of language use and their social networks generally entail greater use of the ethnic language than men's. Secondly, women's perception of the functions and value of the ethnic language tend to support its continued use. It seems likely that women perceive the ethnic language as particularly important

in expressing their ethnic identity, and in realising the interpersonal or social functions of language (see Holmes, 1993c). While these functions can (and in the long term no doubt will) be expressed through different styles and uses of English, in the meantime, the value women put on these functions may be contributing to their continued use of the ethnic language. Again, it is possible that sociologists may find that information on patterns of language use can provide helpful indicators of social patterns of various kinds.

### **Sexist language**

The final distinct area of language and gender research that we consider involves studies of sexist usages in New Zealand English. The idea that language reflects, perpetuates, reinforces, and, more recently, constructs ideology has long fascinated sociolinguists, and this work can be regarded as contributing to the wider arena of analyses of images of women, an area in which sociologists have always been involved.

Research into the ways in which sexist usages express societal ideologies of gender, and attitudes to gender roles has a long history (see, for example, Cameron, 1995; Romaine, 1999). Linguistic analyses demonstrate that some areas of language inescapably involve speakers in social and political choices. When, for instance, speakers are faced with a range of variants (such as *Mrs/Miss/Ms* or *he* vs *he/she* vs *they*), there is no neutral or unmarked choice. Rather, "every alternative is politically loaded, because the meaning of each is now defined by contrast with all other possibilities" (Cameron, 1994, p. 26).

Feminists have therefore long recognised the linguistic markedness of women as a particular cause for concern in the battle for equal treatment. Meyerhoff (1987) documents early New Zealand research in this area. More recent corpus-based analyses of sexist usages in a number of varieties of English, including New Zealand English, identify the very wide variety of ways in which this markedness is expressed. Areas which have been examined include the use of pseudo-generic terms, such as *-man* and *he*; gender-neutral terms such as *chairperson*; sexist suffixes such as *-ess* and *-ette*; metaphorical reference terms such as *bitch* and *stud*; terms of address such as *Ms* and *dear* (Holmes, 1993a, 1993b, 1997d, 1999a; Pauwels,

1998; Wolfson and Manes, 1980), and terms of reference such as *lady* and *girl* (Holmes and Sigley, 2000). These analyses indicate that women are often assigned subordinate status by virtue of their gender alone, and that they are typically treated *linguistically* as subordinate, regardless of their actual power or social status in a particular context. The relevance of such work for sociologists is especially clear from the disciplinary overlap apparent in recent research in critical discourse analysis (see Holmes, introduction to this issue).

### **Social constructionist approaches to language and gender**

As indicated above, social constructionist approaches have gradually come to dominate language and gender research in New Zealand, as elsewhere, under the influence of feminist theorists such as Judith Butler (1990) and Chris Weedon (1987), with European theorists such as Derrida, Kristeva and Foucault hovering in the background.<sup>3</sup> The arguments which have led such theorists to challenge 'essentialist' approaches (typified by Tannen's best-seller) which assign women and men to inescapable, social or even biological categories, will be very familiar to sociologists, as will the exhortation to recognise the fluidity and dynamic nature of social interaction, and the extent to which social identities are plural, interacting, complex, and constantly 'performed'. In other words, gender identity is not a fixed category but a dynamic social construction - we are constantly 'doing gender'.

New Zealand writers have also pointed to the dangers of misrepresentation and over-simplification in research which treats 'female' and 'male' as distinct and fixed social categories, and searches for correlating speech features which reflect these categories (for example Holmes, 1997c; Jones, 2000; Weatherell, 2000). One alternative framework which is proving very valuable is a 'communities of practice' approach to gender (Eckert and

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3. Indeed, the shift from a term denoting a biological category 'sex' to a term identifying a cultural category 'gender' paved the way for the perception that a person's gender identity is predominantly socially constructed from the roles, norms and expectations of the community in which they participate.

McConnell-Ginet, 1992, 1995; Holmes, 1999b). A more ethnographic focus on shared 'practices' and activities within the context of community membership moves the focus from the way gender influences language use to the ways in which language use constructs, shapes and contests gender identity. As Eckert's (1999) detailed study of high school students demonstrates, a community of practice model accommodates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analysis. This framework takes account of the importance, for sociolinguists at least, and especially for social dialectologists, of researching the ground as well as the figure (see Holmes, 1998). In this final section, we briefly outline the case for complementary qualitative and quantitative approaches in sociolinguistic research on gender, using New Zealand research for exemplification, and exploring its implications in some of the areas discussed above.

To introduce the argument we use a brief excerpt from a longer narrative.<sup>4</sup> Telling a story is one means of presenting oneself (and others) as appropriately feminine or masculine in terms of current societal ideology:

The form of our stories (their textual structure), the content of our stories (what we tell about), and our story-telling behaviour (how we tell our stories) are all sensitive indices not just of our personal selves, but also of our social and cultural identities (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 170).

The excerpt is part of a conversation between two close friends, Helen and Joan, both middle-aged Pakeha women pursuing well-paid professional careers. In this excerpt Helen constructs rather conservative identities for herself and her daughter, Andrea - namely 'good mother' and 'sweet little girl'.

Excerpt [overlapping speech is indicated by slashes / \]

- H. we went and swam at the pool  
Andrea did SEVEN lengths  
J. goodness me

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4. This analysis draws on Holmes 1997c and 1998.

- H. with a little breaks in between  
but she's never swum a length of that pool before  
/and she just suddenly discovered\  
J. /(that's so good)\  
H. she could swim a length [laughs]  
and got so keen she didn't want to stop  
she said I'll just do another one and then  
J. /that's terrific\  
H. /I'll do another one so that\ was so fun  
so she looked like a [laughs]  
Liz was there with her friend John  
and he said /she\ looked like a goldfish you [laughs] know s-  
J. /mm\  
H. /(there's) a little head ( )\  
J. /[[laughs]\ (he'd find out when we-) yeah  
H. a- a rolling in the water  
J. /[[laughs] oh\  
H. [laughs] and legs sort of sagging in the water o-  
and breaststroking away /you know\  
J. /good on her\  
H. but she was obviously really sort of getting a kick out of the  
achievement

Helen achieves the construction of her daughter Andrea's very feminine identity by a variety of linguistic means, including the effective use of diminutives such as *little* and attenuators such as *just* and *so*, the pragmatic particles (or 'hedges') *sort of* and *you know*, the adverb particle *away* in the phrase *breast-stroking away*, and the repetition of phrases and syntactic patterns (*I'll just do another one and then I'll do another one*). These components all contribute to Helen's construction of an endearing little girl swimming gamely away, as does the paralinguistic laughter, and the attribution to an observer of a comment that emphasises how sweet and amusing Andrea's behaviour is. In the process of constructing this picture of her daughter, Helen also constructs herself as a 'good mother' who takes responsibility for her children's activities, and, in particular, looks after her little girl by taking her swimming, encouraging her efforts with admiration, and taking pleasure in her achievement.

The expression of gender identity in this text is most obviously illustrated, then, by this kind of detailed qualitative analysis of the discourse. But, very importantly in our view, Helen's gender is also expressed through her use of a range of speech features which more extensive, quantitative research has established as characteristic of New Zealand women of her particular ethnicity, professional status and social class background. Helen uses, for example, pronunciations which are more frequent in the speech of middle class Pakeha New Zealand women's speech than that of middle class Pakeha New Zealand men. So, to give just two examples, Helen consistently uses the standard variant [ing] rather than the nonstandard [in] throughout this excerpt (e.g. *sporting, going, working, driving*, etc), and she uses a conservative pronunciation of /t/ at a level of 53% in the selected extract, almost exactly the (50%) level typical for middle-aged middle class Pakeha New Zealand women (Holmes, 1994). Hence, as women and men make sociolinguistically significant phonetic choices in their daily interactions, they are constantly constructing their gender identities: "the use of phonetic variation and the construction of identities are inseparable" (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 1995, p. 503).

Moreover, Helen's use of pragmatic particles such as *you know, sort of, quite*, and *just* also contributes to the construction of a rather conservative, feminine gendered identity in this particular social context (Holmes, 1995, 1997c). As mentioned above, pragmatic devices such as tag questions, and particles such as these convey a range of social meanings such as tentativeness, facilitation, rapport, and solidarity. Speakers draw on these social meanings in their construction of relatively feminine or relatively masculine gender identities. Interacting in different social contexts, and especially with participants from other communities of practice to which she belongs, Helen makes different choices, and constructs a very much more radical and less conformist gender identity. Without the quantitative studies which established these patterns, however, we would be unable to make such observations on the significant sociolinguistic choices Helen makes in constructing a particular kind of gender identity in this particular context. In our view, then, the most illuminating sociolinguistic analyses of language and gender involve both macro-level quantitative studies of patterns of language



use and micro-level ethnographic analyses of the way such norms are instantiated or flouted in particular discourses. The quantitative patterns provide the (back)ground against which individual choices can be interpreted.

## **Conclusion**

To sum up, Lakoff's claims about women's linguistically deficient style in the early 1970s generated a huge amount of mainly quantitative research in the following two decades, as researchers attempted to characterise the features of women's and men's speech in different social contexts. Early deficit accounts of why women spoke differently from men gave way to explanations which emphasised differences in female and male patterns of socialisation, or pointed to disparities in social power and the general dominance of men's norms in many areas of society. More recently there has been a shift to social constructionist approaches and a greater focus on the discursive articulation of gender in interaction.

While this progression is generally apparent in New Zealand sociolinguistic research, the different stages are more apparent in some areas than others. As indicated above, speech function research perhaps illustrates most clearly the progression from quantitative approaches to more qualitative discourse analyses of significant spoken and written 'texts'. But there is also evidence of the insights to be gained by more qualitative approaches to language and gender research in social dialectology (e.g. Bell, 2001; Holmes, 1997c). Firstly, in constructing complex social identities in different social contexts, speakers draw on socially recognised norms for ways of speaking; they are constantly instantiating or resisting recognisable gender roles. Secondly, recognition of the role of Pakeha women in sound change in New Zealand English is also consistent with an appreciation of the crucial significance of language in constructing gender identity. Since colonisation, Pakeha women have tended to be assigned the role of guardians of English linguistic usage in New Zealand. The fact that young Pakeha women's usage seems likely to determine the developing shape of New Zealand English indicates the extent to which at least some women are constructed as arbiters of linguistic usage in their daily interactions (see Holmes, 1997a).

In studies of sexist language, too, there has been a move to a more dynamic interpretation of the choices speakers make between 'loaded' linguistic alternatives (Holmes and Sigley, 2000; Sigley and Holmes, *fc*). The linguistic construction of social identity is achieved not only through the choice of particular linguistic features and discourse strategies, but also through the semantic (and often sexist) distinctions encoded in the language.

The potential of more dynamic approaches to the study of gender identity in the area of language maintenance and shift and multilingualism, however, remains largely untapped. Given the significance of ethnicity in this area, it is an obvious arena for research on the ways in which complex social identities are discursively constructed and performed, and complex social meanings negotiated in interaction. Research on the ways in which speakers draw on their complex sociolinguistic repertoires and codeswitch between languages, dialects and styles<sup>5</sup> in conversational interaction might provide a rewarding point of entry.

We have doubtless attempted too much in this brief review of the directions that language and gender research has taken over the last thirty years and we have certainly not done justice to the rich and varied New Zealand sociolinguistic research in this area. But we hope that we have provided New Zealand sociologists with a point of entry for further reading, and perhaps also some understanding of a sociolinguist's view of the complex ways in which language constructs a gendered reality.

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5. See Holmes introduction to this issue for an explanation of these terms.

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## **'Bugger!': Media language, identity and postmodernity in Aotearoa/New Zealand'**

*Allan Bell*

### **Abstract**

The part that language plays in identity formation and presentation is a focus of much contemporary sociolinguistics, particularly through the analysis of language style. This paper explores these concepts through examining four characteristics of postmodern identity as discussed in the work of Giddens: reflexivity between media, language and the self; the narrative of the self, with its themes of choice and lifestyle; the reorganisation of time and place through media technologies; and the interpenetration of the global and the local. The texts of nationalistic New Zealand advertisements are used to illustrate the media presentation of identity. A range of sociolinguistic methods show that many linguistic features at all levels of language serve to mark identity.

### **Introduction: Language style, media and identity**

The role of language in identity formation and presentation has been a prime interest of sociolinguists since the field was launched. An early classic was William Labov's 1963 study of the local identity value of a single vowel sound in the English of Martha's Vineyard, an island off the coast of New England (Labov, 1972). Identity has remained a principal interest in sociolinguistic research, and has become an increasing focus as postmodern approaches have stressed the role of language in social life and self-identity. For demonstration of the way language marks identity, New Zealanders need look no further than salient features such as the 'fush and chups' vowel which distinguishes them from Australians (Bell, 1997a), or the use of 'eh' as a marker of ethnicity for many Maori speakers of English (Meyerhoff, 1994).

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1. Examples and data used in this paper are presented in detail in Bell (1999a, 1999b). The cartoon of NZ Prime Minister Jenny Shipley is reproduced by kind permission of the artist, Laurence Clark.



Close-bound with the concept of identity through language is the notion of *style*. The basic principle of language style is that an individual speaker does not always talk in the same way on all occasions. Style means that speakers have alternatives or choices. Speakers talk in different ways in different situations, and these different ways of speaking carry different social meanings.

In a 1984 publication I outlined the Audience Design framework which has since become the most widely used approach to language style within sociolinguistics. I proposed that the main reason speakers shift their language style is that they are responding to their audience, their listeners. This approach grew out of an early study on the language of radio news in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Bell, 1977). I had come across an unexpected situation which proved to be tailored to locating and explaining style shift. The organisation of New Zealand public broadcasting at that time (1974) meant that two of the radio stations being studied originated in the same suite of NZBC studios in Wellington, with the same individual newsreaders heard on both networks. The National Programme (broadcast on the YA network) had a higher status audience than did the Community Network of ZB stations. A quantitative study of newsreaders' pronunciations (in the manner of the 'variationist' analysis pioneered by Labov in New York City, 1966) showed that the newsreaders shifted their style considerably and consistently as they moved back and forth between the two stations (Bell, 1991). Of all the many factors sociolinguists have suggested as possible influences on news style (e.g. Hymes, 1974), only differences in the stations' audiences could explain these shifts. And looking beyond this particular study, it seemed clear that the same regularities which were amplified in the media context were also operating in face-to-face communication.

More recently, approaches to style have stressed not the responsive but the initiative dimension in speakers' choices (Rampton, 1995; Bell, 1997b, 2001).<sup>2</sup> This emphasises how individual speakers use style - and other aspects of their language repertoire -

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2. Important collections on style in sociolinguistics are Biber and Finegan (1994) and Eckert and Rickford (2001).

to represent their identity or to lay claim to other identities. The thinking of the Soviet theorist Bakhtin (1981, 1986) has been particularly influential in such considerations. Bakhtin stresses how all language use in the present calls up the histories – the many prior usages – of the words and pronunciations which speakers use. Speakers use the voices of others within their own voice, constantly quoting and referencing the language of other individuals or groups. Sociolinguists have looked at phenomena such as ‘crossing’ (Rampton, 1995, 1999), by which British urban youth use fragments of languages which they don’t themselves speak – such as Jamaican creole or Punjabi – as part of their identity presentation. It is this pattern of association that I have called ‘Referee Design’ (Bell, 1990, 1999b).<sup>3</sup> Here language makes reference to a group (often an outgroup, but it may also be the speaker’s own group) through intentional use of its linguistic code and claims affiliation with that group, its values and its characteristics.

The use of language for such identity purposes is particularly salient in the media. Media language is the carrier and maker of representations of identity, and I discuss below how its representational work impacts on the very nature of identity itself in postmodern society.

### **Identity in postmodernity**

The most basic of human and social questions is: Who am I? What is my identity as an individual? What is our identity as a group? What is the identity of our society and nation? This paper addresses these existential questions by examining how some features of identity in this postmodern age are embodied, reflected and created in Aotearoa/New Zealand through the mass media and their language.

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3. The responsive/initiative distinction between Audience and Referee Design is a sociolinguistic instantiation of the structure/agency, society/praxis, determinism/voluntarism dimensions which have been distinguished – and challenged – in social theory. In Archer’s formulation (1995) of ‘realist’ sociology, both structure and agency are regarded as present and necessary, and this is my own position.

Much work in sociolinguistics brings a 'critical' stance to the analysis of texts and their social embedding (e.g. Fairclough, 1992). In this paper I draw mainly on the work of Giddens on modernity and identity (1991), while not claiming to endorse (or even to fully understand) his approach or argumentation as a whole. Rather, I pick up here as the scaffolding for my own work themes which strike me as particularly relevant to the role of media language in contemporary identity in New Zealand.<sup>4</sup> Briefly, I extract four such themes from Giddens (1991):

1. Human identity in postmodernity is especially reflexive. As individuals, we reflect on our actions and situations, and social institutions (especially the media) reflect self-images back to us.
2. As a consequence of this reflexivity and the weakening of traditional ties and norms, the self becomes a 'project' not a given, involving production of a 'coherent narrative of the self'. Individuals have choices, and these choices compose lifestyles.
3. Time and place are reorganised. Communications media project events live from almost any place around the world to any other place.
4. As a consequence of this reorganisation of time and place, the global and the local interpenetrate. Local news and practices may be disseminated to the world at large, as well as representations of images and practices from other locations being received locally.

Although the novelty of qualities such as reflexivity seems to me exaggerated, it also appears undeniable that these four traits are present to a greater degree now than at earlier times, and they serve as a framework which illuminates the identity-making work of language as exemplified in the media in present-day New Zealand.

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4. Rather than 'postmodernity', Giddens (1991) uses the terms 'late' and 'high' modernity. He treats this period as a phase of modernity, and appears to reject progression into 'postmodernity', at least in this 1991 work. In this paper I will however use 'postmodernity' throughout because of the term's greater currency, while recognising that this risks doing a little violence to the detail of Giddens's own thinking.

To illustrate our discipline's approach to such issues, I present here findings from studies of my own which have contributed to sociolinguistic thinking on the theme. The data are from a class of television commercials screened in the 1990s, which are nationalistic in tone, appealing to core stereotypes of New Zealand images and values. Advertisements are 'rich points' of culture (Coupland, 1995), in the sense that they may encapsulate cultural moments in a way which is revealing of wider social phenomena and processes. They are also directly implicated in the representation of contemporary identity. Many advertisements are more or less overtly selling a choice or even a whole lifestyle, and thus present scenarios of potential self-identity for their viewers. Linguistically such advertisements work to reference social associations, using a group's linguistic features to claim reference to - or even identity with - that group. That is, in my terms, they are Referee Design. The analysis shows how all levels of language - from the discourse level in whole texts to the micro level of single pronunciations - are implicated in identity work. It also exemplifies several of the sociolinguist's analytical approaches - discourse analysis, qualitative analysis, quantification, and co-occurrence analysis.

### **Reflexivity**

In postmodernity, human identity has become particularly reflexive (Giddens, 1991, pp. 20, 75). That is, we are self-conscious beings who reflect on our own actions and situations, and whose reflections in turn affect those actions and situations. Our images are also reflected between the self and the social institutions that surround us. Social research methods both describe social phenomena and feed back this knowledge in a fashion that changes the phenomena themselves. This reflexivity is most evident in the media, which are pervaded by representations of self-identity that impact on individuals' reflections on their own selves.

In the early 1990s, the Bank of New Zealand ran a series of television advertisements that concentrated directly on New Zealanders' self-identity and their relationship to the place they live. One of these advertisements focuses on the New Zealand bach.

**Bank of New Zealand: Just a bach**

Visuals: one long 'tracking' shot of a bach beside the sea

Music: restful guitar

Voice over: It's nothing very flash,  
he said,  
just a bach.  
1953:  
you grew up here,  
summer holidays,  
learned to play scrabble  
and to fish.  
And now  
you bring your kids,  
and they read the old Biggles books  
and laugh  
and learn to fish.  
And it's still nothing flash,  
just a bach.  
Who are you?  
You're a New Zealander.  
And who are we?  
We  
are your bank.

The visual track shows no people, just a very ordinary bach of the mid 20th century, not very well kept, set in a typical New Zealand beach location. The soundtrack contains the spoken text, and slow, guitar-picked mood music, restful, holiday-ish – even *reflective*.

The text addresses identity as directly as can be – 'Who are you?' – inviting a reflexive activity of self-understanding from the viewer. The pronoun of address 'you' is repeated throughout the text of the advertisement, describing the typical activities of a traditional New Zealand summer holiday, and defining the viewer's experience in terms of them. At the close of the text, after all the 'you' clauses, comes a 'we' which characterizes the BNZ. The Bank makes its claim

to ingroup identity, as the New Zealand flag floats on to the screen and masks the bach.<sup>5</sup>

Lexically, the key word 'bach' is as local as is the concept. It is a distinctively New Zealand term, and known to be so by speakers of NZ English. The bach is a rather private place, often surrounded by bush or behind its own stretch of beach. But it is also a place to share with friends and family. In the advertisement this private experience is made a public and national one, part of a shared heritage.

Reflexivity also has a linguistic resonance. The media both create and echo voices. The following advertisement - which gives this paper its title - needs no introduction to locals, having become celebrated overnight when it was first screened in Aotearoa/New Zealand in early 1999, because of its use of a repeated swearword as almost the sole text of the commercial. It shows a series of incidents with a Toyota utility farm truck, incidents which emphasise that the new model of the 'ute' is so much more powerful than the previous model that accidents happen.

**Toyota: 'Bugger' – the new more powerful Hilux**

*Truck pushes fence over.*

*Farmer: Bugger.*

*Truck pulls front wheels off tractor it is towing.*

*Farmer: Oo, bugger me.*

*Truck pulls out tree stump, which flies through air and destroys poultry shed.*

*Farmer: Bugger.*

*Farmer: Hit her now, son.*

*Cow stuck in ditch moos loudly as it is pulled out abruptly by the neck.*

*Farmer: Oo, bugger.*

*Farmer: Hey Bruce. [to dog – comes running]*

*Truck's wheels splatter mud on wife, and on clean washing on clothes line.*

*Wife: Bugger.*

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5. The image is slightly tarnished in retrospect by the knowledge that soon after these advertisements screened, 'our Bank' was sold into foreign ownership.

*Truck drives off too fast, dog misses jumping on it and falls flat on ground.*

*Dog: Bugger.*

*Farmer drives out of sight: another - unseen - catastrophe occurs.*

*Farmer: Bugger.*

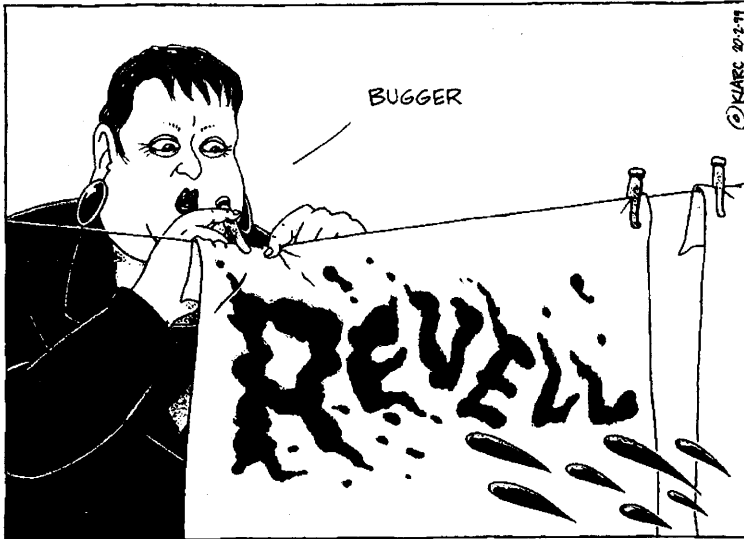
This advertisement is based in New Zealand's national myth of rural life. The farmer's accent is a very vernacular NZ English (although interestingly the actor is an Australian). The choice of swearword is finely gauged – not so strong as to get the advertisement banned, but strong enough to draw comment. The advertisement did attract complaints, despite having a curfew that it be shown only after 8.30pm at night. Those complaints were dismissed, perhaps partly because, as a word, 'bugger' tends to carry slightly humorous overtones which mitigate the complaint or insult that it voices.

For our theme, the striking thing is the reflexivity of language which this commercial took part in. It generated discussion in individual conversation and in the media. This included media commentary, but also media 'quotation' of the advertisement, with news programmes and cartoons picking up and playing with the wording and other features of the advertisement.<sup>6</sup> Figure 1, for example, shows a *New Zealand Herald* cartoon of a minor political scandal which inconvenienced the then Prime Minister, Jenny Shipley. Her clean washing is splattered with mud, using a visual image straight out of the commercial (and of course, literally 'washing her dirty linen in public').

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6. Use of the word in the title of this paper itself takes part in this reflexivity. Derivatives from the advertisement have been shown in Australia, playing on the (mistaken) Australian stereotype that NZ English 'bigger' would be pronounced 'bugger'.

**Figure 1: Cartoon referencing the 'bugger' advertisement, showing then Prime Minister Jenny Shipley, *New Zealand Herald*, 20 February 1999 (reproduced by permission). Revell: one of her MPs who resigned after a minor scandal.**



One remarkable result of the advertisement was its effect in conversation. Since the time the advertisement was first shown, the word has been in quotation marks whenever spoken. Use of the word 'bugger' has been legitimized in a range of hitherto inadmissible contexts, with the degree of quotativeness signalled by the user being dependent on the publicness or formality of the situation. In conversation the word also immediately acquired a semi-quotative character, involving more or less self-conscious reference to the advertisement.<sup>7</sup> This fits well with Bakhtin's discussion of the life of 'the word' (1981), which carries the flavours

7. This quotative character still continues at the time of writing, two years later, refreshed by periodical return seasons of the advertisement to the screen.



of its usages from one context to another. Interactional use of 'bugger' carried with it into conversation the flavour of the advertisement. Of course, in origin the advertisement itself fed off the conversational flavour of 'bugger'. We can see the reflexivity of (literally) the word, always redolent with the meanings of its usages, with the public usage quoting the private and suddenly looping back so that private usage is heard, at least in part, as quotative of the media.

### **The narrative of the self**

Drawing on the practice of reflexivity, the self in postmodern society becomes a 'project' rather than a given (Giddens, 1991, pp. 5, 52). With the loosening of close ties to a relatively small number of neighbours or relatives, traditional guidelines and constraints on life are lost or diminished. The freedom to choose from a range of life options becomes a hallmark of postmodern society. The sum of these choices is a lifestyle, which the individual brings together from a diversity of elements. An individual's life gains its unity from their production of a 'coherent narrative of the self', the creation of a life story or autobiography that makes sense of a person's past, present and future across the trajectory of their lifespan.

The BNZ bach advertisement is a direct address in the media of the question 'Who are you?' As Giddens writes: 'Self-identity ... *is the self as reflexively understood by the person in terms of her or his biography*' (1991, p. 53). Giddens is not, I think, maintaining that humans are composed of only fragments with no stable core, and I would not accept that the self is a shifting kaleidoscope of personas created in and by different situations. There is a continuity of the self across space and time. But as self-conscious, reflecting beings, we make a narrative of the self, an autobiography (Giddens, 1991, p. 74), and in postmodern society, that narrative is more internally than externally sustained.

The BNZ advertisement fits exactly into this scenario. It is a reflection, a narrative across time, from the narrator's own childhood to his children's childhood. Linguistically this is framed as a story by the 'he said' of the second line in the text above. As a story, it occurs at a specific place – 'here' at the bach – and time, '1953'. But there is also the claim – particularly in the generalized 'you' of the

text - that this is any bach anywhere in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and this is any time up to the present. 'You' are defined through this place and its activities, and 'your' story is told. But it is a present story as well as a past one, as the current generation of children repeat the activities of the narrator's generation. The narrator's life story indeed 'forms a trajectory of development from the past to the anticipated future' (Giddens, 1991, p. 75).

The sense of autobiography becomes acute when we know more about the making of this commercial. From a TVNZ documentary (20 September, 1994) about this and other nationalistic commercials we learn - unsurprisingly - that Len Potts, the script writer and director, is a middle-aged man. At least parts of the script are evidently directly autobiographical. The date of '1953' - which would otherwise appear quite arbitrary - fits the scriptwriter's own age, and presumably experience, as a boy. The scriptwriter is making his narrative of the self into an advertisement (rather than, say, a drama, a more usual genre for such self-revelation).

The autobiographical character becomes sharper again when we learn that the voice heard on the advertisement is also the scriptwriter's own. In the documentary, he describes how all the New Zealand actors he auditioned for the part sounded too British, so in the end he recorded it himself. It is a vernacular New Zealand voice - not surprisingly given the script and the history it tells - precisely suitable for the content and mood of what the advertisement conveys. So we have - unusually for the advertising genre of media - a unification of the roles of the author and the 'animator' (voice) of a text (in Goffman's 1981 terms). It is also an extremely clear case of the private being made public, of the local being made national and international.

The individual's *lifestyle* results from the plurality of choices available, which offer the option to compose one's life as a collage (a frequent image of postmodern approaches to the person). Lifestyles are closely related to consumerism and advertising, and their visibility and representation is essentially a media matter. Lifestyles are a world, and advertisers offer a world, none more overtly than this long-running commercial for Toyota New Zealand:

**Toyota: Welcome to our world**

*Visuals:* 'typical' scenes of New Zealand people and landscape

*Music:* American country / gospel song

*Song:* Welcome to our world  
won't you come on in.  
Miracles I guess  
still happen now and then.  
Step into our heart,  
leave your cares behind.  
Welcome to our world,  
built with you in mind.  
Knock and the door will open,  
seek and you will find,  
ask and you'll be given  
the key to this world of mine.  
We'll be waiting here  
with our arms unfurled,  
waiting just for you.  
Welcome to our world.

The advertisement is very long, 120 seconds in its full form. Its visuals major on almost mythical scenes of New Zealand rural life and landscape. New Zealanders are of course now largely urban, but our self-image is that we are still a people of the land, and many are indeed only a generation or so away from a farming heritage. The song and music are southern American crooning gospel style, specifically an imitation of Jim Reeves, a popular singer in this style of the 1950s. The song is in fact performed (skilfully) by John Grenell, a well-known New Zealand country singer. It is a relaxed, feel-good musical style.

The text is striking. With the New Testament (mis)quotations, Toyota appears to offer what Jesus Christ offered in the Christian gospels. Is Toyota God? Does Toyota even create the world and not just make it available? Linguistically, as with the BNZ advertisement, there is a cluster of personal pronouns – second person 'you' and

## One Network News: Watch your world with us

*Music:* unassuming, sung chorus

*Visuals:* a range of ordinary New Zealanders, collage of news shots

*Voice over:* New Zealanders - no two of us are exactly alike,  
and to each of us  
the world is a slightly different place.  
Maybe this is your world,  
or this.  
Maybe it's more like this.

*Sung chorus:* *Watch your world with us*

*Watch*

Whatever your world happens to be,  
one news organisation  
has made it their business to show it to you,  
with more resources  
more credibility  
more live coverage  
and for more years than any other -  
One Network News.

*Watch your world with us*

*Watch*

The team that's earned your trust.

*Watch*

Comprehensive coverage  
from around the corner  
and around the world.

*Watch*

New Zealand's most complete sport coverage.

*Watch*

Weather forecasting that shows you more.

*Watch your world with us*

Many worlds - one news,  
One Network News,  
at midday, six and nine forty.

*Watch your world with us*

*Watch.*

---

first person plural 'we/our', again linking the audience with the advertiser. It is worth noting the obvious: that this is a foreign car company welcoming New Zealanders to their own country. Yet there is no more encompassing lifestyle than the world, and this is what Toyota offers.

### **The reorganisation of time and space**

Time and place are reorganised in the postmodern world (Giddens, 1991, p. 21). Transport moves individuals to the other side of the globe in less than a day's travel. Communications media project events instantaneously - 'in real time' - from almost any place around the world to any other place. The history of media is directly implicated in the increasing immediacy of communications. There has been a development from despatches carried for weeks or months over land or sea, through early modern technologies such as the telegraph which delivered news within days or hours, to contemporary electronic instantaneity. Media language and discourse are bound up with these changes, and the development of the characteristically modern hard news story, with its a-chronological structure is in part a product of the technology and its repercussions (Schudson, 1982; Bell, forthcoming).

The remaking of concepts of time and space through contemporary communications is a very obvious fact. There is no longer a relationship between how far away something is and how long it takes to get news about it. Near the beginning of the 20th century, when Captain Scott died in 1912 on the way back across Antarctica from the South Pole, it was twelve months before the world heard the news. At the end of the century New Zealand explorer Peter Hillary retraced Scott's steps, using a satellite phone to regularly commentate the expedition to the public through the media (see Bell, forthcoming, for analysis of these developments).

News presentation has changed, and its discourse structure shifted. There has been a radical restructuring of the norms of story telling. News is a collage of places and events, which is especially evident in a medium such as television that aims to 'take you there'. In the mid 1990s, Television One - the channel with the largest audience, ran a self-advertising campaign for its news. Here is the full-length version of this 'trailer':

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The parallels to the Toyota commercial are very clear. The visuals begin similarly, with shots of New Zealanders, the projected audience, but then the visual focus moves to typical news shots, together with One Network News staff, and behind-the-scenes shots in the newsroom. Most obvious is the offering of a world, but there is a difference here. Postmodernity presents dilemmas between the fragmenting and the unifying facets of media, the world is both coming together and breaking apart. The voice over offers to unify a diversity of worlds, which are perhaps puzzling and even frightening. The sweet, persuasive voices of the singers command the audience to 'watch your world with us'. The audience and the world are both projected as diverse. Place makes no difference to time: news is reported as it happens, whether 'around the corner' or 'around the world'.<sup>8</sup>

One Network News unifies the circle, presents you with your world. This is in part typical broadcast wordplay on a channel's assigned name or number (compare 'the best things in life are Three' for TV3), but again there are divine overtones to what is offered. One Network News performs the godlike function of unifying a fragmented global experience and presenting it in local living rooms. This is closely linked with repeated foregrounding of this news network's credibility.

Again, we see the mix of second person and first person plural that was manifest in the earlier advertisements. But here there is slippage between exclusive and inclusive 'we'. For Toyota and the BNZ, the 'we' was exclusive, it represented the advertiser and not the viewers. One Network News is also exclusive in the 'us' of its 'watch your world with us' chorus. But in an interestingly different alignment, the start of the trailer is we-inclusive – 'no two of us', 'each of us'. The channel and the viewers are seen as part of the same New Zealand society.

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8 The sense of globalisation is reinforced by the give-away usage 'sport coverage' - redolent of the American consultants who guided the imaging of One Network News and presumably scripted this trailer - rather than the local usage, 'sports coverage'.

### Localisation and globalisation

The global and the local interpenetrate as a consequence of the reorganisation of time and place (Giddens, 1991, p. 21). It is a truism that the global is embedded into the local as we watch distant conflicts live on screens in our living rooms, and the One Network News trailer makes this explicit. Equally true is that the local may also become global. Local events may be broadcast to the world if deemed newsworthy. Cultural forms, particular types of music or dance, are picked up by mass media and dispersed to distant, alien places.

This holds also for languages and language styles. Local forms of speech may be disseminated across geographical or social distance through television or the recording industry until they become globally consumed and imitated. African American Vernacular English, travelling with African American music, is the obvious example (Trudgill, 1983; Bucholtz, 1999).

Travel is a clear correlate of globalisation, and the travel industry is its commercial manifestation. In 1997 Air New Zealand began an advertising campaign consisting of a series of related commercials. These used as their main sound and verbal track *Pokarekare Ana*, the one Maori song which most Pakeha New Zealanders know. The usage of te reo Maori is itself interesting, since the language is (regrettably) very much a minority one in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Most Maori do not speak te reo fluently if at all (Te Puni Kokiri, 1998), and the language is endangered. Few of the Pakeha majority understand more than a few words of Maori. However, the obvious distinctive things about the culture of New Zealand in general tend not to be Pakeha but Maori, including the language.

The original version of the Air New Zealand commercial presented *Pokarekare Ana* as sung by Kiri te Kanawa:

#### **Air New Zealand: Pokarekare Ana (original version)**

*Music:* in operatic style

*Visuals:* New Zealanders, scenery, seabirds

- |   |                  |                      |
|---|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 | Pokarekare ana   | Troubled are         |
| 2 | Nga wai o Waiapu | the waters of Waiapu |

3	Whiti atu koe e hine	when you cross over beloved
4	Marino ana e	it is calm
5	E hine e	O beloved
6	Hoki mai ra	return to me
7	Ka mate ahau i	or I might die
8	Te aroha e	for love of you

*Voice over:* There's one nation of people that loves to fly  
and one airline that flies them:  
Air New Zealand,  
the airline of the world's greatest travellers.

The visuals in this baseline version include a range of New Zealand's natural scenery and birdlife, and a variety of New Zealanders, particularly Maori people, plus an award-winning computer-generated formation of seabirds flying into the shape of the Air New Zealand logo, the Maori 'koru' motif. This is clearly a very 'local' advertisement. It appeals to New Zealand iconry, in that *Pökarekare Ana* is a Maori song, which will not be understood outside Aotearoa/New Zealand. It will also not be understood by most people *inside* New Zealand, yet it is used for an entirely symbolic purpose, to signify New Zealandness.

Many of the visual images are also very local, and appeal to stereotypical New Zealand self-images of a similar kind to those in the Toyota advertisement above. The appeal of the advertisement is summed up in the spoken catchline at the end – that New Zealanders are 'the world's greatest travellers', that Air New Zealand is our airline (although now half overseas owned), and by implication therefore a great airline. The local appeal of Air New Zealand is validated by its claims to global excellence.

One micro-linguistic analysis we can make of the text is to compare the phonetics of the singers' renditions in the advertisement with what a fully native standard of pronunciation would be. That is, how anglicized or how native-like are the pronunciations of the Maori words? We can give a phonetic transcription to the pronunciation of each segment (roughly to each vowel or consonant) and compare that to how a native speaker of Maori would pronounce



it. For example 'pökarekare ana' itself has 13 phonetic segments, one for each letter in the Maori script. In an extreme anglicized pronunciation only one of those segments would be pronounced natively (the 'n'). All the vowels would be changed or pronounced as diphthongs, the consonants 'p' and 'k' aspirated as in English, and an English 'r' used rather than the 'd'-sounding tap of the Maori segment. Such anglicization is of course a site of cultural struggle over how natively Maori words such as placenames should be pronounced. We can specify the degree of non-nativeness in the pronunciation of the different singers using a three-level approach of quantification, qualitative analysis and co-occurrence analysis (Bell 1999b, 2001). Quantification counts the number of times a particular segment is pronounced non-natively over the number of times the segment occurs. Qualitative analysis identifies individual pronunciations which are particularly salient in their social meaning. And co-occurrence analysis combines data from all the phonetic segments to give an overall sense of the particular singer's rendition.

The original version in the advertisement series was followed by others which added other singers and singing styles, and other linguistic representations of the song. In one of these later versions, there is a kaleidoscope of four different ethnic groups - Irish, Maori, African American and Pakeha - voicing successive lines of the song. Here the local becomes global. This very New Zealand song is presented as being sung in Ireland, New Orleans and London as well as at home.

In the Irish segment of the multi-ethnic version (lines 1-3), the musical style is the dominant ethnic marker, along with some stereotypical visuals of pub drinkers and countryside. The pronunciation is radically distant from native-speaker Maori pronunciations, but it is not particularly Irish. Irish presumably appears here because Ireland is one of the source, non-English ethnicities of New Zealand immigrants, and therefore a destination for Pakeha New Zealanders in search of their cultural roots.

In the multi-ethnic version, there is a single line (4) from Kiri te Kanawa, just enough to refer the viewers back to the full version they will have heard on earlier occasions. Her pronunciation in that original version was close to the native-speaker standard, though this is probably due to operatic professionalism rather than to

fluency in te reo Maori. The line she sings in the multi-ethnic version is in fact one where her rendition is entirely native, and thus serves as a standard within the advertisement as a whole.

Then follows the African American segment (lines 5-6), with the visuals carefully locating it in a New Orleans club. The singer is an older man with a distinctively African American singing style which adapts the rhythm and even the tune of the song quite radically to the musical style. This rendition has a high number of non-native features, and quantification shows that a majority of the potentially variable sounds are pronounced non-natively. Qualitative analysis shows that the most salient are adjacent pronunciations in the words 'mai ra' in line 6. The diphthong /ai/ in 'mai' is emphatically monophthongized to 'mah', striking the New Zealand ear as distinctively African American.<sup>9</sup> The /r/ receives a stressed English-sounding pronunciation where the native Maori would be a short tap.

The use of African American links this New Zealand cultural emblem to the dominant popular culture in the world, mediating a two-way traffic - channelling the global into Aotearoa/New Zealand and imaging the local as being global. This song is performed, we are given to believe, in the normal course of events in an ordinary gathering place at the wellspring of global culture. The cultural significance of the Irish and African American versions for New Zealanders is a claim that 'they're singing our song here' (to misquote the text of another advertisement).

In this version the final two lines are sung by a young Pakeha man, busking in the London underground, clearly in the course of his 'OE' (Overseas Experience, the young New Zealander's traditional tour to Europe). This is a return to the heart of the Empire,

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9. There is an important nuance here: the salient 'ah' pronunciation in 'mai' is a cross-language transfer into te reo Maori from American English. To be interpretable as referencing African American, the audience must recognise the source of the 'ah' pronunciation as another dialect (African American) of another language (English). Put differently, a hypothetical listener who was monolingual in Maori would not have the knowledge to attribute to this pronunciation the social meaning I have described here.

completing the global circle at the close of the advertisement, so to speak, as the Maori song is sung on the other side of the world where Pakeha New Zealanders sprang from.<sup>10</sup>

The song acts as the singer's badge of national identity, through which a passing middle-aged Pakeha couple recognize the singer as a fellow-national – and donate. The young Pakeha's pronunciation is interestingly styled. His first line (7) is strongly non-native in its pronunciation. However, it is not a foreign pronunciation but the vernacular, anglicized pronunciation which most Pakeha routinely if regrettably use for Maori. In a real sense, it is more typically local than Kiri te Kanawa's native-like rendition. The second line, however, is entirely natively pronounced, I think because of the increasing cultural salience of Maori pronunciation for younger New Zealanders.

Having classified each phonetic segment as native or non-native, we analyse the co-occurrence of non-native pronunciations throughout the song. Summing across all the segments gives each rendition an index of native-like pronunciation. With 0 representing fully non-native and 1 fully native, the results fit with my more qualitative exposition above. Kiri te Kanawa is most native-like at .86. The Pakeha follows (.75), and the two foreign renditions are much closer to the non-native end at .44 for the Irish and .42 for the African American. The singers' pronunciations thus reflect their degree of cultural or geographical distance from te reo Maori.

Through this we can see that the language in the multi-ethnic version works by singers retaining their own linguistic identities rather than attempting native-like accuracy. That is, the African American has the least native-like pronunciation, but in transferring his own distinctively African American Vernacular English pronunciation to the Maori words, he infuses them with the status

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10. Subsequent versions take this strand still further, featuring a young adolescent girl who is identifiably both Maori (brown skin) and Pakeha (blue eyes) – a very postmodern ethnic hybridity. In a tour de force of world ethnicities, she ends up catching the bride's bouquet at a (presumably family) wedding in Scotland, by way of encounters with Australian aborigines, buddhist monks in Asia, and New York Jews and African Americans. The soundtrack of Pokarekare Ana is here sung by a child, with rather non-native pronunciation.

of his own cultural group and heritage. In the African American lines, the local penetrates into the global through the fact of a Maori-language song being transported to New Orleans. The global penetrates the local through the Maori words being given an African American English pronunciation there.

## Conclusion

I have used a range of sociolinguistic analytical approaches to investigate and illustrate the ways in which language presents identity in these television advertisements. We find identity-laden characteristics across all levels of language:

- interlingually, between Maori language and African American Vernacular English
- in the sound system, a mix of native and non-native pronunciations in the Air New Zealand advertisement
- in syntax, the focus on the 2nd and 1st person plural pronouns in most of the advertisements
- in discourse, the quasi-poetic repetitions and assonances of these advertising texts, and their intertextuality, for instance in the Toyota 'Welcome' advertisement
- most obviously in the lexicon, with the claims to be offering the world, and the biblical quotations and references.

To a large extent, the language in these advertisements is trading on the associations which the linguistic features have in normal social use. But the media usage of such features is not simply reflective. The language is an active ingredient which itself moulds the nature of the situation and the identities involved. The 'bugger' advertisement is a most clear example of media usage affecting everyday language use, and of the Bakhtinian concept of multi-voicing. In one sense, such an advertisement takes the vernacular and gives it public voice, gives the people public voice. But in so doing, do the media also 'take our voice from us'? Is the 'globalisation' of a local feature then tantamount to changing the character of the feature itself? Usage of such an expression

simultaneously references both the private, vernacular sphere and the public, quotative context into which it has been caught up.

Issues of appropriation can become sharp here. Does Air New Zealand's use of *Pokarekare Ana* affirm and support Maori language or exploit it? Certainly it involves the use of the minority group's culture to provide distinguishing character to the majority culture of the country. Given the differential in social standing between the Maori and English languages in Aotearoa/New Zealand, this is an appropriation – but the ambivalence remains, because it does also showcase te reo to all New Zealanders. Such debates arise frequently in sociolinguistic circles, in the wider social science community, and in New Zealand society at large. This paper has aimed to provide a view of how these broad issues of individual, group and national identity can be investigated through language.

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## Linguistic registers and formulaic performance

*Koenraad Kuiper*

### **Abstract**

Speech is one of the most reliable ways to assign individuals to social categories and all humans use speech therefore in order to assign individuals to such categories. One of the social categories which speakers may display when they speak is their occupation. An occupational variety of a language is often termed a register, registers being varieties of a language that depend for their linguistic properties on the use to which the language is being put. Over the last 20 years I have developed a framework for looking at a number of occupational varieties which are passed down the generations as oral and written formulaic varieties. This has allowed them to be investigated both as social and linguistic phenomena.

Language is a sensitive indicator of a large number of social and personal variables. This is manifest to anyone who uses a phone. Not only is a person's identity apparent within a second or two on the phone if the person is known to the receiver of the call, but we can also often pick with accuracy a speaker's age, gender, socio-economic status, geographic origins and a variety of other social markers (Scherer and Giles, 1979). Many of the above linguistic markers of identity are only alterable with difficulty or some self-conscious effort. However other aspects of language change with the uses to which the speaker's language is put. Such changes are often referred to as register changes, a register being a situationally determined variety of a language. All native speakers of a language use a range of such varieties. The doctor speaking to a patient speaks differently to that patient than when she is speaking to her husband on a picnic. Serving staff at MacDonaldis who are also students speak differently to their clients at work to the way they discuss a literary topic in a tutorial.

There are many studies of register varieties and diverse ways to describe them (Biber and Finegan, 1994). My own work has focussed in the first instance on those which might be called formulaic. The work of other scholars who have approached formulaic speech from

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various perspectives can be seen in Aijmer (1996), Cowie (1998), Gläser (1986), Jackendoff (1995), Moon (1998), Pawley and Syder (1983) and Wray (forthcoming).

Formulaic speech traditions were discovered by Parry and Lord in the 1930s and 40s as they searched for explanations as to how Homer, blind and illiterate, could have created two of the great founding texts of Western literature. In search of answers, Parry and Lord went to what is now Bosnia with early wire recording equipment and recorded illiterate bards singing of the heroic exploits of their traditional Christian and Muslim heroes to the accompaniment of the plaintive sound of their one stringed gusls. Lord's book (Lord, 1960) *Singer of Tales*, created a minor sensation in literary scholarship because it opened the way to looking at oral traditional literature in a new way. It was even suggested that whole cultures might be influenced by the ways in which linguistic traditions were carried: either orally or both orally and by means of writing (Ong, 1982). This way of thinking has been influential in many areas of research such as folklore (Foley, 1990; Jackson, Taft, and Axlerod, 1988), cultural anthropology (Edwards and Sienkewicz, 1990), and literary studies (Foley, 1995). It has had little impact on linguistics.

At the same time that Lord's book was published, generative approaches to the study of language were making a similar impact on the discipline of linguistics. Generative approaches were the first fully formalised theories of the nature of human language systems. Chomsky (1965) building on previous distinctions, among others those of De Saussure (1959), set linguistics to study, fully scientifically, linguistic competence, what native speakers know when they know a language, as opposed to performance, what they do with that knowledge when they use a language. This was done by creating testable models of native speakers' internalised knowledge of their language. Such theories are termed generative theories. But not all linguists are students of linguistic competence; there are also students of linguistic performance. Often such students have been sociolinguists who look at language use in a social context or psycholinguists who look at the acquisition of language by children and the psychological mechanisms underpinning speech perception and speech production.



As it happens, Lord's proposals about the acquisition and use of formulaic performance skills of oral heroic poets constitute an embryonic theory of the latter kind of performance. Lord proposes that an oral poet must compose his poems in real time, maintaining fluency in the face of a mobile audience and its reaction to the performance. They do this by using formulae, phrases which are traditionally keyed to specific episodes in the narrative. For example, when Homer's heroes in the *Iliad* arm themselves for battle, the phrases that are used to describe this are the same phrases that are used throughout much of the poem to describe this activity. Such formulae are acquired rather as other lexical items are acquired, through exposure to them. Like words, formulae are not taught but absorbed along with all the other aspects of the tradition within which the poet is performing. A formula is therefore a more or less fixed phrase used by oral poets to do a particular 'job' such as describing how a hero puts on his helmet.

However, performance in the Chomskian sense and performance in the Lord sense have not been connected in a principled and concerted way until I began to do so in the early eighties. A rapprochement between Lord's theory of performance and generative theories of both competence and performance required a number of steps. The first was to find performance traditions which were not in the area of high culture, the reason being that such studies were always beset with problems of their cultural (and literary) value. Vernacular performance traditions could be looked at independent of whether the performance was good, bad, or indifferent. There were already a few studies of vernacular formulaic traditions in existence including work by Rosenberg on black preaching traditions (Rosenberg, 1970) and black verbal duelling (Labov, 1972). But these studies were not of a technical nature. They did not attempt to theorise about the nature of the linguistic knowledge which underlay the performance, ie. they did not seek a competence-based explanation.

The leading idea which I have pursued in my work on formulaic traditions is that there are two major factors which lead to the adoption of such traditions: speakers must be psychologically under some measure of working memory pressure from both the speech

tasks in which they are engaged and other cognitive tasks they must simultaneously perform. The speech tasks must also be, sociologically speaking, relatively routine such that high degrees of novelty of output are not required. That being the case, formulaic performance should have predictable properties which are invariant across different traditions. Such traditions should also evolve in predictable ways given the linguistic properties which they have.

I chose two professional groups to provide evidence for this essentially psycholinguistic investigation of speech production. The first were auctioneers since auctions take place in many different parts of the world and auctioneers are under a range of pressures ranging from light in the case of a house auction where only one house is being sold and the auctioneers has in the order of five to ten minutes to sell it, through to tobacco and wool auctions where thousands of lots are sold at a rate of one every three to five seconds. The second were sports commentators since some sports such as ice hockey and horse racing are very fast paced placing great pressure on speakers to both follow all that is going on while at the same time relating it in real time to an audience. Other sports such as cricket are slow paced, placing slighter processing pressure on speakers allowing them more time for improvising speech.

Although this was the initial motivation for the studies above, I will not delve further into the psycholinguistics of speech production but now look at the relevance of this work for the study of the social order.

The social significance of formulaic performance skills for occupational identification is quite clear from the studies of auctioneers and sport commentators. The linguistic skills which follow from the acquisition of the oral traditions of both professions go close to defining what it means to be a member of each. They certainly go a long way to being able to identify members of such professions by these skills alone. There is other social knowledge required as well. In the case of auctioneers this is described in Smith (1989). For sports commentators there are probably similar treatments. The social knowledge involved in being able appropriately and as a native to sell at auction and relate a sport on radio or TV is quite wide-ranging. If one thinks of the differentiation

of the roles of vendor, vendor's agent, bidder, buyer, by-stander then all play a crucial role in being appropriately able for an auctioneer to address speech to the parties to the auction. All the various field positions, types of shot selection, bowling action must be known to be a cricket commentator, not to mention previous scores of long ago games, batting averages of long dead players etc (Pawley, 1991). All this is social knowledge which not only manifests itself in speech but is coded in the formulae which a cricket commentator has memorised and which enable him or her to produce fluent commentary. For example, the formula *Do I sell?* is addressed by the auctioneer to the vendor at a point in the auction when the auctioneer believes the lot has fetched a bid of sufficient value for a sale to be able to be made from that point on.

These early studies of formulaic performance skills led to further studies such as one on supermarket checkout operator speech (Kuiper and Flindall, 2000). The aim of this study was to show how the social skills of the checkout operator, while governed by a common oral tradition are, notwithstanding, able to be executed differently by different checkout operators. That being so, each checkout operator can evolve a unique persona within the tradition, the tradition thus proving an avenue for individual identity within an occupational tradition. The study was conducted by recording a number of checkout operators in two different supermarkets. Their common tradition was extracted from these recordings and then their idiosyncratic implementation of it provided by their preferential use of certain expressions and not others. For example, of the seven operators two favoured a greeting which began with *Giddy*. They were not the only operators who used it but they favoured it. They were also male. The conclusion was that, even in such a highly routinised environment, there are avenues through which individuals can express their individuality.

In another study Hickey and Kuiper (2000) showed how formulaic traditions can also be written ones in the case of weather forecasters and (Hickey, 1991) showed that these traditions can be sensitively styled for different audiences by different media. Thus, again, a formulaic tradition allows both for socio-cultural continuity and local contextual sensitivity.

Smith (1991) showed that script writers of television soap operas are well-aware of the social value of formulaic traditions of greeting and parting rituals and she builds a model of these rituals from transcriptions of such scripted rituals. This model closely resembles the models of Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974) on such rituals in unscripted spontaneous utterances. The difference between these models and Smith's work is that she shows how formulaic they are and that each formulae is socially 'licensed' to perform a particular role in the ritual. So greeting and parting formulae are, in that regard, no different from Homeric formulae.

Since formulae are keyed to particular contextual features, they are cultural as well as linguistic artefacts. They act as greetings, apologies and so forth. This was, in part unwittingly, first noticed by Austin (see Austin, 1976). Austin did not notice that the utterances which he saw as acting as social acts were, in fact, relatively fixed formulae. Since formulae have relatively fixed conditions of use, a number of things should follow. First, if there is a major social upheaval, one would expect the formulae which existed before the upheaval to change in various ways. They might change their form to indicate that they are different from those which existed before the upheaval; some formulae may disappear altogether; others may undergo changes to their conditions of use.

I investigated this prediction in a paper on routine formulae before and during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (Ji, Kuiper and Shu, 1990). The study was written with two co-authors who were both linguists and had lived through the Cultural Revolution. Its findings were that, indeed, major changes in the formulaic inventory of speakers took place. Old formulae which were keyed to old ways were either proscribed or altered to represent the new order. For example, an old formula to begin school classes at the beginning of the day was proscribed and in its place an imperial greeting and homage formula was adapted to pay homage to Mao Tse Tung. Ji (1998) carried on this study showing in detail how each twist and turn of ideological and political direction during the Cultural Revolution had consequences for the formulaic inventory. Linguistic engineering through young people's desire for conformity in being like their peers came to be exploited for socio-

political ends. This work showed clearly that formulaic speech is not only sensitive to socio-cultural movement and change but is able to be manipulated by the powerful for socio-political ends.

If formulaic speech is socially sensitive it also follows that in a relatively uniform but bilingual culture the formulaic inventory in two different languages could have very similar cultural underpinnings in the conditions of use of formulae. That prediction is explored and corroborated in a study I made of sections of the formulaic inventory of Hokkien-English bilinguals in Singapore with a multilingually fluent Singapore Hokkien speaker (Kuiper and Tan, 1989). Singapore has a lectal continuum in both English and Hokkien ranging from a pidgin like dialect at one end to educated dialect at the other. In all the cases we explored, a formula for, say, greeting someone in one language and at one level of the lectal continuum was matched with an equivalent formula in the other language at the same point of the continuum. However the loan translation clearly went from Chinese to English since the cultural values that underpinned the formulae and their use were Chinese and not English.

It is also possible to use the formulaic inventory to explore and critique socio-cultural practices and assumptions since the formulaic inventory is a cultural artefact and each formula thus has things to say about the culture in which it functions. In an article written in 1990 (Kuiper, 1990), I showed that rugby locker room vocatives are a coercive means of maintaining group solidarity by acting as weapons to create a warrior elite. They do this by attacking players' desire to be thought well of by their mates (Brown and Levinson, 1978), indicating that they may not be men but women (or parts of the female sexual anatomy). The message is that one cannot be sure of being a man save by undergoing trial by ordeal, that being both the verbal humiliation of the locker room banter and the game of rugby with its opportunities for physical injury and humiliation. Since these gendering practices are transmitted only within the confines of the solidary group, they have a strongly coercive potential to maintain group solidarity. I contrasted this gendering practice with another where a group of men actively maintain one another's 'face' through the use of formulae which support people even when

they are potentially letting the side down, making mistakes and the like.

Since oral performance traditions are cultural artefacts they also have a history. In most cases this is not amenable to research since data cannot be obtained. However two avenues are possible. Historical linguistics has shown that historical reconstruction is possible in the case that languages which have a shared history can have their 'parent' reconstructed on the basis of the shared features of the 'offspring'. This is an avenue that I have explored (see Kuiper and Tillis, 1986; Kuiper, 1991). In the first of these studies I recorded and transcribed the chants of American tobacco auctioneers. Each of these chants is relatively uniquely that of the particular auctioneer but the tradition is a musical one. For help with that I worked with Frederick Tillis who is a black musicologist specialising in nineteenth century black musical traditions. He was important because the music of tobacco auctioneers is clearly black and overlaid on an English discourse structure and English formulae some of which are the same as those used elsewhere in the world in the English auctioning tradition while others are home grown southern ones. We surmised that two oral traditions came together in the chants of tobacco auctioneers, the monotonous chanting of English auctioneering tradition and the black African American tradition with its pentatonic scales, blues notes and syncopation. The creation of this hybrid tradition is thus a classically creole one.

The second study used comparative data from England, Canada, America and New Zealand as a basis for attempting to reconstruct the common underlying oral tradition which was exported from England in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This study (Kuiper, 1991) shows that it is possible to reconstruct aspects of the discourse structure, formulaic inventory and prosodics (intonation, stress, and the like) of an English tradition carried orally for three hundred years using the tools of historical reconstruction. That tradition contains formulae such as *Are you all done?* which is said in order to mark the conclusion of an auction. It is to be found in many auction traditions which derive from the English tradition. It contains the basic discourse structure rule of having a description of the lot, followed by the search for an opening bid, followed by bid calling,

followed by an optional conclusion or coda. Many auction traditions also share a shout mode of delivery during the bid calling where the auction is in the open air and the auctioneer enunciates particular words with a very high volume. For example the bid calling formulae *At X dollars* would have the word *at* delivered with 'shout' prosodics. Shout is a term Douglas Haggio and I developed and is described in detail in Kuiper and Haggio (1984).

The second way to investigate oral traditions is by means of recordings of the tradition from earlier periods. That is only possible back as far as recording equipment exists. Based on recordings of race calls in Christchurch from the 1930s onwards (see Kuiper, 1991), I show that major features of the tradition of current South Island callers documented in Kuiper and Austin (1990) was created by one caller who became the model for subsequent callers. This includes, for example, the convention that the only horse which is mentioned twice is the leader of the race. For example, a caller who says *Smoking Joe, he puts his nose in front* can only do so if the horse is the leader. That only became mandatory after it became part of the oral tradition created by Dave Clarkson. In this study I therefore show how an oral tradition can emerge where none existed. That tradition then becomes the frame within which its successors must make their way.

There are two other overarching areas which are important, both of them methodological. From the beginning, the empirical studies of formulaic performance have been conducted within a research tradition of ethnography of speaking (Saville-Troike, 1982). Since my aim was always to see formulaic performance traditions within their cultural setting, that was the obvious methodology to choose. It has a major disadvantage. It takes a long time to conduct research studies since one must become as thoroughly conversant with the situation and its cultural locus as possible. In the case of the many auctioning traditions that I have looked at, recorded and described, one must attend a good many auctions to get to know just what is going on.

This is not just a matter of the physical things that are happening, but the cultural values of the people concerned and what they are doing. Frequently that is where my co-authors come to be important. While it is not always customary to acknowledge the work of those

who may not have written a word of what is in the report of a study, most of these studies depended on the work and knowledge of my informants and co-researchers. I could not have written about Singapore English without Daphne Tan and her family's large collection of formulae made for the study, and their knowledge of how those formulae are used. Paddy Austin's family owned racehorses and went to the races frequently. Doug Haggo and I had both watched a lot of 'Hockey Night in Canada' on the CBC. Marie Flindall was an experienced checkout operator.

A second methodological area is that of formalisation and quantification. Formalised systems such as I have developed to explain both the discourse structure and formulaic syntax of formulaic traditions are documented most explicitly in Kuiper (forthcoming). Because they are explicit they allow for the generation of associated quantificational work. Two of the major approaches to the social analysis of the contexts of language use are variationist studies which are quantificational, and ethnography of speaking studies which generally are not. I have shown that there is value in using quantificational approaches when one has a formal theory as to the parameters of variation that are available within an oral tradition. The study of race calling shows how valuable quantificational data can be by showing how a loose tradition comes to be fixed over time. They are also useful in showing how individual variation is possible within a formulaic tradition (Kuiper and Flindall, 2000). To my knowledge, these studies are unique in this regard.

It seems to me that the implications of the line of research I have sketched for sociology are interesting, and not necessarily all obvious. If we think of social identities as being negotiated in interaction and as evolving over time we are close to a conception of humans as social beings which would be in line with that of Goffman (1969). We play parts, and a good deal of what it means to play a part is learning the lines. In the kinds of studies I have done, the stereotypical socially sanctioned lines are provided by the oral tradition of the particular role one is acquiring. Much of this acquisition is unconscious and fast. But not all. As shown in Gleason, Ely, Perlmann, and Narasimhan (1996), parents do explicitly instruct



children in some cultures as to what they may and may not say by way of formulae. But auctioneers acquire their oral tradition by being exposed to it, as we all acquire vocabulary. In many parts, the script plays a leading role. Without it there would be no part to play. But the oral tradition is also embedded in social action. The auctioneer says, 'Any more bids? Last call.' and raises his hand, looks intently round the gallery of buyers one last time and then lowers his hand to knock the lot down.

However, learning the part and its associated actions are not all of the story. The part must be played legitimately, in the social context set down for it. I can now mimic an auctioneer quite well. But I am not an auctioneer and I could not be. I don't hold a licence. I can imitate a cricket commentator, but I could not do a live commentary since that involves perceptual tasks which I can't perform, as well as social knowledge I do not have as to individual player's life stories and significant events from the past. I have not been initiated.

Notwithstanding these caveats, it still seems to me that some of the most interesting and revealing social data relating to the construction of the social self is to be found in the detailed study of small local varieties since these have the capacity to yield large amounts of data which can be transcribed and then systematised. The analysis of this data has, for me anyway, yielded a great deal of insight into social identity and social processes. It has also provided unforgettable field work experiences. I will mention just one such. I spent a day in the 1980s at Fuquay-Varina in North Carolina recording two tobacco auctioneers. One was 68 and the other 74. Both had been auctioning all their adult lives. The 68 year old was dying of lung cancer, a not unusual situation of people who spend many days a year in the large warehouses of the tobacco country breathing in tobacco dust. Inside the warehouse the black chant of this large white man filled the shed. There was no other sound. The buyers shuffled past the heaps of ripe tobacco signing their bids, grabbing a leaf and crushing and smelling it. Every hour or so when Hank got tired, his mate Earl would enter the line carrying on with his chant in an uninterrupted stream of song. After two or so hours, the warehouse was sold out and the ritual recommenced at another warehouse. Such a day has a great deal to teach one about what it

takes to be a tobacco auctioneer (as do the following months of transcribing tape).

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## Getting personal: Language use in a call centre context

*Margaret Franken*

### **Abstract**

This paper presents a description of language use in the specific organizational context of a call centre of a women's clothing outlet. It represents what Iedema and Wodak describe as a linguistic-discursive approach to organisational research (Iedema and Wodak, 1999, p. 7). The paper analyses audiotaped data collected from customer service representatives (CSRs) during their calls with customers. The language used by the CSRs in the study is analysed in terms of how it achieves 'the smile down the phone', and how it reduces the social distance between the CSR and the customer, in order to effect a sale. Given the fact that the CSR and customer are strangers, it could be argued that this discourse can be viewed as 'synthetically personal' (Fairclough, 1992). A tentative framework for describing the nature of the discourse suggests that there is a degree of standardisation (as suggested by Cameron, 2000). However, individual CSR patterns of language use in the data also lead to the observation that CSRs do resist standardisation and that seemingly authentic communication can occur in this context.

### **Introduction**

Sociolinguistic inquiry has for the most part sought to establish a correlation between social variables and language choice in order to generate explanations. As Holmes states, "...the sociolinguist's aim is to move towards a theory which provides a motivated account of the way language is used in a community, and of the choices people make when they use language" (1992, p. 16). However, organisational discourse from a sociolinguistic perspective focuses on "specialised social and organization sites of enquiry" (Iedema and Wodak, 1999, p. 6). Clearly workplaces are productive and more specific sites for investigation (see for instance Holmes, 2000 for a range of sociolinguistically motivated papers about language, and in particular language and gender in the workplace).

This paper focuses on the specific workplace context of the call centre. It examines the language used by customer service representatives (CSRs) in a call centre of a women's clothing outlet. Call centres are ideal sites in which sociolinguists and others can step beyond their disciplinary boundaries "to provide accounts of social life and discourse manifestations in terms of the new problematics of change, globalism and pluralism" (Iedema and Wodak, 1999, p. 6).

Call centres typically involve a large number of workers, most of whom are women, gathered together in a central location to arrange retail sales or services.<sup>1</sup> Most commonly this is managed by phone, although the use electronic media, email and the Net, are becoming increasingly common options for the customer. Call centres are one of the fastest growing industries and are predicted to continue to increase. Peterson (1999, p. 5) states, "Estimates of the industry's growth worldwide range from 10 to 30 percent a year".

Call centre work falls into the service sector, specifically, "interactive service sector work" (Leidner, 1993), and as such has particular requirements of potential recruits. Thompson, Warhurst and Callaghan (2000) present the case that labour in the service sector can be thought of as aesthetic labour as it is selected primarily on aesthetic grounds. They define aesthetic labour as a supply of "embodied capacities and attributes" possessed by workers at the point of entry into employment (p. 12). As Wiggins (personal communication) states of the recruitment and selection process for call centre operatives, "employ the attitude then we can train them".

Specifically within the call centre context, the capacities and attributes are associated with "the quality of vocal communication, with customer satisfaction being strongly influenced by the energy and enthusiasm of the call centre operative" (Thompson et al., 2000, p. 12). The energy and enthusiasm of the call centre operative is seen as a primary means by which customer satisfaction is guaranteed. Energy and enthusiasm are seen to be transmitted to

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1. Centralisation typifies first and second generation call centres. Gandy (1998, p. 68) outlines the recent development of third and fourth generation call centres where workers are located in different branches or even in their own homes.

the customer by the 'smile in the voice' (Wiggins, personal communication). Other writers have likewise identified 'the smile down the phone' (see for example Richardson and Marshall, 1996; Cameron, 2000). The ubiquitous smile metaphor suggests that the overriding relationship to be achieved between the CSR and the customer is one of friendliness, in which the social distance between the two interlocutors is reduced.

Cameron lists a number of aspects of the particular discourse between service sector workers and customers which Sturdy aptly names the "rhetoric of serving the customer". These include prosody, voice quality, the way in which particular speech acts are performed, address terms and salutations, and the use of certain politeness formulae (Cameron, 2000, p. 324). Cameron's claim is that these are subject to prescription or standardisation by employers, with standardisation in this context referring to the practice of making and enforcing rules for language use with the intention of reducing optional variation in performance (Cameron, 2000, p. 324).

What is of particular interest in the present study is the use of linguistic devices by which social distance is reduced. These have been described as *positive politeness strategies* (see Brown and Levinson, 1987, for a full account of politeness theory). As Blum-Kulka (1997, p. 51) explains, positive politeness strategies can be achieved by attending to the hearer, stressing reciprocity, displaying a common point of view and showing optimism; and can be manifest by in-group identity markers, use of slang, jokes, endearments, etc.

The friendliness of the CSR, achieved through politeness strategies, must appear to be genuine and authentic to the customer. However, given the fact that the interlocutors are strangers to each other, the language of CSRs can at best be termed 'synthetically personal' (Fairclough, 1992), rather than genuine, authentic or sincere. Sincerity is one of Searle's major pragmatic parameters (see Searle, 1979). 'Putting on' friendliness can be seen to be a violation of this parameter.

CSRs need to believe that the energy and enthusiasm they are required to transmit is real. As Taylor (1998, p. 98) states, "service sector employers are increasingly demanding that employees 'deep act' - actively work on and change their feeling to match the display

required by the labour process". Sturdy expresses this as a 'fake it till you make it' strategy. Therefore, not only are aspects of language standardised, so too are the attitudes or beliefs about the nature of the interaction between CSRs and customers.

The present study presents an analysis of the language used by a number of CSRs in a women's clothing outlet, that broadly speaking displays positive politeness strategies at work. It describes the linguistic means by which these and other strategies are realised, and it attempts to interpret the functions of the utterances in a detailed way.

## **Methodology**

One of the most significant constraints in the present research is access to data. Many previous studies have focused on physical materials such as training manuals, didactic presentations, post-hoc interviews or survey data but not language interaction per se. This constraint has been recognised by other researchers (see for instance Sturdy, forthcoming). Sturdy, concerning the rhetoric of training sessions states that "very little research explores knowledge diffusion in action, through observation" (p. 8). This would apply equally to the language interactions between CSRs and customers.

The initial research plan for the study was to collect audiotaped data of the CSR and customer interaction. Initially the researchers made contact with the call centre trainers and interviewed them about the possibilities for different types of data collection. The trainers responded to a research plan by indicating what they felt would be possible, and allowable by management. It was made clear to the researchers that taping of interaction including both the CSR and customers would not be acceptable to the company. Constraining the research to CSR language may be attributed to several reasons: The company may have wished to protect the customers and to some extent its CSRs, it may have wished to keep its own training methods 'inhouse', and it may have wished to avoid criticism or adverse publicity.

The company also constrained the taping of CSRs' language. However, they would allow on-site transcription of the utterances



of a number of selected CSRs. The selection of four CSRs was made on the basis of years of experience.

The partial transcription of the tapes was analysed by the researchers. This analysis was verified by both the trainers and two CSRs. This occurred by asking the four to respond to a selection of utterances. They were asked to suggest what the CSR was trying to achieve in the use of each utterance. As Schiffrin (1996, p. 322) points out, it is important to check the interpretations of utterances with either the participants themselves or with other people who have a degree of familiarity with the ways of speaking used in the interaction.

Despite the constraints, the present research did access data capable of generating a framework. However the study also acknowledges that the framework runs the risk of making the call centre interaction appear to be a linear process dominated by the CSR. Clearly it requires the presence of an audience to broaden the usefulness of the framework.

## Observations

The analysis of the data is discussed below and summarized in Table 1. The first category in the analysis is associated with the procedure of keeping the conversation going, the procedure of purchasing and extra purchasing. In order to maintain the flow of conversation, the CSRs make use of fairly neutral expressions or back-channelling devices such as, *Yes*, *OK* or *Mmm*. These are acknowledgments of an interactant's talk as the interaction proceeds. Questions such as: *Have you your customer number ready?* and *Anything else you were looking at?* are ways of carrying out the mechanics of the process of selling and extra selling. Involved in this fairly neutral category is also the explication of product knowledge, such as, *They must not be tumble dried*.

The second category in the analysis concerns expressions of affiliation with the company. This is achieved by the CSRs' use of the inclusive pronoun *we* to mean the CSR and the company. When the trainers were interviewed, they indicated that the use of *we* and *us* is one of the most important features of CSR language. Deviations from this such as the use of *they* and *them* as in the example, *They say*

to go up a size for a looser fit, are viewed by the trainers as RIP (rest in peace) words, words not to be used (Sturdy, forthcoming). The trainers expressed the view that the use of pronouns *they* and *them* indicate a lack of responsibility on the part of CSRs. It is perhaps significant that the newest recruit was the only one to use such terms.

**Table 1: Functions and exemplars of selected CSRs' language**

<b>Functions</b>	<b>Exemplars</b>	
<b>Procedure</b>	conversational purchasing extra purchasing	<i>please, OK</i> <i>Have you your customer number?</i> <i>Anything else you were looking at?</i>
<b>Product knowledge</b>		<i>They must not be tumble dried.</i>
<b>Affiliation with company</b>	corporate inclusive	<i>we</i>
<b>Affiliation with customer</b>	naming letting customer into the process	<i>Dear, Maria, Good lady</i> <i>Let's have a look</i> <i>I'll just go over the style number. I wonder if it is 247? We'll just go over that</i>
<b>Customer as special</b>	affirming customer choice/action  customer selection or identification boosted back-channel cues	<i>They've been really popular</i> <i>Mmm nice choice the candy</i> <i>We really do appreciate that call</i> <i>...for you</i>  <i>Absolutely, Excellent</i>
<b>Minimize for CSR</b>	effort	<i>No problem</i>
<b>Minimize for customer</b>	effort/risk expenditure risk	<i>Just pop those numbers in</i> <i>How do you want to charge that?</i> <i>They say go up a size for a looser fit</i>

The third category in the analysis covers politeness strategies of two kinds: positive politeness by which the social distance between the CSR and customer is reduced; and strategies where the imposition on the CSR or the customer is minimized. In terms of reducing the social distance between the CSR and the customer, the CSRs used terms of endearment such as *Dear, Good lady* and made frequent mention of the customers by their first name. CSRs also achieved a degree of closeness by the use of *we* (inclusive of CSR and customer) and by including the customer in the process by the use of other inclusive devices such as *Let's*, as in for instance *Let's have a look*. Phrases such as this and ones in which the CSR is 'talking aloud' as she processes a sale, eg. *I'll just have a look for you*, ensure that the customer remains with the CSR during the process. One example that shows many of these features is, *Just bear with me for a little while. I'm just going to look at something so we can both know what item we're looking at*.

Another important strategy is the affirming of a customer's choice or action. The CSRs used phrases such as *Mmm nice choice the candy, We really do appreciate that call*. These strategies aim to have the effect of making the customer feel special. Another way in which customers can be made to feel special is through indicating special effort on the part of the CSR by the use of the phrase *for you*, as in *We can do that straight away for you, I'll just read those card details out for you, That is available for you*. Affirmation of the customer is also achieved by back-channelling devices which can be seen to be boosted, or stronger than the customary *Yes* or *OK*. Examples of these are *absolutely, excellent*. Back-channelling devices such as these operate to indicate the commitment participants have to contributing to the interaction and to maintaining mutual understanding and rapport (Franken, 1997, p. 176).

While the CSR may like to indicate that the customer is special, she may also like to minimize the imposition that a customer's requests pose for her. This is achieved through the frequent use of the phrase, *No problem*.

Effort on the customer's part also needs to be minimized. Hedging directives for example, *Just pop those numbers in or I need you to write some numbers in there Betty*, is a way in which this is done. Expenditure, and in particular risk, are two features of buying items

through a retail call centre that need to be addressed and minimized by the CSR. Expenditure or rather the perception of how expensive the purchase is, is minimized by avoiding any suggestion of large cost. CSRs were seen to use phrases such as *How do you want to charge that?* and *How do you want to pay for that?* Minimizing of risk involved in purchasing an item for instance that may not fit or may not suit the customer is indicated by invoking product knowledge, as in the examples *It's quite a form fit, There's a little message - for a looser fit go to a 14* and *They say to go up a size for a looser fit*. Interestingly the latter phrase also indicates an abdication of responsibility for the selection of a particular size on the part of the CSR. CSRs also frequently suggest that it is a simple matter to return or exchange goods if customers are not happy, eg. *There's a thirty day right of return, If you're not happy with it you can always change it*.

The language used in this call centre context where the aim of CSRs is to ensure the sale of women's clothing items demonstrates many aspects of politeness associated with interaction between speakers who are relatively familiar with each other and between whom there is little social distance. This is not the relationship between a CSR and customer. Nevertheless, CSRs call customers by their first names, they use terms of endearment, they include them by means of personal inclusive pronouns, and they make a point of using language that is designed to make the customer feel good about herself. They minimize the imposition of a sale, and while doing all this project a firm affiliation with the company - an affiliation that perhaps is aimed also to influence the customer and customer loyalty.

However not all CSRs manage to maintain these relationships and the language needed to sustain them successfully. In some cases there are diversions or violations of the patterns observed. Thompson et al. (2000) identify that in call centres there is likely to be more subversion than in interactive service sector areas in which people are recruited for their appearance. They state that in such jobs, "people tend to embrace the image and the means of policing it more readily" (p.25).

A CSR's back-channelling devices may be too idiosyncratic as in the case of the term *alrighty*, or it may be too boosted so as to

sound 'unprofessional' as indicated by trainers' responses to the words, *Yeah, absolutely*. Other informal utterances such as *We got (viz. secured) that one*, were also judged as being unprofessional and idiosyncratic.

There appeared to be a fine line between friendly/positive and 'over the top', as in the case of one CSR's utterance, *Wonderful - I wish more customers were like you*. The trainers' and CSRs' response to this was that it was 'over the top', too friendly and that in fact, it reflected badly on all other customers. In other words, this customer would feel *too special*. In contrast, unanimously positively regarded by both CSRs questioned and the trainers, was the phrase, *Thank you Melanie we really do appreciate that call*. Fairly direct utterances such as *Is that OK with you?* were recast by one trainer as ideally being *If you don't mind I'll just....*

An RIP area already mentioned above is the use of the pronouns *they* and *them* signalling that the CSR is 'failing to accept responsibility', or in reality forgetting that she and the company are one and the same. Another extremely strongly RIP area is where CSRs fail to minimize the cost to the customer. The term used by one CSR, *That's the grand total of ....* received extremely strong censure by both the trainers and the CSRs questioned.

What is admissible in the language used by CSRs is sometimes embodied in the training manuals used before and during employment. However the boundaries between what is positive/admissible and what is not, are somewhat vague, and represent inexplicit knowledge, although clearly there is great degree of agreement. Sometimes CSRs themselves are conscious of their own tolerance and intolerance towards the commodification of their language. One CSR when questioned about the phrases, *Nice talking to you Maria, Have a nice day* felt that these were 'just too X' (ie. the company name). She also judged certain utterances to be positive, friendly and therefore effective but stated that she herself would not be comfortable using them.

Wright (1994, p. 25) claims that power over employees "is inherent in the continuous assertion of the status of a discourse as 'true', objective, neutral or normal". What is considered abnormal in this case of call centre language is the too friendly, too direct, too

personal. Language does need to be personal to a degree and is synthetically so. The language we normally use with friends or people reasonably close to us is being appropriated by call centres and can be seen to be, in Fairclough's words (1992), "recontextualised". Recontextualisation refers to the move from human interaction to synthetic interaction.

## Conclusion

The present study is explorative and provides the beginnings of a framework for analysing the particular functions of language in the specific interactive service sector, the retail call centre. Clearly research needs to move beyond the study of CSRs' language only and needs to include interlocutors' or customers' language. Research also needs to consider the customer as audience to the language of CSRs. For instance research could usefully investigate customer responses to particular utterances with a type of 'irritability index'.

Research may well take the framework proposed above and apply it to other contexts (for example, see Franken and Wallace, 2000). This paper investigates the process of commodification in the context of an additional call centre context in the education sector. It also examines a wider range of data including manuals, interview data and rating scales.

It is predicted that telephone call centres as one of the fastest growing employment sectors, particularly for women, will continue to offer great potential for the study of organisational discourse.

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**GENERAL ARTICLES****Interlocks or ownership:  
New Zealand boardroom power***Georgina Murray***Abstract**

Interlocks – so what do they add to an understanding of corporate power in New Zealand? Here it is argued that the sociological study of interlocks (that is, the links created by a director who is on the board of more than one company or organisation) will reveal some but not all dimensions of corporate power. This New Zealand study of directional interlocks will reveal the following tracteries of power: first, a map showing inter-firm political links; second, the direction of the flow of corporate information and third, the links identifying which sector (e.g. productive, financial or service) is at the centre of business. The results show that although industrial companies dominate the interlocking network (with the most heavily interlocked directors being class leaders), further triangulation of evidence indicates that ownership remains the causal key to understanding corporate power relations. The ownership of top companies in New Zealand is, primarily, in the hands of a consortium of overseas finance capital.

**Introduction**

Interlocks occur when one director sits on his or her own, but also on at least one other, company's board of directors. Tracing interlocks is a potent navigational tool for trawling meaning and understanding power relations in business. Power, in this context, means having a key member of your board interlock with (or sit on) someone else's board, thereby feeding you information from a wide corporate environmental scan about the machinations of inter-firm politics. These interlocking directorates can therefore be read as



maps of power displaying directors' informational links, both within and across corporate organisations. They also show which sector of business is at its political centre.

This article examines interlocks in relation to the top thirty New Zealand companies, beginning with a summary of the interlock literature. Primary data from annual company reports is then used to test hypotheses arising from the literature and interviews done with directors.<sup>1</sup> Finally, there is a discussion on the interpretation of these patterns and their significance for the sociology of New Zealand business.

### **The interlock literature**

Three excellent summaries of the interlocking data literature (Glasberg, 1987; Mizruchi, 1996; Scott, 1985) show why the study of interlocks is important. These theorists classify perspectives on interlocks into four groups according to the emphasis on: (1) control; (2) collusion; (3) discretion and (4) social embeddedness. Two traceable threads underlie these perspectives.

The first theoretical thread, emphasising control, is Weberian and it aims to provide independent motives for the actions of interlocking directors. These Weberian-based theorists want us to see the issue of interlocking as one of managers' control and power rather than ownership or class collusion. Power is treated as multifaceted because it resides with many shareholders rather than capitalist-owners. The companies that managers control are characterised as relatively democratically run in ways that are answerable to the wider community, and diversely owned by 'mum and dad' shareholders. A hypothesis from this model could suggest that if ownership is no longer significant then managers (unlike owners) are free to be civically responsible and not motivated by economic self-interest.

The second theoretical thread in the literature is Marxist and includes the majority of theorists writing in groups two, three and

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1. These interviews with top business directors were part of a 1992 study done in conjunction with Dr. Malcolm Alexander. We were using a Large ARC Grant for a project called *Economic Power in Australia*.

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four. These theorists are generally critical of the role of capital and see interlocking boards as a strategy to reproduce advantage and further exploit workers and/or consumers.

The collusive model looks at interlocks as structural mechanisms that cement collusion and subsequently help the development of business cartels. Hilferding (1910) in *Finance Capital* worked on material provided by Jeidels (1905) to find why, "if you took possession of six large Berlin Banks [it] would mean taking possession of the most important spheres of large scale industry" (Hilferding, 1910, p. 368). He saw bank interlocks as a vital dynamic within this system of finance capital collusion (also see Lenin, 1916; or Fennema and Schijf, 1979). According to Hilferding finance capital is bank capital, transformed by industrial capitalists, but still requiring by bankers a permanent supervision of company affairs, which is best done by securing representation on the boards of directors Hilferding, 1910, p. 121). This ensures, first, that the corporation will conduct all its financial transactions associated with the issues of shares through the bank. Second, in order to spread risks and to widen business connections, the bank tries to work with as many companies as possible and at the same time to be represented on their board of directors.

Hilferding's central point is that the most significant development facing capitalism is the concentration of banking and industry. Having bank representatives on the productive companies' boards establishes permanent supervision of the companies' affairs and protects the ownership interests of banks.

New Zealand collusive interlock research includes the empirically untested work of O'Brien (1976) suggesting that:

[A]bout 100 men control the decision making process in the bulk of New Zealand industry, commerce and finance. Control is through a network of interlocking directorates, professional activities and executive positions, which add up to a formidable pool of knowledge contacts and power. The fact that these men are only a small proportion of the companies that they control (in most cases) is irrelevant to their power. People acquainted with the real structure of business power in this country, usually academics... have fostered a belief that ownership, and therefore control, of companies is

widespread... The myth over-looks the fact that the directors of the institutions and some of the executives are drawn from the same one hundred or so who sit on the important boards throughout the country (O'Brien, 1976, cited in Simpson, 1984, p. 68).

By 1980 the hundred pivotal decision-making men had been reduced to "no more than a few dozen, whose influence in New Zealand business is all pervasive" (Simpson, 1984 p.71).

The first to test this sense of collusion empirically was Laurent (1971). He used a sample of one hundred and sixty companies to show how five per cent of the companies held twenty-one per cent of directorships. Collusion was further suggested by twenty-nine per cent of the interlocks being with customers, twenty-three per cent with financial institutions and sixty-four per cent of the interlocks shared between seventy-six directors who formed a "power elite" (Laurent, 1971, p.70).

Later Fogelberg (1980, pp.54-78) argued that large shareholders representing only one half of one percent of all shareholders (between 1962-1972), have "substantially increased their potential influence" and that the top forty-three companies' institutional investment grew seven-fold. Firth (1987) concluded from his study of all listed companies in 1972 and 1984 that the practice of:

...corporate interlocks...is widespread in New Zealand [and] maybe due to the desire of firms to collude with one another in various aspects of their business... the use of interlocks via common directors may provide the avenue for collusive behaviour in (at least) exporting companies. This may explain the high level of interlocking in New Zealand (Firth, 1987, p. 280).

The hypothesis that arises from these theoretical models (that is, collusive individuals versus collusive capital) is that collusion is endemic to New Zealand business and reflecting this collusion will be dense patterns of interlocks between banks and industrials.

Another bank-centred model is the *discretionary model*. Finance capital's discretion in controlling the direction of lending is the key to understanding the role of interlocks within this perspective. Mintz and Schwartz (1985) writers from this perspective, argue that it is

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the hegemonic control that banks exercise, through their discretionary use of credit, that makes them so powerful: "Bank centrality in this context reflects the dominant position of financial institutions in capital-flow decision making" (Mintz and Schwartz, 1985 p. 250). Interlocking directorates, within this centrality analysis, are not hegemonic *per se* but rather a method for managing discretion and assisting inter-firm dispute mediation thereby allowing business to approach the state as one actor (Mizruchi, 1996).

United class fractional lobbying of the state follows an emphasis developed earlier by Useem's (1984) view of an inner circle of CEO's of banks and non-financials representing top business interests. In New Zealand's case this primary lobby group is the New Zealand Business Roundtable (NZBRT). Supporting evidence for intergenerational strong business unity as a continuing phenomenon comes from Mizruchi (1982) who studied 167 large firms between 1912-1935. International comparative support also comes from Stokman et al. (1985) who show the result of interlocks across twelve countries. The hypothesis arising from this discretionary perspective is that directional clusters of directors from banks can be assumed to reflect the dominant position of financial institutions in capital-flow decision-making.

The embeddedness perspective focuses on the directors' social location. This provides an awareness of class formation, missing in many interlock analyses. Interlocks are seen as a mechanism for capitalist class reproduction (i.e. 'jobs for the boys') and class cohesion (i.e. 'don't rock the boat by not employing your own'). Although these two ideas are implicit in many interlock studies prior to the 1980s (e.g. Mizruchi, 1982; Ratcliffe, 1975; Scott, 1985) it was not until the 1980s that such social embeddedness was systematically explored.

Mizruchi (1996) suggests that embeddedness in interlocking research began with Granovetter's 1985 article, 'Economic action and social structure: The problem of embeddedness' that demands an understanding of the social embeddedness of all networks. Although he stresses the importance of social rather than just economic profit-driven motives for involvement, Granovetter does suggest that interlocks between companies could influence a wide

range of organisational behaviour, such as strategies, structures and performances.

Interlocks as a communication node or information conduit are another focus in the literature (Mizruchi, 1996; Scott and Griff, 1983; Useem, 1984). In Useem's *The Inner Circle* (1984), he sees this intercommunication as the most important aspect of the interlocks and he writes of a firm's interlocking directorates as providing the business scan they need to give it an "awareness of its environment". Following on from this perspective, Davis (1991) argues that central interlockers are the key carriers of 'social capital' (Bourdieu, 1977) within the class. The most heavily interlocked individuals are a vanguard of the corporate elite and its most likely innovators.

Scott and Griff's (1983) writing had previously made a major contribution to embeddedness theory when they argued that interlocks encapsulate practices and strategies of transformation. Transforming, coordinating and organizing board relations happen on a variety of levels; through personal relations and creating a community of interests (that can result in joint ventures, mergers, takeovers and amalgamations). However, according to Scott (1985), a primary function of interlocks is as a conduit for information flows.

What follows is the data used to test these hypotheses, that is, the results of a study of New Zealand interlocks and their relationship with the different sections of financial and productive capital.

### **The New Zealand study results**

The New Zealand data comes from a variety of sources. The interlocking directorate map (see Figure 1) is drawn from 1998 annual company reports. When the company report for 1998 was unavailable, then the 1999 report was used. The 1998 top thirty New Zealand companies were found in the journal *Management*, 'Top 200 NZ Companies' (1998, p. 76). The analysis of these data sources showed the following about New Zealand interlocking directorates.

## **New Zealand interlocking directorates**

Figure 1 indicates the prominence of three central clusters. For self-evident reasons I call these 'old capital', 'new wealth' and 'cooperative capital'. These three clusters represent directional or intensive interlocks, in that the directors interlock only from the company from which he or she acts as either a CEO or a chairperson. Showing only the measure of the directors' centrality does not ignore these directors vertical or horizontal penetration into their environment, for both depth and breadth are incorporated into the centrality equation (see the key explanation for Figure 1. Tables 5 and 6, at the end of this paper, also gives more detail concerning the number, depth and breadth of these company interlocks). What follows is primarily secondary source data looking at the three clusters identified in Figure 1 - old capital, new capital and cooperative capital.

### **Old capital**

Within the old capital cluster of five companies, two are New Zealand family dynasties – Fletcher Challenge (FCL) and Fisher and Paykel. The other three are not family dynasties, but are old established companies that include Dominion Breweries (DB Group), Progressive and Independent Newspapers. Independent News now has as its dominant shareholder, Rupert Murdoch, the scion of an Australian business dynasty and a major global media player. Typically, by 2001, globalisation – the spread of capitalism – had swallowed up smaller New Zealand family dynasties, leaving the larger volume in the hands of overseas companies such as Murdoch's Independent News. A conclusion to this picture of changing old wealth is not to write it off as past power since the swallowed up local 'victims' have regrouped and still feature as New Zealand's wealthy in the National Business Review's 2000 Rich List. For example, in 2000, the Fletcher family was worth \$50 million; Doug Myers of the wealthy and influential Myers family was worth \$545 million; and the Carters were worth \$50 million. The best example of this longevity (but not featured here because the family company is private) is the fourth generation energy-enriched Todd

family who have accumulated \$1900 million (*National Business Review*, 2000, p. 5).

Sir Colin Maiden, the director who dominates old capital's interlock cluster, is a much-honoured establishment figure (see Table 1). As may be expected from the social embeddedness hypothesis, Maiden was the recipient of an establishment education (Auckland Boys' Grammar, Auckland University and Oxford) and has a great deal of 'social capital'. This is evident in the many medals he has received and his status as the ex-Vice Chancellor of Auckland University. He typifies the type of director found in an earlier study showing thirty-four percent of the top business people surveyed had fathers who were owners or directors of large companies (Murray, 1990).

**Table 1**

Sir Colin James Maiden

**Qualifications:** ME, Doctor of Philosophy.

**History:** Born Auckland 5 May 1933. Married 1957 to Jennifer Rowe. Has four children. Educated at Auckland Grammar School; Auckland University (1951-5); Oxford University (1956-58).

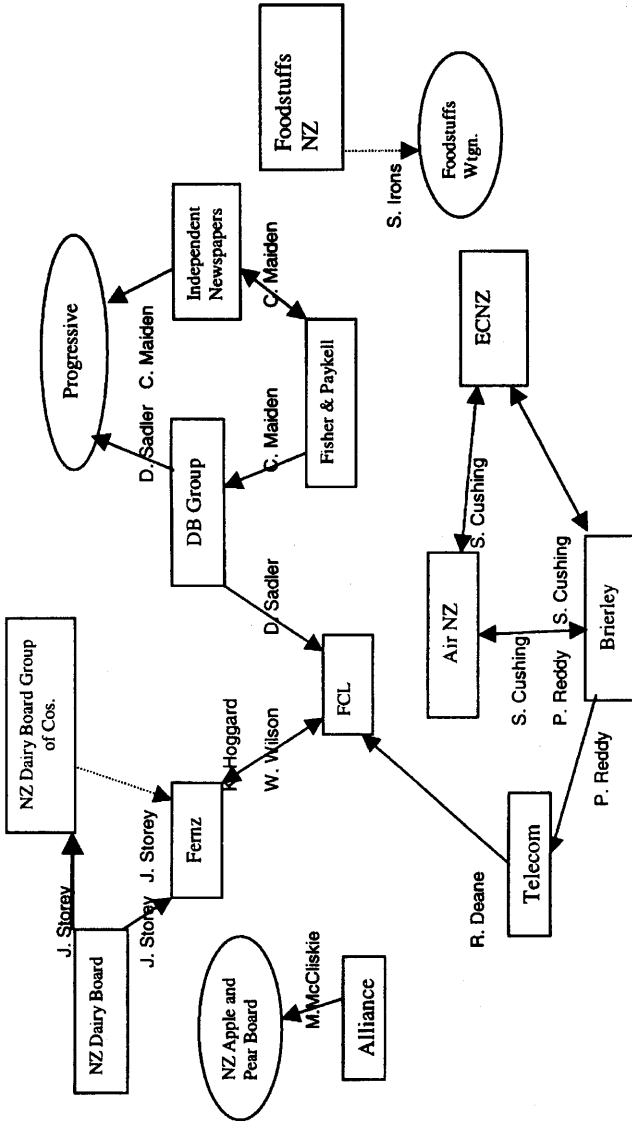
**Awards:** Rhodes Scholar (1955); Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal (1977); Medal of the University of Bonn (1983); Thomson Medal (1986); Knights' Bachelor (1992).

**Career:** Defense Research Board of Canada (1958-60); Senior Executive General Motors (1961-70); Vice Chancellor of Auckland University (1971-94); Independent News (Chairman); The NZ Refining Co; Fisher and Paykel (Chairman); The National Insurance Co. Progressive Ltd.; DB Group; Trans Power NZ Ltd.; Sedgwick (NZ) Ltd.; Tower Corp.; Assoc. Commonwealth Universities (Honorary Treasurer); NZ Vice Chancellors Committee (Chair); Spirit of Adventure Trust Board (Past President); and NZ Metric Advisory Board.

**Address:** Remuera, Auckland.

**Source:** 1996 NZ *Who's Who*, *Aotearoa*, Mt View Trust.

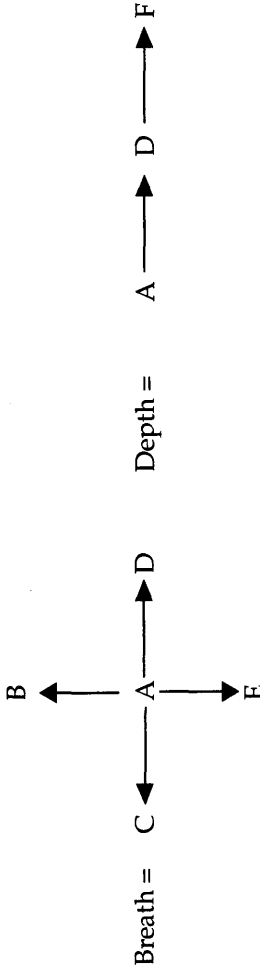
Figure 1: Interlocking directorates 1998



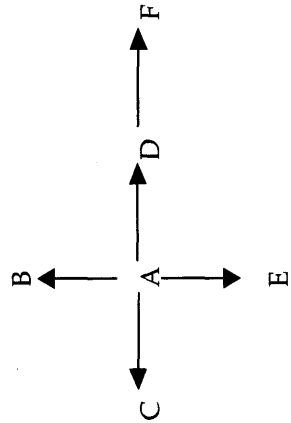


Type of interlock

- Breadth measures the immediate span of the interlocks. The following example would be 4.



- Depth equals the number of vertical interlocks in the following way. The following example would be 2.
- Centrality is a total of these two indices. The following example (a combination of the above two) would be 5.



Old capital was unswayed (at least initially) by the 1984 Lange Government and its politics of economic liberalism or Rogernomics (so called after Roger Douglas, Minister of Finance, 1984-1988.) An original New Zealand Business Round Table (NZBRT) member, from this old capital cluster, when interviewed in 1987, spoke of the NZBRT as “a lot of aggressive people who take confidence in being part of a select little group” (Murray, 1990). However, by 1992, the same man had re-assessed the NZBRT as “doing a very good job.”

### **New capital**

New capital has as its base company asset-raiders and also those raided (that is, newly privatised state enterprises). The key company in the cluster is Brierley investments (BIL) or what Eldred-Grigg (1997, p.190) calls “the bag-lady of business. At its centre was its 1961 founder Ronald Brierley the “dull young hustler” (Eldred-Grigg, 1997, p.189). By the 1970s Brierley became renowned as one of those “who had worked out new ways to manipulate the elaborate controls of the welfare state” (Eldred-Grigg, 1997, p. 191). He remains canny, as indicated by his having a personal wealth of \$123 million (*National Business Review*, 2000, p. 17) and by having largely abandoned his original company that has subsequently hit hard times. His current corporate vehicle is the Guinness Peat Group. The fall of Brierley’s reflects the cyclical carrion but ultimately precarious nature of new capital’s role.

The chairperson overseeing Brierley’s fall was Sir Roger Douglas, the former Minister of Finance in the Lange Labour government and the ignominious architect of its politically suicidal new right policies (see Table 2).

Jesson (1989) argues that Douglas’ *muse* was Roderick Deane, who features centrally in the interlocks (see Table 3). Through Douglas, Deane was able to become the architect of New Zealand’s economic liberal policy framework responsible for dismantling large parts of the welfare state. Deane learnt his economic liberalism as an alternate executive director for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), from 1974 to 1976. He was also the mentor and teacher of Roger Kerr (managing director of the NZBRT). Deane was a key class member between 1986-7 because the Labour government put

**Table 2**

Sir Roger Douglas

**Estimated Wealth:** Salary from Brierley's (1998) \$NZ306,000.

**Position:** Chairperson of Brierley Investments Ltd and Executive Director (first appointed 1990).

**Career:** Minister of Finance (1984-8) 'where he was responsible for the widespread reforms in the New Zealand Economy' in the Lange Labour Govt.; Aetna Health (Director); John Fairfax Holdings Ltd; Tasman Institute (Director); New Zealand Business Roundtable (Deputy Chair).

**Publications:** *There has got to be a Better Way* (1980).

**Source:** Brierley's Annual Report 1999.

this well-known monetarist into the position of chairperson of the State Services Commission. This role meant that he was in charge of the corporatisation (and subsequent privatisation) of many government departments. This meant taking profitable assets owned by the people, and selling them back to them (in very small measure), while delivering the bulk of these assets to other capitalists. This is the main defining achievement of globalisation and a great capitalist class victory. Deane as the head of one of these corporations called Electricorp, known as the Electricity Department from 1987 – 1992, was strategically well located. He then moved on to become the Telecom CEO, to assist with the privatisation process from 1992. These labour party-capitalist class alliances are inevitable in a capitalist system but have been previously more notable between the National Party, industrial capital and old established rural wealth.

The New Zealand Business Roundtable was of crucial importance to this fraction of capital. The NZBRT had been set up in 1976 to assist old capital deal with industrial strikes, but by the mid 1980s a new capital change of tone, leadership and direction was evident (Murray, 1990). The NZBRT's new capital dominance was resisted initially by old capital, but their disquiet was quashed in the 1990s when the State demonstrated the ability to accept new right policy, which crippled the union movement and hastened big

capital's general enrichment. By the early 1990s, the NZBRT was universally accepted as an effective lobby group, which helped create *new right* policy for the state, whilst acting to forge coherent new right capitalist class interests. There remained few blocks to their crusading, privatising zeal other than co-operative capital.

**Table 3**

Dr Roderick Sheldon Deane

**Position:** Chairperson of Telecom (1992-)

**Qualifications:** B.Com (Hons) (1964); PhD (1967); FCA (1988); FCIS (1987); FCIM (1991); FNZIM (1992).

**History:** Born April 8, 1941. Married with one child. Educated Victoria University.

**Awards:** Postgraduate scholarship (1960-4); NZ medal (1990).

**Career:** Union Steamship Co. (1960-3); Part-time Lecturer in Economics at Victoria Uni. (1964-78); Reserve Bank (1963-74; 1976-86); Alternate Executive director of the IMF (1974-1976); Chief Economist and Head of the Economic Dept. (1976-82); Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank; CEO Electricity Corp of NZ (1987-92). Company directorships – ANZ Bank; AMP (1990-2); Transpower NZ (Chair); Powermark NZ; Design Power NZ (1987-92); State Services Commission (1986-87); Electricity Supply Industry of East Asia and the Western Pacific (Vice President) (1991-92); NZ Assoc. of Economics (Past Council member); Institute of Policy Studies (Executive Council Member); New Zealand Business Roundtable.

**Publications:** *Foreign Investment in New Zealand Manufacturing* (1970); *Policy and the NZ Financial System* (1979); *Financial Policy Reform* (1986).

**Source:** New Zealand Who's Who Aotearoa 1996, p. 165.

### Co-operative capital

Co-operative capital, based in shareholding farmer-owned-companies, is both highly profitable and efficient. The Dairy Board and NZ Dairy Board Group are New Zealand's double-headed top company. Cooperative capital has been the focus of attack from economic liberals within new capital, who want to reconstitute their cooperatives as companies with shares (Kerr, 1997).

Charles Bidwell (1994), a 'new-capitalist', explained in an interview with the author what should happen to these statutory cooperative boards:

The main area still to be deregulated now in New Zealand are the producer boards, which are these monopoly outfits that the farmers have. There are several of them. The biggest one is the New Zealand Dairy Board that has a monopoly on selling New Zealand dairy products abroad. There is also the New Zealand Apple and Pear Marketing Board that has a monopoly on exporting New Zealand apples and pears. There is the Kiwi Fruit Board, which has a monopoly on kiwi fruit sales. These organisations are products of the highly regulated last thirty years or so. In my view they are not doing the farmers any good and not doing the New Zealand economy any good and it would be excellent if they can be deregulated. And the New Zealand Roundtable has been working very hard to educate the farmers and the politicians about the advantages from deregulating agricultural exports. This focus on the producer boards has been one of the NZBRT prime agenda items.

Kerr, (the CEO of the NZBRT) has written in the NZBRT's Producer Board submission to government that the producer boards should be wound up and their assets sold (Kerr, 1997). Farmers, while continuing to make huge profits from their company, sensibly reject this self interested NZBRT logic.

In sum, Figure 1 shows that in 1998 the directional interlocks between companies, through their interlocked directors, have been dominated by productive capital (that part of capital invested in sectors where surplus value is directly produced). This dominance of productive capital, measured by centrality and directional interlocks, goes back to 1966 (Murray, 1990). However, the following data on finance capital complicates this picture of three powerful, competing, dominant clusters of productive capital in New Zealand.

### **Shareholdings in the top thirty New Zealand companies**

Table 4 shows that thirty six per cent of the top thirty companies (that is, of those who list their top shareholders in their annual

company report) are owned by one single nominee company. This is a custodial depository of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (or RBNZ), called The New Zealand Central Securities Depository (or NZCSD). NZCSD is a nominee holding company for an array of finance capital primarily comprising Australian banks (see Table 4).

**Table 4**

**New Zealand Central Securities Depository (NZCSD)**

New Zealand Central Securities Depository is a wholly owned subsidiary company of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ). NZCSD provides a custodial depository service to institutional shareholders and does not have a beneficial interest in these shares. It allows electronic trading of its securities by its members. It operates as a bare trustee to facilitate the efficient clearing and settlement of securities in the New Zealand financial market under the name of the Austraclear system. The Austraclear system is a real-time settlement system which members access from their premises. Each member has a security account(s) on the system which records the securities "lodged with New Zealand Central Securities Depository Limited" (NZCSD), a custodian, fully owned by the RBNZ. NZCSD becomes the legal owner of the securities on the respective register and holds securities on behalf of the member, the beneficial owner. The inventory of securities held in the depository currently stands at around NZD80 billion. RBNZ is a member of the Asia Pacific Central Securities Depository Group (ACG). That group has 21 members from the Asia Pacific Region and was formed in 1997.

**Members include:** National Nominees, AMP Custodians, ANZ Nominees, NZGT Ltd, AIF Equity Fund, AMP Life, The National Bank NZ, Tracker Nominees, Trustee Executors and Agency Co. of NZ AC/40, Citibank Nominees, Trustee Executors and Agency Co of NZ AC/65.

**Owns:** Thirty six per cent of the top thirty companies (with listed top ten shareholders).

**Sources:** NZ top thirty Annual Reports 1999, <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/payment/austraclear/0091771-02.html>, <http://www.rbnz.govt.nz/payment/austraclear/index.html>

This huge ownership of top companies by a single nominee company dominated by Australian banks complicates the previous

interlock picture that showed those companies being controlled by productive capital. A New Zealand banker-director explained this dominance of bank power in an interview with the author (1989):

**Director:** No, in New Zealand they don't seek to have any influence – banks and insurance companies – they don't have people on boards and they don't seek to influence boards.

**GM:** Does this mean that banks don't have any control over decisions about how industrials spend their money?

**Director:** No, they deliberately keep out of it – the banks and the insurance companies – mainly because they act for different companies. Bigger companies these days have four or five banks – all the major trading banks as their bankers and they might see several insurance companies, life assurance companies, looking after their pension funds and other different things – so the banks and the insurance companies stay strictly neutral....

**GM:** Is this pattern of no influence from banks changing?

**Director:** No, it's not changing in New Zealand. You ask the AMP or National Mutual and they will say the same – they don't get involved. If they don't think a company is being run well, in an extreme case they'll tell the chairman or the managing director. But normally they'll express their displeasure by selling out the company and investing somewhere else.

**GM:** But they do control industrials' access to credit?

**Director:** Oh, yes, they control credit

**GM:** So they can make discretionary decisions about who they are going to loan money to?

**Director:** Oh yes, they can do all that. So indirectly they do have some influence on the appointment of a director – if a company wasn't doing well and the bank might say, "You have to get one or two live wire directors, we suggest so and so and if you get them we may increase your credit."

**GM:** I have read that in the US banks can develop whole sectors. Does that happen here?

**Director:** No that doesn't happen.

This interview reinforces that ownership, not discretionary manipulation of credit or board members, is the source of bank power (that is the discretionary hypothesis).

The concentration of capital found in Table 1, as represented by the thirty-six per cent ownership/control of top business found in

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the NZCSD, means that NZCSD has ultimate control of these companies merely by their “indirect control”, through what the above interviewee suggests manifests as control of the recruitment of board members and more threateningly by their ability to “sell ...the company and mov[e] elsewhere.” To go further and definitively prove the collusive hypothesis I would need to calculate the number of shares over which the bank has voting control as banks do not automatically have power of attorney to vote as they wish but must vote in proportion to the decisions they receive from the people whose votes they hold (Lum, 2000). This is complicated and has not been done here but is an area for further research.

What this data does show is that finance capital is the first tier of power in New Zealand. Rather than the identified second tier of political control indicated by productive capital through their corporate board interlocking networks or their lobby group interlocks (e.g. the NZBRT as explored further in Murray, 1990; Vowles, 1996). Finance capital’s very large nominee company stakes, created with the help of successive governments’ economic liberal strategies, has given (predominantly) Australian finance capital pivotal power in New Zealand. Bedggood argues that although economic liberalism provides the recent dynamic for further intensified accumulation at the expense of labour it is not a new phenomenon but rather a cyclical one that reflects the present dominance of finance capital (Bedggood, 2000). This realignment of capital is not unique to New Zealand and can be similarly found in Australia, Britain, Sweden and other western social democracies. Privatisation, as an example of this, while spectacularly speedy in New Zealand, has been replicated throughout all western economic liberal regimes. What is new to New Zealanders is the new right regime’s production of a class of very poor people who were formerly members of the middle class (see New Zealand Yearbook, 1992, p. 233).

## **Conclusion**

Directional interlocks in New Zealand form political information and discretion conduits, but they do not empower industrial



capitalists to make final decisions without a keen awareness of the interests of their finance capital major shareholders. This is because finance capital, through its ubiquitous ownership, ultimately controls who is on the board of industrial capital companies and whether or not it continues to invest or divest the company. However, this argument does not move from this basis to support a quasi separation of a dominant finance capital and a subordinate everything else (Jesson, 1999). Rather it says that productive and financial capital are inextricably linked because the health of one guarantees the prosperity of the other. After all "financial capital merely distributes and redistributes the surplus value created in the process of production" (Hoveman, 1998). Finance capital is therefore only a part of the circuit of production, but in the 1990s it has exercised ultimate control over the organisation of productive capital.

In reviewing the efficacy of the four models hypotheses, the first point to be made is that the hypotheses are not mutually exclusive. My argument corroborates that part of the collusive model hypothesis that posits the existence of an extremely high concentration of finance capital ownership, but not that this density necessarily leads to collusive board links that create cartels. New Zealand banks do not put their directors on the boards of companies in which they invest, because their ubiquitous ownership (through nominee companies) of these companies makes this unnecessary.

My argument also follows the social embeddedness hypothesis: that is, that those directors with centrality are politically key to the process of centralisation, since they integrate and acquaint the class fractions with their long-term interests (e.g. through their acceptance of new right thinking). The intensity measuring interlocking directorate webs (that is, Figure 1) indicates only control at the overt and intra class political level. These maps are tracteries of the fractionalisation of capitalist power. The identification of key interlocking directors (e.g. Deane and Maiden) is crucial to an understanding of the direction and the dynamics of the capitalist classes' leadership and fractional changes.

The major contribution this model makes is the identification of ownership as a key to understanding the determining power

relations of interlocking directorates. Ownership is central to the understanding of power in corporate New Zealand. Those who own the company play the ultimate tune of power.

The process described here is a manifestation of both the global and regional movements of capital. Globally what is occurring is shown through the extensive penetration of overseas finance capital ownership into the top thirty New Zealand companies. The Marxist explanation for this excessive penetration of overseas capital is that it has occurred directly as a result of the financial deregulation of the post-1984 New Zealand economy (Britton et al., 1992), which, in turn, is a response to a global crisis of capital accumulation (Roper, 1996) caused by low global economic growth (Brenner, 1998). Regionalisation has occurred as part of this process because the deregulation of the financial sector and the privatisation of state assets have opened new opportunities for Australasian direct investment. This is not new 'globalisation' but the changing cyclical face of capitalism.

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Table 5: Ownership of the available top thirty companies 1999

Company	NZCSD %	ANZ nominees %	National Nominees %	Citibank %	AMP %	Other
Air NZ	38	.85	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMFI In=28%</li> <li>• Urtica In.= 8%</li> <li>• Portfolio=7%</li> <li>• S. Tindall=29%</li> <li>• Tindall Foundation=23%</li> <li>• The Warehouse management Trustee=1.5%</li> <li>• National Mutual Ass. Of Australasia=1.4%</li> <li>• CDSandCo=48%</li> <li>• Crown Forest=27%</li> <li>• 3.442576 BC =24%</li> <li>• CIBC Mellon Trust=.33%</li> <li>• Cede andCo=.18%</li> <li>• Auele Med. 1%</li> <li>• Southern Cross1%</li> <li>• St Kentigens 1%</li> <li>• SAS Trustees=2%</li> <li>• JWG Hest and Co=3%</li> <li>• QBE Insurance=1.3%</li> <li>• Woolf Fisher=1%</li> <li>• Fisher/Agar/Norton/ Collinson/Robinson=1%</li> <li>• Asia Pacific Breweries=58%</li> <li>• Bell=25%</li> </ul>
The Ware House Group	28	-	-	-	-	
FCL	-	-	-	-	-	
Fernz	-	5	16	-	-	
Briefey	-	45	12	2	3	
Fisher and Paykel	64	-	-	-	-	
DB Group	-	3	3	4	1.47	

Telecom	57	-	.53	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chase=1.01%</li> <li>• NZ Guardian=.65%</li> <li>• News Ltd=49%</li> <li>• Guardian Ass=.6%</li> <li>• Salpean Nim=.3%</li> <li>• Tocooya=19.27</li> <li>• Green and McCahill=10.14</li> <li>• Dairy Meats Ltd=10%</li> <li>• Hendy Nominees=2%</li> <li>• Perpetual Tr.=2.5%</li> <li>• Westpac=3%</li> <li>• Chase Man.=1.6%</li> <li>• MLC=1.5%</li> </ul>
Independent News	34	-	.32	-	-	
AFFCO Holding Ltd	16.78	-	-	-	-	
Lion Nathan	76	-	-	-	-	
Total	36.76	0.6	0.71	0.11	0.29	

Source: 1999 annual company reports

Table 6: Interlocking directors in the top thirty companies, 1998

Company	No and type of interlock (i.e. breadth, depth and centrality)				Director's name and company of origin	Shares of director	Status	Direction HS/P/T/I/N	Top share-holding
	N	B	D	C					
New Zealand Dairy Board	4	2	3	4	J. Van der Heyden (NZ Group of Dairy Boards) J. Storey (NZ Grp Dairy Bds) G. Fraser (NZ Grp Dairy Bds) J. Storey (Fernz)		NE C NE C	N T N P	NZ Dairy Board shares (a farmers cooperatively owned enterprise)
New Zealand Dairy Group of Boards	4	1	2	2	J. Van der Heyden (NZ Dairy Board) J. Storey (NZ Dairy Bd) G. Fraser (NZ Dairy Bd) J. Storey (Fernz)		NE C NE C	N T N P	Parent company 43.8% Remainder registered cooperative dairy companies
Air NZ	3	2	2	3	P. Reddy (Telecom) P. Reddy (Brierley) S. Cushing (Brierley) S. Cushing (ECNZ)	8006 19090	NE E C C	N P P P	1. NZCSD=38%; 2. AMFI Inv.=28%; 3. Urtica Inv.=8%; 4. Portfolio Management=7%; 5. ANZ staff= 85%
FCL (Paper and Energy)	4	1	1	1	P. Baines (NZ Post) K. Hoggard (Fernz) D. Sadler (DB Group) W. Wilson (Fernz) R. Deane (Telecom) G. Nicol (Alliance)	23,562 12,491 115,655 53,988 2,517	NE NE NE C NE NE	N N N P N N	1. CDS and Co=48% 2. Crown Forest Industries Ltd=27% 3. 442576 BC Ltd=24% 4. CIBC Mellon Trust Co.=33% 5. Cede and Co.=18%
Fernz	3	1	1	1	K. Hoggard (FCL) J. Storey (NZ G. of D.Bd) J. Storey (NZ D Bd.) W. Wilson (FCL)		MD NE NE NE	P N N N	1. National Nominees=16%; 2. ANZ Nominees=5% 3. Auele Medical Research Fd=1% 4. Southern Cross = 1%; 5. St Kentigens Trust=1%
Brierley (1999-Camelin Group)	2	2	2	3	S. Cushing (ECNZ) S. Cushing (Air NZ) P. Reddy (Telecom) P. Burdon (NZ Post)		C C E NE	P P P N	1. ANZnominees=45% 2. National Nominees=12% 3. AMP=3% 4. Citibank=2% 5. SAS Trustees=2%
Fisher and Paykel	2				C. Maiden (Progressive) C. Maiden (DB) N. Geery	4,923.03	C C	P P	1. NZCD=64%; 2. J.W.G. Hest and C. Maiden=3% 3. QBE Insurance=1.3% 4. Woolf Fisher Trust=1% 5. Fisher/Agar/Norton/Collinsor/Robinson =1%
DB Group	2	2	1	2	D. Sadler (FCL) C. Maiden (Fisher and Paykel)		C NE	P NE	Aisa Pacific Breweries 58%; 1. Citibank 4%; 2. National Nm 3% 3. ANZ Nm 3% 4. AMP 1.47

Carter Holt Harvey1996 (International Federal Paper)					(O/S)		-	-	
Lion Nathan					(N/A)	4,269,88	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NZSD=75.9%</li> <li>• Perpetual Tr. 2.5%</li> <li>• Westpac= 3%</li> <li>• Chase =1.6%</li> <li>• MLC = 1.5%</li> </ul>
Kiwi Co- operative Dairies					- (N/A)		-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4000 NZ farmers</li> </ul>
Sheil NZ Holding Company					-(OS)		-	-	-
BP NZ Holding Co					-(O/S)		-	-	-
Mobile Oil (Exxon)					-(O/S)		-	-	-
Caltex Oil (Exxon)					-(O/S)		-	-	-
Foodstuffs Wellington					(N/A)		-	-	-
Food Stuffs South Island					(N/A)		-	-	-
AFFCO Holdings					• A. W. Young (Kiwi Managements Ltd)		• NE	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toocooya Nominees=19.27%</li> <li>• NZCSDL=17%</li> <li>• Green and McCahill= 10%</li> <li>• Dairy Meats NZ = 10%</li> <li>• Hendy Nominees=2%</li> </ul>
ECNZ									
NZ Apple and Pear					• M. McCliskie (Alliance Grp.)		• NE	N	
Alliance Group					• M. McCliskie (Apple and Pear Marketing); • G. Nicol (FCL)		• NE • E	N P	
HJ Heinz (NZ)					(O/S)			-	
The Ware House Group					(N/A)			-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NZCSD=28%</li> <li>• S. Tindall=29%</li> <li>• Tindall Foundation=23%</li> <li>• The Warehouse management Trustee=1.5%</li> <li>• National Mutual =1.4%</li> </ul>
NZ Post					• P. Baines (FCL) • P. Burdon (Brierley) • J. Nicol (NZ Dairy Bd)		• NE • NE • NE	N N N	
Foodstuffs NZ	2	1	1	1	• S. Irons (Food Stuffs Wtgn)		• C	P	
Foodstuffs Wtgn	2	0	0	0	• S. Irons (Foodstuffs NZ)		• C	P	•

Independent News Ltd	1	1	1	1	• Sir Colin Maiden (Progressive)	• C	P	1. News Ltd=49% 2. NZCSD=34%; 3. Guardian Ass.=.61%; 4. Citibank Nominees= .32%; 5. Salpean Nominees=.30%
Telecom	1	1	2	2	• Roderick Deane (FCL) • Alan Gibbs (Lion Nathan) • Patsy Reddy (Brierley)	• MD • NE  • NE	P N  N	1. NZCSD=57% 2. Bell Atlantic Holds.=25% 1. Chase=1% 2. NZ Guardian Trust=.65% 3. National Nom.=.53%
Progressive	1	0	0	0	• Sir Colin Maiden (Indep. News)	• NE	N	

**Source:**

1. *Management*, Dec, 1998, p.76
2. Individual annual company reports 1998.

**Key:**

- i. Status of director- NE = Non Executive, MD= Chief Executive Officer, C=Chairperson, E=Executive;
- ii. Directional interlock -P= primary, I= induced, t=tight, HS= high shareholding;
- iii. Type of interlock-N=total number, C=centrality, B=breadth, D=depth.
- iv. Ownership detail- NZCSD (New Zealand Central Securities Depository)= National Nominees, AMP Custodians, ANZ Nominees, NZGT Ltd, AIF Equity Fund, AMP Life, The National Bank NZ, Tracker Nominees, Trustee Executors and Agency Co. of NZ AC/40, Citibank Nominees, Trustee Executors and Agency Co of NZ AC/65.
- v. Ownership Detail (Continued) CDS and Co = a nominee group whose name a re registered securities that are held in the book based depository system maintained by various banks, investment dealers and investment custodians in Canada. (Source FCL Annual report p.129, 1999).
- vi. N/A= There are no interlocking directors within the top thirty companies.
- vii. O/S= The directors are Overseas directors in their parent companies and not interlocking within the top thirty New Zealand companies.



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## **(Over) working women: Gendering discourses of market governance in New Zealand**

*Susan Copas*

### **Abstract**

Over the past twenty years or so a number of profound social changes have occurred as successive New Zealand governments have embraced, to differing degrees, the policies and practices of a deregulated market economy. In the move from welfare to market governance qualitative shifts have occurred in what constitutes the public and private domains. A crucial aspect of this reconfiguration involves the gendered relationship between paid and unpaid work and how it is valued. This article examines the rising importance of paid work and the associated disappearance of unpaid work from the public arena. The analysis focuses on changing parameters of citizenship in hegemonic political discourse in New Zealand, detailing how individualised and economically driven policy discourses of the 'active society', underpinned by a market liberal version of human capital theory, are manifesting in changing welfare and employment policies. A gender critique of the assumptions that sustain these policies reveals how contemporary political emphasis on unidimensional economic value is both delegitimising unpaid work, and disguising the increasingly multidimensional (over)workload of contemporary women. While this article was written during a manifestly neo-liberal political climate its themes remain valid in the more overtly social democratic ethos of today.

### **Introduction**

Over the past twenty years or so most Western democracies have embraced, to differing degrees, the policies and practices of a deregulated market economy. Successive New Zealand governments have been in the vanguard of this movement (often characterised as a move from welfare to market governance), and a number of profound social changes have occurred as a result.<sup>1</sup> A

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1. See Kelsey (1995) and Boston et al. (1999) for a comprehensive overview of what has come to be called 'The New Zealand Experiment'.

crucial aspect of this societal reconfiguration involves a new political centrality of paid employment as 'the' organising principle of human life. In stark contrast to the gendered social roles of the welfare state's production-reproduction dichotomy, the shift to market governance advocates an egalitarian form of self reliance, which unwittingly constitutes paid employment as a great gender leveler. In political discourse and policy the rise of 'market citizenship' has created a space for new social identities to emerge, the foremost of which appears as a gender neutrally articulated 'worker-consumer' (Larner, 1997). There is no doubt that this movement resonates for a new generation of young women who have laid claim to rising educational and economic expectations. And against a backdrop of unprecedented social change, in an age sometimes called 'postfeminist', it is hardly surprising that the liberation calls of a previous generation now appear old fashioned, boring, and redundant (Franks, 1999).

However, to uncritically accept this scenario would be both premature and foolhardy. Beyond a seemingly 'degendered'<sup>2</sup> political rhetoric and social expectations, a growing body of literature (both academic and popular) is concerned to document and understand the persistently gendered nature of contemporary social processes and identities with regard to all forms of work, both paid and unpaid (see for example – Brodie, 1996; Else, 1996 and 1997; Franks, 1999; Greer, 1999; McKenna, 1997; O'Connor, Orloff and Shaver, 1999). An important recurring theme in much of this literature identifies changes in the way paid and unpaid work is valued as a critical factor in the development and legitimation of new social identities. This analysis takes up that theme by focusing a citizenship lens on political discourse to examine the rising importance of paid work and the associated disappearance of unpaid work from the public arena in New Zealand. In doing so I track the rising importance and value of the 'active' citizen and the concomitant disappearance of the 'social' citizen in welfare and employment policy and discourse.

My focus on discourse, and the production of meaning through language, is integral to the arguments about changing conceptions

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2. This is Anna Yeatman's term, cited in Brodie (1996, p. 137).

of identity and value that I am making. As Richardson (1998, 349) maintains, “[l]anguage is how social organisation and power are defined and contested and the place where our sense of selves, our subjectivity, is constructed. Understanding language as competing discourses, competing ways of giving meaning and of organising the world, makes language a site of exploration [and] struggle.” A gender analysis of how governmental practices are changing the meaning of paid and unpaid work provides rich evidence of these processes. I focus on the constitutive force and historical variability of language as it manifests in very different conceptions of what and who is to be governed in the discursive movement from welfare to market governance. My concern with how forms of governance are changing also has its theoretical origins in Foucault’s work on governmentality. This developing perspective within the arts and humanities begins from the premise that:

Government is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes (Dean, 1999, p. 11).

I take a focus on discourse in this domain to investigate how interconnecting discursive processes frame various political initiatives and produce changing versions of meaning about paid and unpaid work in some aspects of welfare and employment policy.

My discussion begins by comparing constructions of the ‘citizen-mother’ in welfare state discourses with the neo-liberal policy emphasis on the ‘active citizen-worker’. I then consider the assumptions that drive contemporary versions of citizenship through an analysis of the economically premised discourses of the ‘active society’ and human capital theory. I detail how these ideas – emptied of any reference to gender or gendered processes – are manifesting in New Zealand. In doing so I widen the analytical lens and bring gender ‘back into the picture’. A gender critique shows how contemporary policy discourses, with their narrow economic

emphasis on paid work, contribute to the discursive deligitimation and disappearance of unpaid work, thereby disguising the multidimensional (over)workload of women.

### **Background and context: Weaving a tapestry of history and theory**

The welfare state in New Zealand – as elsewhere – was built on the construct ‘society’ and a particular understanding of the social. During the 1930s the Labour government laid the liberal foundations of state welfarism on top of a number of historically gendered discourses. At this time, “[p]rotectionism directed at stability in employment for male ‘breadwinners’ was a key ingredient of New Zealand social policy, protecting the [s]tate in turn from claims on it for income support” (Du Plessis, 1993, p. 211). This policy focus was part of traditional Keynesian, highly interventionist economic thinking, which rose out of an interpretation of the 1930s Depression and infused the development of welfarism (Easton, 1997, p. 35). Under this rubric “the social was an order of collective being and collective responsibilities and obligations” (Rose, 1996, p 333). This notion included common assumptions of gendered interdependence around paid (productive) and unpaid (reproductive) work. Welfare legislation, appositely called ‘social security’ in this country, created a social and economic framework based on liberal notions of equality that pooled national resources to collectively underpin politically constructed individual needs. The intention was “to achieve a ‘pervasive’ welfare that would symbolise citizenship and unite all citizens” (McClure, 1998, p. 61). In reality these intentions served neither to unite all citizens nor to articulate equal individual need. Instead, they constituted clearly defined gendered identities with differential responsibilities and obligations for men and women.

The socially recognised ‘model’<sup>3</sup> citizen was the male ‘breadwinner’ in paid work, and in this role legislative mechanisms such as the ‘family wage’ guaranteed men income support regardless of their domestic or life situations. Notably, women’s paid work was not politically sanctioned. Whether single or married they

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3. This is Jane Jensen’s (1999) phrasing.

did not have equal opportunity of access to paid work. Female wage rates were set at considerably less than men's, based on 'normative' gendered assumptions that women were either single without dependents, or married and therefore attached to a 'breadwinning' male (Du Plessis, 1993). In this environment both the extent of paid work undertaken by women and the financial contributions they made to the household were largely unrecognised in any official sense.

In contrast, the unpaid work of mothering and domesticity was publicly recognised. The flip side of policies like the 'family wage' and family benefit<sup>4</sup> was the assumption and recognition of women's primary domestic role. As a consequence, women were granted auxiliary citizenship status within narrow parameters, as wives and mothers (Molloy, 1992). According to the political discourse of welfare governance the archetypal 'citizen-mother' was morally applauded and to some extent legislatively protected in her unpaid work bearing and raising the next generation. Her quintessential role was seen as complementary but not equal to that of the male 'breadwinner' on whom she was dependent for both social and economic security. This production-reproduction dichotomy embedded the social identities of the 'male breadwinner' and the 'citizen-mother' and created a double bind for women. A gendered 'normality' and moral value for the unpaid domestic role was established at the expense of any public recognition of, or value for, women's paid work.

A great many changes, both social and economic, occurred from the establishment and initial development of state welfarism in this country in the 1930s and 1940s to the early 1980s. Yet throughout this period, government policy discourses continued to articulate a gendered division and consequent differential value of paid and unpaid work as the 'norm': "Up to the mid 1980s....[e]mployment and wages policy was designed to support breadwinning men's ability to maintain dependent wives and children. Taxation, benefit and industrial development policy similarly reflected those concerns" (Saville-Smith et al., 1994, p. 76).

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4. This universal benefit was usually paid directly to the mother (Koopman-Boyden and Scott, 1984, p. 129).

The somewhat controversial introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) in the 1970s can also be seen in this light. The DPB provided support for women to undertake mothering and unpaid domestic work independent of a male breadwinner (although the benefit was available to men as well as women, the vast majority of recipients were and still are female). Similarly governmental discourses surrounding this benefit were and still are – often emotively – gendered female (Goodger, 1997; Koopman-Boyden and Scott, 1984). As such, the implementation of the DPB can be seen as a development in auxiliary citizenship rights. The policy recognised changing marital circumstances, yet framed this recognition through historical maternal discourses, thereby allowing dependency on a male breadwinner to be legitimately transferred to dependency on state welfarism.

A comparison with the governmental discourses of the 1990s is very revealing. During that decade, the language of economics and the market dominated government policy, expounding the importance of self-reliance, individual freedom and ‘choice’, more often than not construed as consumer choice rather than citizen choice (Bauman, 1998; Lerner, 1997a). In this framework, a focus on degendered individualism supersedes prior conceptions of a gendered social collectivity. An economic emphasis in policy and practice now constructs individuals as “rational utility maximising” (Goldfinch, 1997, p. 65) units who are legislatively encouraged to be self-supporting and provide for their own welfare needs through paid work.

The concepts of the male ‘breadwinner’ and the ‘family wage’ have disappeared. Social and labour market changes, including second wave feminism’s challenges to motherhood as the primary occupation for woman, and growing levels of male unemployment have played a part in this process, as has the withdrawal of aspects of welfare governance which to a large extent socially supported unpaid motherwork. In the policy push for more self-sufficiency, state supported mothering is no longer seen as having either legitimacy or moral value. Indeed, in some quarters “the degree of community responsibility for raising children” (New Zealand Treasury, 1987, p. 57) has been questioned. The responsibility for bearing and rearing a new generation (ironically, on which the

market is completely dependent) is now seen as a matter of individualism and private choice.

In many respects these changes have contributed positively to a more general acceptance of paid work as a right for women. Unfortunately this has been at the expense of public recognition for unpaid work, which has become a casualty of these changes in orientation. Moreover, the gendered nature of unpaid work appears less susceptible to change. Numerous studies continue to show that despite their increasing participation in paid work, women still take primary responsibility for and perform the bulk of unpaid caring work in families and in society more generally (Baxter and Western, 1998; Bittman and Pixley, 1997; Dempsey, 1997; Williams, 2000). These processes and patterns are also confirmed by New Zealand research (Copas, 1999; Davey, 1998; Else, 1996). This (over)workload is not publicly recognised in governmental discourse. Any notion of unpaid work, formally articulated by 'citizen-motherhood' (albeit in gender discriminatory ways), has either disappeared, or transmogrified into a private, individual 'lifestyle choice'. How has this change occurred? Part of the answer to this question requires a critical examination of the assumptions that drive contemporary policy processes. When these seemingly gender neutral assumptions and values are juxtaposed with the stubbornly consistent processes and patterns of unpaid work, unsurprisingly (given the historical precedents) a profoundly narrow and covertly gendered version of what constitutes 'work' in market governance and how it is valued is revealed.

### **(De)constructing work and value in contemporary market governance**

Two fundamental changes in policy orientation have occurred in the move from welfare to market governance. These are: (i) an overarching concern with economic rationalism – that is, with the primacy of 'bottom line' economics in many facets of policy development; and (ii) a concurrent rise in the discursive construction of self-reliant individualism. These themes motivate an influential design for social policy proposed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) euphemistically called the



'active society'. Widely characterised as an adaptive movement away from passive social benefits – the increasingly expensive approach of welfare governance – the idea of the 'active society' has been enthusiastically taken up by national policy makers in many Western democracies (Dean 1995; Oliver, 1991; Walters, 1997). This new approach to governance, "holds that the best way for governments and other agencies to address social problems is through the promotion of 'activity'. 'Paid employment in the market' is held to be the principle form of such activity" (Walters, 1997, p. 224).

In this framework, a narrow economic use of the word 'active' is coupled with individualised notions of the primacy of paid work. To paraphrase William Walters, "the active society seeks to make us all 'paid' workers". In doing so this policy reformulation seeks to move notions of welfare away from the arena of collective social governance towards individual economic responsibility. The focus on individual economic self-reliance through paid work has obvious ramifications for unpaid work – it all but disappears from the political/policy arena.

In New Zealand social policy, the use of words like 'welfare' and 'benefit' in a policy document which exhorted citizens to move from 'Welfare to Well-Being'<sup>5</sup> starkly illustrates a number of the premises on which ideas about the active society are based. In *The Department of Social Welfare's 1996 Post-Election Briefing Paper* (p.7), governmental discourse stigmatised and individualised the terms 'benefit' and 'welfare' which according to this document, [have] "become devalued, having acquired negative connotations associated with bureaucratically provided assistance in response to lack of income or family dysfunction.....thus....carry[ing] suggestions of dependency and inadequacy." An historical comparison throws changing meanings into sharp relief, for it was only sixty years ago that the term 'benefit' was chosen for new state welfare schemes, because, "it lent dignity to state assistance...[as it]... belonged to friendly societies and company schemes and was linked with *respectability, work and worthiness*. [A] renewed sense of entitlement and lack of

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5. This call was explicitly made in the text of the Department of Social Welfare's Post Election Briefing Paper (1996, p. 61).

shame was also conveyed in the government's talk of hazard and the inherently chancy nature of life..." (McClure, 1998, p. 83, emphasis added).

Neo-liberal discourse articulates very little 'dignity in state assistance'. Benefit cuts and tighter targeting are, "designed to encourage self-reliance by providing people with sufficient motivation to move from state dependence to independence" (Shipley, 1991, p. 4). In this version of meaning, 'respectability and worthiness' only come via the individual uptake of paid work. Lacking a wider social dimension, this discourse with its focus on personal motivation also pathologises all those not in paid work. In a neo-liberal policy framework, those individuals who fail to counter the 'inherently chancy nature of life' are characterised as 'inadequate, dysfunctional and welfare dependent'.

These changing values and meanings – in terms of who is to be governed and how they are to be governed – provided the impetus for the on-going merging and renaming of several Government Departments and agencies. An important aspect of this maneuvering was the discounting of a wider context of 'activity' and the disappearance of alternate meanings. *The Department of Social Welfare* was firstly renamed as *Income Support*. This move constituted a shift away from the social (where both collective responsibility, and a wider conception of what constitutes welfare were assumed by welfare governance) to the economic. *Income Support* discursively signals a diminished role for government – that of temporary economic support only. In moving away from a gendered construction of welfare this new terminology also "signals a departure from the idea of the worker/nonworker division which was at the heart of the welfare society" (Walters, 1997. p. 224). (Note how value judgments and assumptions about 'what counts' as legitimate work are again in evidence here, this time in the discourse of critical social science. Contradicting William Walters' definition, women engaged in the unpaid work of domesticity and childcare arguably formed the vast majority of the welfare society's so called 'nonworkers'.)

Change intensified with the 1998 merging of *Income Support* with the *New Zealand Employment Service*. The amalgamation created a new self-styled 'super agency' named *Work and Income New Zealand*

(WINZ). This title became firmly situated in discourses of paid work. Overt reference to any form of state support was eliminated in the renaming, as was any reference to welfare. However, this restructuring cannot be seen as a simple trajectory, for it involves a redefinition, a withdrawal and extension of forms of governance in overlapping and complex ways across a now increasingly permeable public and private divide. Although heavily underscored by economic factors, the movement took a particular moral tack: "The Government's social and economic objective is to provide an environment where New Zealand families are able to take control of their own lives, freed from the dependence on state welfare that currently traps so many of our people" (Jenny Shipley, the then Minister of Social Welfare, 1991, p. 1).

On the one hand, this discourse called for an expanded welfare role for the family thereby reducing state responsibility. On the other hand, the move toward the self-sufficient family through an emphasis on paid work as a panacea for many welfare concerns has seen "the subjection of households to greater state surveillance, regulation and intervention" (Clarke and Newman, 1997, p. 28). The National Government's 1998 policy requirement for spouses of those receiving invalid's benefits to be assessed as to their '[paid] work readiness' provides a graphic example of this extension of governance into the private realm. Under the provisions of the *Social Security (Work Test) Amendment Act 1998*, the spouses of those receiving an invalid's benefit were required to be available for paid work if their youngest child was fourteen or older. As a result staff from *Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ)* were required to check with the doctors of invalid beneficiaries to determine the nature and severity of their medical conditions. This was done to ascertain the level of care required and to assess its impact on the paid work readiness of spouses.<sup>6</sup> In this double movement, the difficult and time consuming unpaid work of caring for an invalid, together with other family responsibilities, was neither recognised nor valued. Indeed it was augmented by further state intervention and regulation of 'private' life.

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6. WINZ spokesperson interviewed on National Radio, Morning Report (13 January 1999).

These forms of governance create an environment where the individual uptake of paid work becomes highly valued and considered normative. Unsurprisingly, other discourses and practices are implicitly measured against this standard. Given the importance of economic values in this policy discourse, it is almost inevitable that other considerations will assume lesser value. As I have noted, much governmental opprobrium was aimed at the beneficiary population, but the values espoused extended well beyond this group. At a time of low economic growth and insecure employment, political discourse, often devoid of these wider issues, reformulated what it meant to be a New Zealand citizen. This new version of meaning holds paid employment as the touchstone of contributory citizenship and maintains "we are citizens only if we earn" (Shklar cited in Narayan, 1997, p. 50).

### **Paid employment: 'The' legitimate citizenship activity**

New meanings about contributory citizenship have also influenced employment policy and practice. In the mid-1980s, the fourth Labour Government implemented a major change in employment assistance policy whereby, "[a]ctive labour market policy... move[d] away from the wage subsidy programs that had formed the main plank of [employment assistance] policy for more than a decade" (Higgins, 1997, p. 141 emphasis added). This process hastened the demise of generally award-rate wage subsidies, which were underpinned by the welfare state's "social approach to governance with its notion of 'involuntary' unemployment – a problem endemic to the functioning of the macroeconomy, and hence a problem that had to be solved at a national level" (Walters, 1996, p. 208). In its place were employment policies that moved the focus from macroeconomic and social factors to the individual unemployed.

A major emphasis was placed on job training and 'upskilling' the unemployed. At the same time, moral discourses began to stress the responsibility of all citizens to undertake or look for paid work (Higgins, 1999). This change in focus and direction from collective social entitlement to individual accountability also broadened the policy constituency beyond the previously narrowly defined 'unemployed' to include all those in non-paid work. It was an

important precondition for the introduction of the Community Wage instituted through the *Social Security (Work Test) Amendment Act* in 1998. The Community Wage incorporated the Unemployment, Training and Sickness Benefits into one 'active' income support measure. This legislation reclassified all beneficiaries as 'job seekers' – a renaming that was much more than an exercise in semantics. The assumptions and values on which this reclassification was based enabled a Minister of Employment to disallow the existence of any other form of work or value when he claimed "we intend to get our job seekers and other groups of beneficiaries active, to facilitate greater participation in paid work" (McCardle, quoted in Hansard, 1998).

All those in receipt of welfare benefits (with very few exceptions) were now required to sign a Job Seeker Contract and "search for paid work and take part in suitable activities like training or community work" (*Income Support*, 1998). This practice, premised on two key components of the active society, economic self-reliance and individual responsibility (via the contractual obligations of the 'job seeker'), reinforced the notion of contributory citizenship.

The Community Wage, like other work-tested benefits, was based on the concept of reciprocal obligations. Payment of the Community Wage is made in return for beneficiaries making themselves available for suitable community work, training or other organised activities...[This] involves work of benefit to the community or the environment. This activity type will be used where it is thought by the department that this is the best option to assist beneficiaries into work, by helping develop their self-esteem, motivation and work discipline (*Social Security (Work Test) Amendment Bill*, 1998, p. ii).

Also evident in this policy discourse are references to the significance of individual 'self-esteem, motivation and work discipline'. These calls are based on assumptions of 'human potential' and 'human capital' – an important theoretical foundation for the active society:

This emphasis upon individuals as active agents in their own economic governance through the capitalisation of their own existence is paralleled in a whole new set of vocabularies and devices for managing individuals within the workplace in terms of the

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enhancement of their own skills, capacities and entrepreneurship (Rose, 1996, p. 339).

The explicit governmental concern with the “capitalisation of one’s existence” that Nikolas Rose refers to relates specifically to paid work, and generally occurs in discourses of education and employment (Marginson, 1997). However, the values that underpin ideas of human capital extend well beyond these realms. Pervasive use of these narrow economically individualising ideas is contributing to a corresponding lack of value for unpaid work, and indeed to its disappearance in discourses of market governance.

### **Human capital theory: An instrumental ‘version’ of humanity**

The predominant and developing emphasis on self-enhancement, education and training in New Zealand’s social and employment policies (aspects of which were described above), is driven by economic theories of human capital. In a wide-ranging, international analysis of changing social policy discourses, William Walters (1997, p. 228) presents a strong case for ‘training’ as the “one particular governmental practice on which the possibility of an active society seems to be staked.” Policy implementation in this country certainly appears to be mirroring this international trend (Higgins, 1997 and 1999). Yet, an analysis of the theoretical subtext supporting this particular focus reveals striking gender blindness.

Unlike the comparatively recent policy ‘turn’ to constructions of an active society, theories of human capital, working within the framework of economic rationalism, have been developed in various ways over the past thirty years or so (Becker, [1964] 1996). From the 1960s under the auspices of welfare governance, the theory provided a social welfare rationale for the widespread expansion of state investment in education as a ‘public good.’ In line with the hegemonic collectivist notions of the time, discourse and policy were based on the untested but widely held belief that: “education should be regarded as an investment which yields direct and significant economic benefits through increasing the skill of the population.... It is both beneficial and realistic to regard education as a form of

national investment in human capital" (Marginson, 1997, p. 106).

This social discourse, like others of its genre, has been substantially modified in the shift to market governance. An updated 'market liberal' version of human capital theory now seeks to reconfigure education from national investment as social welfare and 'public good', to individualised investment in the private self (Marginson, 1997, p. 111).

The significance of these assumptions in changing discourses of governance is not to be underestimated, for as William Walters (1996, p. 213) argues, a human capital perspective, "indicates more than a change in the way populations and economies are to be governed. It implies a transformation in the way individuals are to govern themselves. They should manage their own lives in the manner of enterprises". More than this however, the emphasis in this discourse on enterprise and economic value creates an almost completely instrumental approach to the management of human life, albeit often couched in the more intrinsically focused psychological language of self-management and improvement. While advocating a lifelong individual investment in education and training, the discourse sets up attaining and maintaining paid work as the specific outcome for reconfigured 'active' citizens. New Zealand policy discourse is rich with examples of this approach. For instance, a Work and Income New Zealand publication for newly renamed 'job seekers' was subtitled *Your Life, Your Future, Your Magazine*. Inside, it claimed that WINZ "works to support individual growth in each of their customers so they can set goals towards training, work and independence and be the very best they can be" (Domino, 1998, p. 10). Strongly evidenced in this discourse, paradoxically through a personalised language of individual potential and actualisation, is, "the extent to which personal life is governed and is itself a terrain of government...the extent to which the self is (like inequality, poverty and racism) *not personal, but the product of power relations*, the outcome of strategies and technologies developed to create everything from autonomy to participatory democratic citizenship" (Cruikshank, 1996, p. 248, emphasis added). Again I emphasise, it is a particular version of participatory democratic citizenship motivated by economic self-sufficiency that is being constructed here.

The flip side of this policy push towards individual economic activity and responsibility is (as noted above) the articulation of discourses of pathology. Those receiving income support payments are already subjected to stigmatised concepts like 'dysfunctional families' and 'welfare dependency'. In policy discourse these terms are commonly used as an expression of individual moral and/or psychological deficits (Peters, 1997). Human capital theory, with its emphasis on individual enterprise and responsibility, translates this tendency to the entire population. Comments in a widely disseminated social policy manifesto from the OECD sum up a number of these movements comprehensively:

The shift in social policy priorities consists not only of an emphasis on active as opposed to passive policies for those needing income support. The ultimate guarantee of self-sufficiency through earnings is through preventive measures: educational achievement, recurrent education, training and retraining throughout active life, and the development of a work ethic and skills sufficient to meet competitive requirements in the labour market. A significant component of this orientation is an emphasis on the encouragement of human potential as an end in itself, as well as a contribution to market efficiency – through *prevention, rehabilitation and treatment* (OECD, 1994, p. 16, emphasis added).

In this discourse there is no mention of unpaid work, which arguably facilitates "the encouragement of human potential as an end in itself." This omission in blanket policy orientations based on narrowly defined concepts of 'activity' precludes any account of the gendered processes and practices of human reproduction, development and maintenance that underpin the societies to which the policies are directed. As importantly, in paying little cognisance of the unpaid, gendered work of reproduction and beyond, this economically focused, myopic policy lens forecloses any holistic conception of intrinsic human value, because it fails to recognise that,

...the process of reproduction and maintenance of human resources is different from the production of any other kind of resource. It does not respond to economic signals in the same way...if the demand



for labour falls, if unemployment rises and wages fall, mothers do not 'scrap' their children and leave them to rot untended. Human resources have an intrinsic, not merely instrumental value (Elson, cited in Kabeer and Humphrey, 1991, p. 89).

A broader conception of human work and value has become a casualty of changing conceptions of citizenship in discourses of market governance. Social and economic policies premised on ideas about the active society and human capital are qualitatively changing the basis of the citizenship relationship between individuals and the state. This process – from the primacy of the social in collective discourses of welfare governance to the ascendancy of the individual in market governance – is marked by the discursive disappearance of gender. However, this nominal gender democracy is an illusion, and the reinstatement of gender variables provides a particularly revealing and disturbing view of the chimera.

### **Engendering 'active' citizenship**

In enterprise culture [the active society], one's choices must always be self-enhancing, the catch being that the self and its enhancement will be recognised only if it takes specific forms (Strathern, 1992, p. 171).

Economic independence through paid work appears to be the specific form of self-enhancement recognised in contemporary discourses of market governance. In New Zealand policy and discourse degendered active citizens are now required to take care of their own. However, this value-laden privileging of paid work is tacitly built on a peculiar gender blindness that is contributing to both the disappearance and devaluation of unpaid work: "The extent of mothers' self sacrifices and their ability to cope with everything – from breastfeeding a 2-pound newborn to raising a child who is disabled or has a difficult temperament – is astonishing. Just as astonishing is society's inability or unwillingness to recognise the true difficulty of all these endeavors" (Coll, Surrey and Weingarten, 1998, p. xix). However, it is really not so astonishing that these

endeavours go unrecognised in an environment that places little public value on either the nature or scope of the work involved.

Under market governance, unpaid work has all but disappeared from public view into a private (and newly privatised) familial domain – into a depoliticised arena Nancy Fraser (1989, p. 168) has characterised as a “zone of discursive privacy”: “Domestic institutions depoliticise certain matters by personalising and/or familiarising them; they cast these as private-domestic or personal-familial matters in contradistinction to public, political matters.” There are numerous examples of this movement in New Zealand social policy. For example, in the words of Ruth Richardson, Minister of Finance in the Fourth National Government: “[I]n general, those individuals and families with reasonable means should attend to their own needs. As a broad principle, the top third of all income earners can be expected to meet the cost of their social services” (cited in Peters, 1997, p. 6). Of course, the articulation of ‘social services’ in this quotation is somewhat of a misnomer. In individualising these ‘services’ and shifting them into the private domain of the family, government policy achieves two things. Firstly, the economic cost of the services moves from collective public to private individual and family provision. And secondly, the cost of this work beyond a monetary component (i.e. the substantial amount of unpaid work required to provide these services), inequitably borne by women (Bittman, 1998; Else, 1997), disappears from public view. In line with an orientation to the market, the private gendered family now supplements, and in some instances replaces, formerly publicly provided services, and ironically many women are now performing unpaid (generally unacknowledged) ‘value-added’ services. Commenting on education reforms, Jane Kenway and Debbie Epstein (1996, p.305) observed, “that as state services are withdrawn women’s unpaid labour increases. Indeed mothers now contribute in many ways to the ‘market value’ of their children’s schools.” Despite this, it is difficult to find any recognition or public value for unpaid work in political discourse.

Unpaid work has not disappeared altogether however. It is still possible to find governmental discourses that argue its value. Specifically, there remains a limited focus on human reproduction presented as a consistent ‘public good’ (Therborn, 1987, p. 244).

However, nowadays this argument tends to surface in the pervasive moralising of 'family values' (Stacey, 1996). Unfortunately, despite contemporary political rhetoric expounding the moral virtues of 'family values', there is little tangible recognition that parents (and mothers in particular) both provide and sustain the process of human reproduction and development. It is increasingly hard to see how this 'public good' is rendered salient in processes of market governance, which seek to further privatise and individualise unpaid work thereby denying the social and interdependent nature of human life.

Furthermore, discourses of the active society and human capital that insist all citizens undertake paid work occur in a context where most places of paid work "presume that workers emerge from a cupboard neatly pressed and ready to contribute their labour" (Cox, 1994, pp. 127-8). In this respect, contemporary moves to market governance work alongside well-established capitalist discourses to further entrench the gender differentiated nature and value of paid and unpaid work:

Capitalism has instilled us with values which force us to make paid work take priority over caring for our young; this priority is reinforced through keeping children invisible in the workplace.....Children threaten the values of the workplace; they stand as a group which needs constant regulation – provided by *mothers...* – toward capitalist values (Rossiter, 1988, p. 280, emphasis added).

While active citizenship is premised on paid work, it seems 'family values' do not extend into this realm. The proportion of women engaged in paid work has increased dramatically during the past few decades, yet predominant labour market practices and values have changed very little (Franks, 1999). Nor have widespread and concerted attempts at 'family friendly' workplace policies achieved a great deal (Buxton, 1998; England, 1996; Fredriksen-Goldsen and Scharlach, 2001; Lewis and Lewis, 1996; Tudhope, 1994) as the intractable, gendered nature of paid work practices and values remains: "The dirty little secret is this: For all its politically correct talk, your company doesn't much like your kids" (Fortune

Magazine, cited in Callister, 1998, p. 9). My argument is that this 'dirty little secret' can be extended to the political/policy domain where the implicit connotations become even grubbier. On a cost-benefit basis 'your country doesn't much like your kids'? Of course, in this arena political rhetoric continues to expound families as "the backbone of our society".<sup>7</sup> Yet, at both a policy and an institutional level (which encompasses the way many organisations structure paid workplace practices), many aspects of market governance take little or no social responsibility for human reproduction and the unpaid work required to support it (Acker, 1998). Instead, this arena is left primarily to individual women to maintain, whereupon the juggling required to manage and sustain both paid and unpaid work arguably makes a gendered mockery of the term 'active citizen'.

## Conclusion

In New Zealand political discourse and practice, the journey from 'citizen-mother' to 'citizen-worker' has occurred against a backdrop of unprecedented social and economic change. Yet despite this, some glaring inconsistencies remain. In particular, the narrow concept of the 'waged worker as model citizen' continues to endure. In the discourses and policies of welfare governance this 'model citizen' was explicitly gendered male. This is no longer the case. In the move to market governance the 'model citizen' has been redefined by the discursive disappearance of gender. There is no doubt that today's 'active citizen' is first and foremost a paid worker. However, there is also no doubt that this overt privileging of paid work, along with the reprivatisation and subsequent devaluing of unpaid work, has a politically unacknowledged gendered subtext. The arguments I have presented above show that policy discourses of market governance – despite their nominal gender neutrality – mask the social interdependency of paid and unpaid work, and the gendered processes that sustain it.

The direction these discourses may take under the more centre-left orientation of the current Labour Government remains to be

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7. Roger Sowry, Minister of Social Welfare, made this statement, ironically, at a 'Business Breakfast at the Beehive', (quoted in Allwood, 1998, p. 22).

seen – debates over the funding and extent of paid parental leave may prove to be a case in point. However, the present Labour administration's alignment with 'third way' politics continues to embrace a number of market liberal discourses including an on-going emphasis on individualism and economic self-reliance that tends to foreclose any recognition of social interdependency, which in all its many guises seems to be receding further from the public arena.

Moreover, this limited framework that privileges privatised human worth on a cost-benefit basis loses sight of the social dimension of what it is to be fully human: "The idea that true individuality is necessarily social is one of the oldest propositions in philosophy. We find ourselves through what we do and through the long struggle of living with and for others" (Handy, 1997, p. 86). Of course, the work involved in 'living with and for others' carries on unabated, with women continuing to shoulder the majority share. And while notions of so called 'active' contributory citizenship continue to circulate recognising only narrow parameters of economic individualism, the many dimensions of unpaid work undertaken by the present generation of (over)working women will continue to be politically overlooked.

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## Writing and reading the everyday spaces of home

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### **Abstract**

In this paper I demonstrate how reading fiction for certain discourses is both interesting and useful in relation to historical and empirically generated material. Sociologists, I think, have forgone the study of everyday life that is as surely grounded in space and place as it is in social interaction. Much of this everyday life takes place in what we call the home. Drawing attention to the common distinctions between house and home, I suggest that home as an ideal concept is mapped onto the physical structure of the house in culturally determined ways which impact upon sexed and gendered experiences. Using women's fiction and excerpts from interview transcripts I illuminate and critique some of the contradictory meanings and historically placed discourses of home and socio-spatial interaction.

### **Introduction**

This paper arises out of my doctoral project, part of which explores how, as a sociologist, I might learn from reading fiction. While we may think of reading fiction as a leisure activity dissociated from the work of 'doing' sociology, when reading for certain kinds of content we can discover a rich source of material related to everyday life within particular historical-social contexts. Of fiction McRae (1995, p. 188) claims:

One of the pleasures and uses of fiction is the encouragement it can give to deeper reflection on life. Such reflection may amuse, it may disturb, it may enlarge our view of life, even cause us to change our behaviour. But fictional literature has a special impact, even power, when it forces deliberation not only on the nature of humanity but also how we might be more humane.

It seems to me that this statement also admirably describes why we do sociology. In trying to write about socio-spatial interaction

between women and the house and/or home I had to find material related to the historical and contemporary experiences of the (twenty) women interviewed for my project. As a sociologist I initially found it difficult reading both fiction and transcripts for 'spatial' content, although on an intuitive level we all have some shared understandings and experiences of housing and home. We connect with Soja's (1985, p. 62) claim that: "To be alive is to participate in the social production of space, to shape and be shaped by a constantly evolving spatiality which constitutes and concretises social action and relationships."

Housing (in New Zealand) as material environment is socially constructed and experienced, not only as a physical place but also as home. 'Home', I argue, exists as an ideal concept which, in the New Zealand context of high rates of ownership, is mapped onto the house, fusing the two as a special kind of place in which cultural beliefs about men and women's interaction behaviours and activities are embedded (Lavin and Agatstein, 1984; Matrix, 1985; Pred, 1983; Rakoff, 1977; Rose, 1993). Darke (1994, p. 11) writes that: [T]here is a distinctive relationship between women and their homes; that women value their homes in a particular way ... but to substantiate these ideas is a long project which does not lend itself to conventional research methods.

Given the need to move beyond conventional research methods, the aim of this paper is to illustrate how the study of fiction contributes to understanding the everyday life experiences of women within the house/home. First, I wish to explore the concepts of house and home and how these are related to sexuality and gender. Second, I will use excerpts from the writing of Janet Frame (1957; 1988); Gray (1979) and Kidman (1979) in combination with Ferguson's (1994) book on housing policy to interrogate women's experiences of post-war suburban development. Lastly, I will weave contemporary fiction (Fletcher, 1993; Koea, 1992; Duckworth, 1994; Kidman, 1997) with interview material, demonstrating resonances between the two.

## House and home

Women interviewed tended to see the house as a physical structure, an empty shell. Home, by contrast, referred to the quality of living within the house. In one sense the house, then, exists without meaningful social interaction, but as Rakoff (1977) and Wigley (1992) state, a house *is* a meaningful cultural object. The development of suburban housing and the design of internal spaces rather than representing certain kinds of social interaction and/or activities of inhabitants, is produced with those already in mind. For example, the separation of the house and home from places of work has resulted in conceptions of home as haven (Saunders, 1989), and as a consequence, Thoits (1988) argues, anger control (by women) became crucial for harmonious marriage and family life.

Wigley (1992, p. 351), critiquing the role of architecture, argues that: "[T]he house is never a self-sufficient spatial device [but] requires a multiplicity of systems which are not just added to a physical form." In relation to sexuality he claims that: "Place is not simply a mechanism for controlling sexuality. Rather it is the control of sexuality by systems of representation that produces place." Grosz (1995, p. 35), too, claims that living spaces function to, "mark the subject's body as deeply as any surgical incision, binding individuals to systems of signification in which they become signs to be read."

Physically constrained by housing, women's bodies and activities become associated with the concept of home. But these houses and/or home are not necessarily of their own making. Irigaray (1992, p. 141) argues that *men* are predominantly concerned with building homes for themselves in "caves, huts, women, theory" and Rose (1993, p. 56) argues that women's experience of home is marginalised or invisible: "[E]vacuated of any meaning on her own terms, womanly icons represent the values of others, including their sense of belonging to a place." Golden illustrates this argument in another way, claiming that homeless women create discomfort because they cannot be categorised: "[W]omen are so entirely defined in terms of whom they belong to that no category exists for a woman without a family or a home" (1992, p. 25).

This discussion highlights the difficulty in separating the house from 'home' and establishes connections between women and the

concept of 'home'. Housing comprises a system of signification in which are embedded a range of activities and behaviours which we associate with making 'home'. 'Home', I argue, exists as an ideal concept closely associated with women's identity formation in the sense that there exists a range of social relations and home-related activities in which women's participation is deemed essential, by themselves and by others. One of the major difficulties of doing sociology in this spatial context is to understand women's complicity and challenges to these signification systems. Through interrogating fiction – within an historical context – for what I have called 'spatial discourses', we can learn about these socio-spatial relationships.

### **Writing (against) suburban domestication of women post-war**

Ferguson (1994) throughout her history of housing policy and housing development in New Zealand illustrates the way in which suburban development was predicated upon prescribed roles for men and women:

The emphasis on a suburban vision was [also] to dominate housing policy for many years ... Politicians and reformers saw the suburb as free from moral pollution, and the family home as more necessary than ever for the future of the country. An essential feature of this suburban vision was the wife and mother, who would ensure the health and training of the next generation (Ferguson, 1994, p. 60).

Hayden (1984, p. 40) writing of the American experience – which can also be extrapolated to that in New Zealand – argued that suburban development marked "the triumph of a prescriptive architecture of gender on a national scale." Frame (1957) in *Owls do cry* captures the essence of the relationship between the state's building programme and its associated gender roles:

Toby turned the corner to where the Chalkins lived. Marry Fay Chalkin? Marry her and be a husband like the rest of the chaps around thirty, with a house built in the right style and the right things put inside it, the sort of things a girl would like, the new furniture that you can't sit on, the chairs with legs like an operating table, and

the skinny mantelpiece that sits above a fraud fire...Marry Fay Chalkin and squat on a quarter acre section, a government house perhaps, that exists in spawns or litters, alike of the same mother and father the government architect. In a suburb of revolving clotheslines and a free kindergarten. With people and no place alone. (Frame, 1957, p. 53).

In *Owls do cry* Toby, like his sister Daphne, is 'outside' society, unable to conform to the socio-spatial patterns of society, unlike their youngest sister Chicks who does conform to the roles of good wife and mother. However, we read Chick's description of her dinner party already aware of the terrible emptiness that her conformity produces:

By the way, when I first began this diary I said I would give a record of my inner life. I begin to wonder if I have said anything about my inner life. What if I have *no inner life*? I am morbid today. I had a letter from my mother in Waimaru. She says the same thing over and over in her letters: that everything is well, that everybody is happy: and she says it like a chant of denial, so that you can't help knowing nothing is well, and nobody is happy. Sometimes I wonder if we should go south to live. I don't know. I really don't know (Frame, 1957, p. 97).

The description of the furniture within the house and roles enacted by Chicks epitomise everything that her brother, Toby, was against:

Well, it is over now and I can look at it calmly and with indifference. Shall I describe last night? Well, before they came I had the children put to bed and the baby given her bottle, and the sitting room arranged cosily and, I hope, tastefully, with the chairs and couches (our furniture is Swedish make) placed at what Tim and I consider the correct angle so as to make conversation easier and more intimate. I dusted the radiogram and blew fluff from the long-playing needle, and left the Fifth Symphony lying upon the cabinet. I could not help leaving a few of our more intellectual books lying around, carelessly, as if we used them every day, some of them half-open, or open at pages of difficult words ... Tim had decided that we wouldn't have any drinks, only coffee, and that the cake had better be chocolate, with walnuts, for variety. I prepared to make a number

of narrow slices of toast with a sardine, or a slice of tomato, lying upon each. Above all I wanted our evening to be a *natural* one, with none of the artificialities one finds – everyone at ease and happy (Frame, 1957, p. 98).

In emphasising *naturalness* in this last sentence, Frame draws our attention to the constructed nature of women's activities in the suburban house/home. Her writing echoes that of her predecessor, Robin Hyde (*Wednesday's children*, 1937; *The godwits fly*, 1938); and like Hyde, Frame herself, has experienced difficulties in finding home (King, 2000). There are also similarities in their descriptions of suburban housing:

Rows and rows of grimy little streets and terraces, mostly very flat, crawled listlessly from the shopping centre and the big concrete block of the hospital to the green garment's hem of the bay. Newtown in its half century of life had contrived to get itself very dirty: and it was static, nothing there would change. Always little houses, little shops, the tramway sheds, the Heddington Arms, with a tower on top and orange paper flowers showing through unwashed windows (Hyde, 1938, p. 18).

In *The Carpathians*, Frame (1988) continues her strategy of listing attributes. This, according to Ash (1995), has the opposite effect of supposed realism, the 'exhibition' of words draws our attention to the produced (and deliberative) nature of both housing and writing:

Mattina walked to where she hoped the dairy might be ... she noticed the neat, uncomplicated shape of the houses, like dolls' houses built for people, and the confectionery-colouring of the wooden walls and the roofs of corrugated iron or tiles, and the front paths leading directly from the gate to the front door with a branch at the corner, leading presumably to the back door. And except for the car cemeteries on the front lawn of the end house on the corner of Gillespie street, all the lawns were neatly clipped and all the gardens had spring flowers, daffodils, narcissi, and many others that Mattina could not name; and blossom trees, cherry and plum and larger trees at Number Twenty-four Kowhai Street, with blossoms frilled and flounced like dolls' dresses caught up in the branches (Frame, 1988, p. 24-5).

These suburban settings with gardens and trees (and room to grow vegetables) were in part based upon New Zealand's rural culture, as well as the idea of home as haven, "not from the difficulties of a pioneering life in the bush, but from the dangers and complexities thought to be inherent in town life" (Ferguson, 1994, p. 34). However, for many women suburban experience was isolating; for some women the roles of wife and mother within burgeoning household-related consumption seemed at best unreal, at worst resulted in what was to be called suburban neurosis. Kidman (1979) in *A breed of women* captures the dis-ease of what Friedan (1971) referred to as the 'problem with no name':

Sometimes when the children had been tucked up for the night she would see Max looking at her reflectively. She would wonder what he was thinking and then decide against asking him. She had nothing to hide from him, he knew her, she had never lied to him. He seemed to her a plain man in his needs, and she tried to provide for them. One night, however, he asked her, "Harriet, are you happy here?"

..."I don't know, I haven't really thought about it. Do I seem unhappy?"

"No," said Max, thinking as he went along. "But I remember you in Wellington when I first met you. You've changed since then."

"Of course I've changed, silly," said Harriet, "I didn't have you and the children then."

"But you were going to do so many things with your life then. You were very excited. And you haven't done any of them."

"I opted for something different."

"Not quite," said Max. "Most of it's just happened. I think you thought I'd share some of the things you wanted to do."

"And did you mean to?" Harriet sat watching him. Something was happening between them, but she didn't know what it was.



He shook his head. "I don't think so. I thought all of this would just follow the way it has, and that it's what you wanted anyway."

"Well then, are you trying to tell me it's not what I want? What are you trying to talk me into, Max?"

"I don't know."

The moment had passed and they were both backing away from it. However, Harriet never forgot what Max had said. He deceived me, and he knows it she thought. He was trying to be honest now, but it was a little late for honesty. He was a perpetrator of some great lie, like all the other men who lived in the suburbs of Weyville. True, he was vaguely aware of it without recognising exactly what he had done – but then, neither did Harriet. She told herself that she was happy; she was, she knew it. Then she began to have flashes of anger against Max, who had tried to provoke her into thinking she was behaving badly because she didn't exactly fit into the mould that all the other women did (Friedan, 1971, p. 180-1).

The post-war model of family living which Frame and Kidman expose was based on motherhood within the context of heterosexual relationships. This heterosexuality was tied to specific social and economic relations, as well as to state incentives to boost the population in the belief that an increase in the population and economic growth went hand in hand. Despite the geographical and ideological separation of urban and suburban women, the control of women's sexuality remained an issue in both contexts. Game and Pringle (1979), writing of the Australian (and New Zealand) experience, stated:

It was in the immediate post-war period that woman's role as mother and homemaker became firmly established. Even the role of wife became somewhat secondary. At the same time there was pressure on her to be her husband's companion and exciting sexual partner. Hence, there was conflict between her different roles in the home. (Game and Pringle, 1979, p. 9).

The following excerpt from Alison Gray's book *The marriage maze* (1979), written in the same year as Kidman's *A breed of women*, echoes

the claims above, as she reveals the difficulties (for Elizabeth) of trying to reconcile the realities of child care, work, and sexual intimacy:

I pulled a face angrily. "What am I supposed to do? I'm so damn tired I want to die. You work till all hours of the night, every night on Jeffrey's stupid house and when you come and want a screw it's too late. I've only got three hours left before I get up for Victoria." I sat straight up in righteous rage. "Several times I've sat up in bed reading, waiting for you to come to bed, and you never do. I'm just something you fit in after work or when it suits you."

"If you'd make yourself more attractive I might notice you more."

"Tony!" I screamed at him and stormed out of the room to pick up Victoria, her crying like music to my ears (Gray, 1979, p. 65).

For Alison Gray and another New Zealand writer, Maurice Gee, it is important that their central characters are architects; both use the male architect character to foreground *spatially* influenced power relations between men and women. In Gee's (1990) *The burning boy*, Tom and his wife are in marital strife, but neither want to leave the house he has created:

She is not, in fact, better at loving the house. Tom loves it too, in all the obvious ways, but also in a way that lifts him and makes him soar. He goes beyond possessiveness and pleasure and reaches a condition of knowing ... But he loves. He loves his houses; and this one above all the rest. Believes he has reached the perfect marriage with himself when he designed it, and says (drunk again), "That's my baby. Who needs kids?" (Gee, 1990, p. 117-8)

In both Gray's and Gee's novels, creating (architecture) and building are activities related to male subjectivity as Irigaray (1992) and Rose (1993) claim, and are different from women's everyday experience of living in the houses. Gray (1979), through the voice of Elizabeth, describes the paradoxical experience of house/home:

In each room I moved soundlessly over the thick carpet back towards the dining room, I could see the leaves, lit by well-placed spotlights,

brushing against windows, and starlight on white walls. Tony had drawn the curtains in the dining room and there was a soft glow from the timbered ceilings and the lamps, pots and trays piled haphazardly on the table waiting for a home. I picked up my glass and walked past him into the living-room, where another skylight soared into the flame tree. It was a very beautiful house, elegant, extravagant, even excessive. I leaned in the doorway and contemplated the moon above the small glimpse of sea that was our lot. Outside it was cool, calm, undemanding. My sort of country. Behind me and around me, touching my side, was Tony's land, his creation, his love with whom I must now share my life. A flame of jealousy exploded in me and I turned back to the unpacking.

"Do you want dinner?" Tony asked.

"Yes, I suppose so." I looked around vaguely ...

"When do you think we can get a clothes line?" I asked Tony. He stared at me in angry astonishment.

"You've got all this and you're worried about a clothes line?"

I was defensive. "I've got a lot of washing to do with two children in nappies and Vicky always filthy at play-centre" (Gray, 1979, p. 109).

In these novels, as well as in the interview material, women talk about needing to weave the aesthetic and physical attributes of the house with the practicalities of everyday living. Several women interviewed talked about a house 'feeling right' or 'working.' At the same time we cannot discount what is built *into* the house in relation to sex/gender roles, and the relationships between the two. One woman I interviewed, Lucy, talked about the different processes for her of housing and roles as she moved out of a heterosexual marriage into a [new] lesbian relationship. Of the former she said, "...and the expectations – oh, do I have to do the garden and redecorate to my taste, be responsible for cleaning it. ...my husband was incredibly conservative and traditional and wouldn't move outside the roles." Lucy stated that she could have died and no one would have known who she was because of all the roles. By contrast, the house she and her partner were rebuilding was evolving; both the house and the

relationship were an 'unknown.' Of the house she said, "*it really is a house evolving,*" and of the relationship, "*I don't think that anything I've been is what I am going to be, because it's still evolving.*" Lucy's experience, alongside the excerpts from fiction, draw attention to historically based changes in attitudes and praxis of gender roles and/or sexuality, and their relationship to housing and the activities of home-making.

### **Contemporary voices**

In contrast to the earlier novels discussed above, which portray women's experiences of socio-spatial roles, some novels of the late 1980s and the 1990s also involve processes of deconstruction. Contemporary novels cited in this paper deconstruct both women's experience of house/home and draw attention to the ways in which language, as another symbolic system, may not articulate women's experience. Interviewing women, I was often aware of the struggle to articulate experience. Morag, for example, commented on the spontaneous speech of the young in comparison to what she herself had not articulated.

I took a walk with a niece [aged 11] who was staying last summer ... and I found it wonderful that every house we went by she told me if she would like to live in it or not. I found that a fun thing because I knew what she was doing, because I thought almost on a subconscious level I do this, but she's articulating about it because ... her language is of the moment.

In a different way, Delia spent some time trying to articulate her ambivalence about living with her (male) partner and her desire to retain her (spatial and economic) independence.

*He can't understand it, he thinks that if you love someone you'll stay with them and I said no ... I hate living on my own, but it's better to live on your own and be lonely than to live in a situation that isn't suitable to you. Because I was on my own all those years and then because I lived with this guy, now I'm back on my own I've done a lot of thinking ... and I find I quite often sit and think well, you know, this is nice; I've got all the things around me that I have and like and I feel comfortable here, but it's like a*

*jigsaw puzzle. There's one piece that's missing, but is that piece going to fit perfectly or is that piece going to be completely missing or if there's another piece that doesn't quite fit properly.*

The assumption of heterosexual cohabitation is implicitly built into housing. To reconstruct housing and (enduring) relationships in a different way requires thinking imaginatively about the relationships between space/place and partnerships. In Kidman's (1997) novel, *The house within* – the title of which is metaphorically significant – Bethany expresses an ambivalence similar to that of Delia:

That year ... Bethany found herself living alone. Alone, that is, in the sense that there was no man living in her house. Her husband, Peter, had left her the previous winter. ... the house was so quiet she could hear herself breathe. After a while she thought the pain wouldn't kill her. 'I should make some wine,' she said to Gerald, the man she had begun to see ... She hadn't been looking for a man, but she liked the habit of sex ... Bethany thought she was falling in love with him but it was hard to tell whether it was just the desire to fill the odd empty places in her house (Kidman, 1997, p. 59-60).

Kidman's is not the only novel that uses the house/home as metaphor for a woman's body. Koea (1992) in *Staying home and being rotten* links Rosie's body with the different houses she has inhabited, and Duckworth (1994) also uses the house/home as metaphor for women's experience of heterosexual relations. In *Fooling*, Ros's body is symbolically linked to her house; Neil is trying to persuade Ros to enter into a relationship with him requiring her to sell her house as well as make herself sexually available. They are discussing these possibilities: "[P]arked overlooking the sea and the suburb where Ros's house sits modestly decaying – if he is right – under its skirts" (Duckworth, 1994, p. 43). Duckworth's analogy of the decaying sexual organs with the decaying house because neither was occupied by a male partner, simultaneously illuminates and deconstructs one way in which woman/women and home/house are mutually constituted. The reader is aware early in this short novel that any substantial liaison with Neil is not going to ultimately benefit Ros. Not only are there links made between the women's bodies and the metaphorical house/home, but in this novel Duckworth also demonstrates that the material and economic conditions relating to

home ownership and sexuality are inseparable, a point made earlier by Frame.

These (and other) contemporary New Zealand novels written by women, I think, go some way to addressing the challenge from Code (1991, p. 59) who claims that:

[W]omen are excluded from processes of naming and meaning-construction, and women's interests and experiences occupy but a small part of both everyday and institutional vocabularies. Linguistically, it is a man's world, where women's place is defined and maintained by 'man made language' in innumerable subtle ways. Hence women must learn to speak a language that does not in effect speak of 'their own' experiences.

Beryl Fletcher (1993) in *The iron mouth* weaves this concept into her novel, drawing attention to the power of language to not only represent but also *construct* subjectivity. She links women's inability to define self with dependence on the male subject that she contextualises in relation to the domestic hearth:

So much has become clear to me in the past few months. The loss of identity that occurs when a woman becomes detached from a man through death or desertion. Of course, men suffer too. They lose the comfort of the domestic hearth. But do men lose their identity? I think not.

*We don't have the right words.* Identity is far too superficial to describe the loss of this deeply held truth of the constructed female self; the hero serves as the gates and walls of Troy, the last bastion of protection. Of course this safety is more symbolic than real. The confusion that women feel over domestic violence is grounded on the erroneous belief that belonging to one man serves as a form of protection against the marauding savages outside the city wall. I thought modern women were free, especially women like us (Fletcher, 1993, p. 248, emphasis added).

The reference to 'domestic' violence echoes the focus of research projects that explore the nature and causes of male violence to women and children within the 'domestic' or 'private' sphere. The spatial context of housing and concepts of home are clearly implicated for Fletcher who sets up both the house and language as

metaphor and structure. She writes: "From the beginning I attempted to change the metaphors but keep the structure intact. I see now that this separation is impossible. Structure is metaphor and vice versa" (Fletcher, 1993, p. 272). This claim echoes that of Wigley who asserted that housing can be seen as a system of representation of beliefs about the containment and/or control of women's sexuality which can then be incorporated into women's embodied sense of self.

While the linguistic processes of deconstruction are useful in exposing the relationships between the spatial and the social, there are also processes of reconstruction, a process implicit in the excerpts from Delia's and Lucy's transcript material. In *The iron mouth*, the house that 'represents' power relations between the central woman character dependent upon her father's finance as well as the 'in-house' heterosexual relationship, burns down. The symbolic deconstruction allows for a different kind of rebuilding of both house/home and relationships. However, it is perhaps Hulme's (1983) novel *The bone people* which most clearly deconstructs and reconstructs connections between housing and women's experience of relationships.

The house/home in which (the character) Kerewin Holmes lives is constructed as a tower: "[A] home befitting the eccentricity of a Holmes. I am still myself, iron lady, cool and virgin" (Hulme, 1983, p. 48). This house, a tower that appears to symbolise Kerewin's relationship to a phallogocentric world, is destroyed: "All the rest of the wood and furnishings she sent splintering and crashing downwards in a frenzy of destruction" (Hulme, 1983, p. 316). Hulme, too, uses the house/home as metaphor for Kerewin's existence, 'home' clearly comprising a central metaphor through which Kerewin refashions both dwelling and self. Kerewin is architect, builder and dweller, disrupting the builder-dweller dichotomies suggested by Irigaray (1993) and Wigley (1992) in theory and by the authors Gray (1979) and Gee (1990) who posit the architect/builder as male and the dweller as female.

I had spent many nights happily drawing and redrawing those plans. I had decided on a shell-shape, a regular spiral of rooms expanding around the decapitated tower ... privacy, apartness, but

all connected and all part of the whole. When finished it will be studio and hall, church and guesthouse, whatever I choose, but above all else HOME. Home in a larger sense than I've ever used the term before (Hulme, 1984, p. 434).

Hulme's novel proposes home to be more than a 'container' for nuclear, heterosexual relationships; to be more than the experience of women-centred households such as Hyde imagines in *Wednesday's children*.

## Conclusion

I have found many connections between the imaginative writing of authors' depictions of the socio-spatial relations of house/home and experiences articulated by the women I interviewed. The intertextuality of fiction and empirically generated material provide a more comprehensive view of the society in which we live than that made possible through literary analysis alone and/or empirical research. In the context of my project, putting a sociological imagination to use when reading fiction enabled me to make connections, and identify the challenges to the power relations embedded in the house/home and the everyday patterns of social interaction.

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## The use of firearms in intimate murder-suicide in Australia and New Zealand

*Jo Barnes*

### **Abstract**

Although murder-suicide is relatively rare, the number of events per year is fairly constant and often occurs in the context of intimate or family relations. These intimate or familial murder-suicides are, in most cases, perpetrated by males who kill their female partners and/or children and are often preceded by incidents of domestic violence. This paper proposes that murder-suicide can be positioned at the extreme end of a continuum of violence. Using data from Australia and New Zealand for a period of twenty years from 1973-1992, the article explores the use of firearms to show how domestic violence can culminate in tragic death.

### **Introduction**

Murder-suicide is an event that, although relatively rare, is nevertheless numerically fairly consistent each year and is perpetrated often by those who deliberately intend to murder and then commit suicide (Barnes, 1997). Research undertaken in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia shows that murder-suicide is a gendered activity with the majority of murder-suicide events being perpetrated by males who use firearms to kill their victims (e.g. Barnes, 1997; Dorpat, 1966; Wallace, 1986; West, 1965; Wolfgang, 1958). Most murder-suicides occur in the context of intimate or family relations and are often preceded by a history of domestic violence that culminates in the fatal use of a loaded firearm.

In this paper the thesis that murder-suicide can be placed on the extreme end of a continuum of domestic violence (Kelly, 1987) is proposed and data from Australia and New Zealand are used to illustrate how firearms can transform 'domestic violence' into murder.

## **Murder-suicide in Australia and New Zealand**

The murder-suicide event is one in which an offender kills one or more victims and then takes his or her own life. In an extensive study of murder-suicide in Australia (Barnes, 1997) data were collected using the records of state coroners in four states of Australia (South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and Western Australia). For a twenty year period (1973 -1992), 233 murder-suicide events were identified. Of these, detailed information was collected on 188 cases in which a total of 438 people died (of the 188 incidents 146 involved one offender and one victim, while the remaining 42 incidents involved one offender and multiple victims).

In New Zealand, for which no equivalent study was found, data extracted from the New Zealand Police's National Homicide Monitoring Programme show that over a six year period (1993-1998) 29 murder-suicides occurred in which a total of 63 people died.

In the study of murder followed by suicide undertaken in Australia (Barnes, 1997), three important features of the murder-suicide act stand out. One is the gendered profile of murder-suicide, the second is the relationship between the offender and the victim, and the third is the use of firearms to carry out the murder-suicide.

In Australia and New Zealand murder-suicide is most likely to be carried out by a male and the victim is most likely to be female. At the same time the relationship between offender and victim in the murder-suicide event is often an intimate one. While there are a small number of cases in which women are the offenders and their male partners the victims, in most cases victims of female-initiated murder-suicides are the offender's own children (Barnes, 1997, p. 114). There are also cases in which men kill their own children, sometimes as part of a plan to kill their whole family, but the only victims are the children. Other victims are family members or friends or are at least known to the offender. Murder-suicides in which strangers are involved are rare. Firearms (hand guns, rifles and shotguns) are the weapons that are used most in male-perpetrated murder-suicides.

A significant aspect of murder-suicide is the gendered nature of the act. In Australia 90% (n=188) and in New Zealand 86% (n=29) of

the offenders were male. Females accounted for 71% (n=250) of the victims in Australia and 65% (n=34) of victims in New Zealand (see Table 1).

**Table 1: Number and percentage of offenders and victims by sex**

	Offenders		Victims	
	No.	%	No	%
Male	195	89.9	85	29.7
Female	22	10.1	199	70.3
Total	217	100.0	284	100.0

A second significant aspect is the intimate and familial nature of murder-suicide. Of the total 217 murder-suicides carried out in Australia and New Zealand for which there were data, 142 of the 283 (50%) victims were, or had been, in an intimate relationship with the offender (intimates are defined as present or past spouses, de-facto and lovers). The second largest category was that of 'own child' in which there were 85 victims (30%).

For both the murder and the suicide, a firearm was the favoured weapon. In 62% of suicides and 64% of murders, a gun was used. Knives accounted for 12% of murders while suffocation, mainly by carbon monoxide gas was responsible for 9% of suicides and 11% of murders. In the Australian data there were forty cases in which multiple weapons were used: that is, a different weapon was used for the murder and the suicide.

For the Australian study it was possible to analyse type of weapon by gender. Guns were used in 125 (74%) cases in which male offenders committed suicide. Of female offenders three (17%) used a firearm, while five (28%) caused their own deaths by carbon monoxide poisoning. When looking at murder weapons the pattern was very similar with 73% victims of male offenders being killed

by firearms and 11% by knives. Thirty nine percent of victims of female offenders died from the effects of carbon monoxide poisoning or suffocation and 15% from gunshot wounds.

Many of the documented cases in the Australian study of murder-suicide involved guns that the offender possessed for what appeared to be no apparent reason. While some offenders used them for hunting rabbits, most of the weapons were stored in wardrobes and seemed to be regarded as a badge of masculinity. Those offenders who actively purchased or borrowed a gun to carry out the planned murder-suicide appeared to encounter few obstacles – they were able to construct stories, which were readily believed, as to the planned use of the gun (Barnes, 1997).

Most murder-suicides take place in a domestic setting. In the Australian study the majority (69%) of murder-suicides took place in the privacy of the offenders and/or victim's home. Forty three percent took place in the home where both the victim and the offender were living at the time. Fourteen percent took place in the victim's home, often following the victim's departure from the family home, and 10% took place at the offender's home. Often in these cases the victims had returned to collect their belongings from the family home or perhaps to discuss the break-up of the relationship. Two percent of murder-suicides took place in a situation where the victim was killed in her/his own home and the offender then returned home to commit suicide. In three percent of cases it was the victim's workplace that was the site of the murder-suicide. Again, in these cases the offenders had gone to the victims' place of work to talk about their relationship. Ten percent of murder-suicides took place in public places, such as in the street outside the victims' or offenders' homes, or remote sections of parks or bushland. In nine percent of murder-suicides, victims were killed in their own home and the offender had then travelled to such places as a railway line, bridge or river and committed suicide.

The pattern seems to be similar in New Zealand. The three year survey of gun homicide in New Zealand, 1992-1994, undertaken by Alpers and Morgan (1995) which looked at victims and perpetrators and their weapons found that: "All 13 victims of murder/suicide (100%) were shot by a family member, a former partner or a known

sexual rival .....Twelve (92%) of 13 victims of murder/suicide were shot at home or at work" (Alpers and Morgan, 1995, p. 4).

A third feature of the murder-suicide cases is the presence of violence prior to the event. Stories of physical, verbal and mental abuse were rife within the case studies. While it is obvious that not all violent relationships end in such a final way, nor is it true that all murder-suicides have a violent history behind them, a consideration of the part played by domestic violence is important in attempting to understand the background in which some murder-suicides occur.

In the Australian study there were 69 cases (37%) in which there was a known history of violence within the relationship. Often the victim had been physically or mentally abused by the offender for sometime prior to the event. It was virtually impossible to quantify the amount of violence and the duration over which it may have taken place but as the two following cases show violence was often a characteristic of the relationship between the offender and the victim. The information contained in these cases came from police records (Barnes, 1997):

**Case No. 139**

The 37 year old male of Polish descent killed his estranged wife and then himself after he had waited for her to return to her home. The victim had left the marriage approximately four months earlier with the help of police who had confiscated the offender's guns. During her marriage the victim had been constantly verbally abused as well as suffering some physical violence. The victim had stayed at a refuge until the offender had moved into his mother's house and then had returned to her home. Following a period of harassment both in person and by telephone the victim had taken out a restraining order against the offender. A few weeks later the offender was imprisoned for eight days for contravening that order. The offender had threatened to kill the victim and her children a number of times and had at least once threatened to kill her and himself. He was described as drinking heavily and was "highly strung and excitable". The victim was in fear of him, so much so, that when he was allowed access to his children he was ordered to collect them from her in front of the police station.

**Case No. 87**

In this case a 62 year old man had had "three prior convictions for assaults on (his wife) including one prior in 1958 for wounding with intent to murder when he apparently shot (the victim) in the leg" [Police Statement]. When the offender discovered his wife was planning to leave and stay with friends with the possibility of not returning he shot her and then himself.

In a study of domestic violence in New Zealand, Busch, Robertson and Lapsley (1992) relate the stories of two women, victims of domestic violence and then murder-suicide.

Peggy died four months after being granted final non-molestation and non-violence orders. She was shot at point blank range by her ex-husband, Brian. Brian then shot himself .... Statements from their children found in police files or cited by the refuge worker make it clear that Brian had been violent towards Peggy over a long period of time (Busch, Robertson and Lapsley, 1992, p. 145).

Roslyn...was leaving a counselling appointment when she was shot dead by her husband, Peter, who had been waiting outside. Peter then shot himself.... Most of the abuse Roslyn experienced in her marriage seems to have been emotional. However, there was one occasion on which Peter knocked her unconscious, and he appears to have used physical violence on the children (Busch, Robertson and Lapsley, 1992, p. 49).

**A continuum of violence**

Rod (1980) made the connection between domestic violence and homicide in her paper on marital murder when she asserted that "spouse murders with a history of assault could be said to be the 'tip of the iceberg' of domestic violence" (Rod, 1980, p. 99). The connection between domestic violence and homicide was made even clearer by Radford (1992) who used, seemingly for the first time, the term 'femicide' which she defined as "the misogynous killing of women by men" (Rod, 1980, p. 3). Arguing that it is a form of sexual violence Radford placed it on a continuum of sexual violence. The concept of a continuum of sexual violence on which the many forms of violence can be placed with sexual harassment and wolf

whistles at one end and rape and wife beating at the other was developed by Kelly (1987). Radford placed femicide at the extreme end of this continuum of sexual violence. Sexual violence focuses on a man's desire for power, dominance and control. It was defined by Kelly (1987, p. 41) as: Any physical, visual, verbal or sexual act, experienced by a woman or a girl, at the time or later, as a threat, invasion, or assault, that has the effect of hurting or degrading her and/or takes away her ability to control intimate contact.

This author argues that intimate murder-suicide can also be seen as being at the extreme end of a continuum of sexual violence. Identifying sexual violence as a broader concept that connects the different expressions of male violence allows the placement of these different types into the context of the overall oppression of women in patriarchal society. Theoretically it provides a broader perspective of male violence against women rather than the narrow definitions which result in an event such as murder-suicide being treated as a discrete disconnected issue which is often viewed as a result of mental illness (Barnes, 1997).

### **The use of firearms in domestic homicide**

The connection between intimate murder-suicide, domestic violence and the use of firearms can be clearly seen in this study of murder followed by suicide, but this type of event is only one example of domestic homicide. In Australia the National Homicide Monitoring Programme has revealed that during the period July 1989 to June 1996, there were 2,024 homicide incidents. Of these, 543 (27%) involved intimate partners. As in murder-suicide, intimate homicides overwhelmingly involved male offenders and female victims (77%), and of these approximately 26% involved the use of a firearm. A study of firearm homicides in New Zealand shows that 29 homicides involving 40 victims took place in the years 1992-94. Twenty two (55%) of these victims were victims of family violence.

The extent of homicide as a result of domestic violence is made visible by the availability of official data but the extent to which firearms are present within the domestic violence context is largely concealed. The study of family violence and breaches of domestic



protection orders by Busch et al. (1992), maintained that incidents such as the following example are rarely reported to the police:

One woman reported regular use of a firearm to intimidate. The first occasion followed an argument that saw her spending the night in another bedroom. In the morning, while she was in the bath, her partner brought a rifle into the bathroom and told her that if she left him, she would not get out of the area alive. A frequent terrorising tactic was to discharge the rifle by the bedroom window while she was asleep. She commented that he seemed pleased to see the fear this evoked as she awoke startled (Busch et al., 1992, p. 103).

Considerable controversy surrounds the effort to control firearms in Australia and New Zealand. Laws that attempt to restrict the availability of firearms are subject to heated debate between the anti- and pro-gun lobbies. A review of the literature on gun control indicates that one of the debates is based around the use of firearms in criminal activity and the use of firearms by the mentally ill (see for example, Alpers and Morgan, 1995). It is this author's opinion that focussing on criminals and the mentally ill as the perpetrators of illegal firearm use distracts the argument from the domestic nature of many gun related homicides.

The fact remains that a gun is an extremely effective means of fatal violence. The use of a gun to threaten can too easily result in death. An American report adroitly summarises the situation regarding firearms, "Any firearm murder follows a particular chain of events: One person acquires a firearm; two or more people come within reach of the firearm; a dispute escalates into an attack, the weapon is fired; it causes an injury; and *the injury is serious enough to cause death*" (Roth, 1994, p. 2, emphasis added).

## **Conclusion**

This paper has summarised the findings of an Australian study of murder-suicide, supplemented by data from the New Zealand National Homicide Monitoring Programme. The data showed murder followed by suicide is predominantly carried out by a male offender who kills his female victim with whom he has had an

intimate but often violent relationship. Using the concept of a continuum of violence the author proposed that intimate murder-suicide can be placed at the extreme end of that continuum and that firearms, which constitute the main weapon used in murder-suicides, can too easily transform violence into death.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

Macpherson, C., Spoonley, P. and Anae, M. (Eds.). (2001). *Tangata o te moana nui: The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. Palmerston North: Dunmore Press.

Reviewed by Peter Beatson

This book is something of an intellectual hybrid, a fact that makes it a little difficult to review unambiguously for the readership of an academic journal. The bulk of its contents had its genesis in a milestone conference, the nature and purpose of which is summarised in the present book's Preface:

In July 1999, the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs convened a conference to forge a vision for Pacific peoples in Aotearoa in the twenty-first century. The conference, 'Pacific Visions: Navigating the Currents of the New Millennium', sought to develop plans to close socio-economic gaps identified in a series of status reports on Pacific peoples released by the Ministry. The conference brought together some 700 people from Pacific communities, the academy and government ministries, to define goals and formulate action in five areas: prosperity, partnership, leadership, society and identity (p. 9).

Much of the present book (Parts Two to Four) reads like a transcript of the conference proceedings, although some contributions were later commissioned by the editors. This material is based squarely on a Pacific Island (PI) perspective, as it was produced largely by scholars and activists from within the New Zealand Pacific Island community itself. However, the conference foyer (Introduction and Part One) is occupied by Papalagi scholars writing within the Western intellectual tradition, who construct an academic analytical frame for the insiders' views that are to follow.

It is the juxtaposition of these two rather different cultural perspectives, one based on Western, universalistic, analytical

detachment, the other on substantive, ethnically partisan Polynesian rhetoric, that confronts the reviewer for journals like *New Zealand Sociology* with a dilemma. Criteria that are appropriate for evaluating one perspective are not always relevant for the other. The obvious recourse would be to adopt a double standard, judging the Papalagi Part One in terms of Western sociological orthodoxy, then discarding one's academic antennae in favour of respectful enthusiasm for PI polemics.

The trouble about such a compromise is that it would lead to a review as hybrid as the book itself. At the risk of appearing insensitive, I will operate from within a purely academic, sociological framework, justifying my decision on the grounds that the majority of my readers are likely to be non-Islander social scientists, that many of the PI writers themselves deploy social scientific concepts and paradigms, and that according to the book's Preface it is intended primarily for tertiary students.

From my culturally one-eyed perspective, Part One is excellent. The writing is clear and intelligent, and the chapters are structured around logically developed arguments. Above all, the authors keep their eyes firmly on the book's overt theme as announced in its subtitle *The evolving identities of Pacific peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand*. The plural *identities* must be emphasised.

Richard Bedford and Robert Didham explore the ethnic tangle caused by ethnic self-identification in the census, a tangle created partly by changing definitions of ethnicity from one census to another, and partly by the fact that respondents frequently opt for multiple identities which have to be prioritised by the statisticians who interpret the census findings. Len Cook, Robert Didham and Mansoor Khawaja then provide an extremely useful overview of immigration, fertility, geographic distribution, socio-economic status, age structure and inter-ethnic marriage patterns, past, present and projected future. These first two chapters are a must for anyone wanting to get the demographic basics under their belt.

Cluny Macpherson's chapter 'One trunk sends out many branches: Pacific cultures and cultural identities' is the best in the book. Rich in knowledge and insight, it is alert to the ever-changing mutations and re-alignments, erosion and reassertion of ethnic identities. The chapter is both strong on history and keenly alive to

the up-market, finger-clicking, hip-hop, designer chic of postmodern Polynesia. Macpherson is also sociologically incisive, highlighting amongst other things (as none of the later PI writers succeed in doing) the clash of sacred, authoritarian Island values of older generations with the questioning, secular ethos encouraged by the New Zealand education system.

Paul Spoonley completes Part One by applying the concept 'diaspora' to the Polynesian world. He outlines the global context within which Pacific populations exist today, and the increasingly transnational character of these communities' linkages to other enclaves and the world at large. He describes the social, economic and technological forces that are reshaping the experiences of migrant ethnic groups and the ways in which they are connected to their homelands. As with the other writers in Part One, his theme is the growing diversity of Pacific identities.

Up to this point, I was a thoroughly appreciative audience. I teach a course on New Zealand society to a sample of the very tertiary students for whom the book is intended. I am always on the lookout for good material about PI New Zealanders, and was all set to make this a highly recommended text. My response became progressively more mixed and muted, however, as I read my way through the remaining parts.

So much depends upon context. I have no doubt the PI material made for stimulating listening when presented live at the original conference. The personalities of the presenters, the supportive response from the audience, and the very nature of the expectations people bring to conferences would have allowed these papers to work, and probably work well. They would have been entertaining performances, and if at the end of the day listeners might have retained only a few vivid fragments from the oral marathon, surely that's all any of us get out of conferences?

Even when transferred from an oral to a print medium, the PI material in this book rewards readers with many rich nuggets. In the limited space of a review, I can only mention a few facts, ideas, insights or vignettes that helped extend my understanding of my fellow New Zealanders with histories, identities, challenges and interests quite different from my own.

I enjoyed Melani Anae's illuminating play on the term 'Vikings of the Sunrise', fusing Sir Peter Buck's vision of ancient Polynesian navigators with today's middle class Pacific Islanders exploring the sunrise industries of the Information Age. From an early chapter by Fuimaono Karl Pulotu-Endemann and Carmel Leinatioletutoga Peteru, and from a later one by Tamasailau M. Sua'ali'i, readers gain glimpses into Samoan family structures and gender roles, including the ambivalent but accepted position of fa'afafine in traditional Samoan society and their more fraught experiences in modern, urban New Zealand. A chapter on the Maori-Pacific Island interface by Tracey McIntosh traces the sometimes uneasy relationship between the indigenous and immigrant branches of the Polynesian tree in Aotearoa, and explains why they have found it difficult to make common cause, despite similarities of socio-economic status.

Feiloaiga Taule'ale'ausumai describes the transplantation and subsequent evolution of Pacific Island religion in New Zealand, stressing the potential community tension between routinised, traditional, aiga-based churches on the one hand, and on the other the burning everyday faith and individualistic ethos of evangelical sects that are attracting some young Pacific Islanders. The erosion of cultural identity amongst New Zealand-born PI resulting from the decline of their native languages, which are sometimes reduced to a scattering of Polynesian words in an otherwise English context, is evoked by Galumalemana Hunkin-Tuiletufuga, as is the only partial success of language maintenance strategies.

Tasileta Te'evale explores the positive and negative implications of the high sporting profile achieved by a number of PI New Zealanders, and provides a telling critique of biological explanations of this success. On quite a different subject, Anae Arthur Anae takes readers on his election campaigns, giving an interesting account of the trials and frustrations of that apparent political oxymoron, the Pacific Island National Party politician.

My particular favourite was the chapter by Kirsten Zemke-White on the cultural and political dimensions of popular music. It coheres around a sound thematic core. This is that the enthusiastic adoption by Polynesian New Zealanders of rap music and hip-hop iconography is not a symptom of global homogenisation and

Americanisation, but a reassertion of Maori and PI identity in a new guise. The author handles theoretical concepts well, evokes the origins and ambience of rap in black America, traces its importation into this country, then explores its Polynesian reinvention in the music of individuals and groups like Dalvanus Prime, Che Fu, Sisters Underground, Upper Hutt Posse, King Kapisi, Dam Native and Urban Pasifika. Juicy textual analysis, historical knowledge and thematic lucidity reinforce one another nicely.

In the foregoing, I have simply mentioned a number of insights into PI life in New Zealand that particularly caught my attention. There is, of course, a wealth of other material that readers will find interesting. However, at the start of this review I adopted a slightly cautious tone about Parts Two to Four, the ones generated in the main by the 1999 conference. My mixed emotions were due to the fact that what works in a live setting does not always stand up to transcription into an academic text intended for tertiary students.

When entering that particular discursive arena, there are certain conventions to be observed. These were sometimes breached by the contributors to the present volume. I will not name specific writers, nor give concrete illustrations, but will just mention a few generic flaws that cropped up in a number of chapters.

Some of the writing was rather weak in terms of structural logic. Certain authors (it would be fairer to say 'speakers') jumped abruptly from one idea, vignette or fact to another with little attempt to weave them together into an organically developed argument. Such chapters were collages of juxtaposed fragments, not firmly crafted textual artefacts. Flowing on from this, a few contributors introduced material with only a tenuous connection to their overt topic. Furthermore, authors on occasions fused together incompatible lines of argument: their theses were logically muddled, and sometimes self-contradictory.

Even more problematic for post-Enlightenment critics, the overall mood was tendentious, rhetorical and ideologically loaded. Speakers at the original conference had been enjoined to accentuate the positive dimensions of PI identity, rather than dwell on litanies of negative statistics. This was an entirely understandable strategy for the occasion itself, intended as it was as a launching-pad for a new

and better future for Pacific Island New Zealanders. The promotional tone sat uneasily on the pages of an academic text, however. There was too much group self-affirmation and not enough questioning.

Above all, one or two of the articles were seeped in unreflexive Polynesian fundamentalism, asserting that Island identity in the twenty-first century could only be preserved by a return to the traditional values, roles and authority structures of the homeland. In these particular chapters, no attempt was made to get to grips with the destructive repercussions of traditional familial and religious mindsets. Polynesian essentialism was represented as of unquestionable value in and for itself. If the conference was intended to be future-oriented, certain contributors saw the way forward requiring revalidation of an idealised, atavistic past.

It may be objected that I am writing obtusely off the point. It is obvious that the chapters in Parts Two to Four were presented 'the Pacific way', and as a Papalagi reviewer I'm applying totally the wrong standards when making the above strictures. This might well be the case, were it not for the fact that most of the authors employ concepts, models and theories drawn from Western social science. While overtly deconstructing mental colonisation, many chapters operate from within the very discursive conventions they challenge. If I am viewing the book through the wrong lenses, I can only say that these are frequently provided by the authors themselves.

Piling these criticisms together in one concentrated heap, however, gives an unduly negative impression. This is an important book, bringing together for the first time, to my knowledge, a wide range of Pacific Island scholarship, and giving a permanent record of a landmark conference. I am not entirely convinced it was appropriate to package the latter along with the more analytically rigorous material in Part One of the book, but despite some flaws the whole package provided me, as an outsider to the PI world, with a wider, richer awareness of its nature, diversity, dilemmas and aspirations than I possessed when I began reading.



Tolich, M. (Ed.) (2001). *Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand: Concepts, practice, critique*. Auckland: Longman.

Reviewed by Patrick Day

Herbert Green's 'unfortunate experiment' is New Zealand's most prominent example of unethical research and joins an international shameful list to which all the science and social science disciplines have contributed. The formal consideration of ethical concerns in research on humans is a relatively recent addition introduced well after it was needed. It links with a return to philosophy of the study of ethics, a topic long so unfashionable as to be generally untaught. The recent introduction of formal ethical consideration of research proposals is a global phenomenon and *Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand* is part of the new consideration. However, the book indicates that New Zealand has gone through its distinct version of the change. Not only are New Zealand research examples everywhere but also, from the evidence in the book, it is arguable that we are developing an indigenous sense of research ethics.

The Cartwright enquiry that followed the unfortunate experiment was pivotal in this development. It "spawned ethics committees" (p. 114), to quote Robin Gauld's chapter. Recent years have seen a high regard for ethically sensitive research lead to a veritable explosion of bodies judging the propriety of research proposals.

*Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand* is not an overarching text on research ethics, but fourteen distinct chapters each of which spotlights and analyses a specific topic. As such the book is detailed in many areas and bare in many others. With the exception of the editor who has contributed two, each chapter is written by a separate author. The work is arranged in three sections, ethical principals for Aotearoa New Zealand, practicing social research, and reconsidering ethical considerations. The chapters are generally concise and lucid. The book slots well into various topic areas, not only research methods but a variety from health research, to education, to market research. In spite of their distinct nature and separate authorship, the chapters do combine in an overall theme. The text offers an

acceptance, a presentation, and often an examination of the prominence of formal ethical consideration in New Zealand research.

The standards have changed enormously. Martin Tolich, in his first chapter, considers the difficulty in a small country like New Zealand of giving anonymity to such groups as the communities and schools that are being researched. The heightened sensitivity contrasts with H.C.D. Somerset's *Littledean; A New Zealand rural community* published in 1938. When I was a sociology student at Canterbury in the 1960s, the real name for Littledean was made clear. I remember wondering why the disguise. Somerset, in the 1974 book, *Littledean: Patterns of change*, wrote that "any area subject to a social survey should be anonymous" (p. 103), but anyone with a map of Canterbury could determine the town's identity. Indeed to assist, Somerset included various photos of town buildings and surroundings. The only complaint from locals is their regret that Somerset did not mention by name the people who had contributed to the history of the place. Anonymity was not given. Nor, from the available evidence, was it wanted. However, it is now required. Would Somerset have received ethical approval to conduct his study were he transported from his era to ours?

T.M. Wilkinson gives a useful rendition of the core ideas of ethics research. Other chapters indicate the application of these ideas: the sphere of ethical inquiry has expanded greatly. Mike O'Brien illustrates this with a fine discussion of the requirements of the principal Acts that need to be taken into account in research work. The current situation is that both researchers and ethics committees need a considerable understanding of the application of legislation to their concerns. An equal expansion of ethical concern is into research methodology. Various chapters make the point. Adrienne Alton-Lee's statement of her classroom research, with its recording of teachers' and students' in-class experience of curriculum, is a strong reminder that the aim now is more than an application of accepted ethical principles to a research methodology. The current claim is that ethical issues include, among many other matters, the actual research design, on the grounds that research incompetence in itself is unethical.

The acceptance that methodological soundness, as well as propriety, is an ethical issue (and to me this is an eminently

reasonable view) is a major enlargement of ethical concern. But it is potentially overshadowed by the further and growing insistence that research should explicitly be for good ends. The chapter by Robyn Munford and Jackie Sanders is a careful working through of the many issues involved in research interviews with children so as to safeguard the ethical principles of informed consent, protection from harm, and confidentiality. In an overturning of the traditional acceptance of research freedom of inquiry, they also argue curiosity is no reason for research. The information sought must be necessary and contribute some greater good. Tolich notes this is already the usual view of ethics committees. They tend to see no value in research without clear benefits for the public good. Fiona Cram takes the notion a stage further in her chapter on Maori research. She quotes approvingly the Hongoeka declaration for Maori health researchers with its insistence that such research be determined and coordinated by Maori, working with Maori, for Maori.

There is a growing insistence, then, that research be partisan. O'Brien, writing of much feminist research and research relating to indigenous peoples and ethnic communities, notes "[t]here is an increasingly explicit expectation from these communities that such research should be undertaken in ways that will promote their interests" (p. 26). Similarly Sylvia Rumball in her discussion of future ethics notes that "[e]nsuring that the insights and advantages emerging from research... benefit all people and not only affluent, Western people may well be the biggest ethical issue facing the world in the post-human genome era" (p. 176). The argument is that researchers must ensure they are on the side of the angels. While we may applaud such sentiments, a cause for at least potential concern is the lack of doubt or debate as to what side that is.

Much of the change has to do with objectivity. While objectivity was once an ideal to aspire to, for many it is now so discredited that attempts to approach it are not accepted. Allison Kirkman gives an excellent discussion of the objectivity-subjectivity debate in her call for a reconsideration of the importance of gender and sexuality in research on human subjects. For her, these are all important, and I was surprised to read her describing herself as an outsider in sociology because of her gender and sexual orientation. I wonder

what would enable the respected and long-serving immediate past president of the Sociological Association to feel accepted.

Not all the authors accept the death of objectivity. Neil Pickering, in a chapter aligned with an objective view of the nature of research, gives a considered discussion of the relationship between ethical and research needs in health experimentation. To some extent the difficulty is not one of objectivity and subjectivity but of quantitative and qualitative methodology. Robin Gauld has an excellent run-through of the differing natures, aims, procedures and, consequently, standards for ethical review of quantitative and qualitative methods. His clear statement of design issues and management of risk with regard to qualitative methods should be required reading for all researchers and members of ethics review committees.

There is considerable questioning whether research does meet ethical standards. O'Brien gives an instance of lack of confidentiality when police were able to require the research tapes from a study of gang embers. Tolich in a useful chapter on the nature of surveying via email and the problems of anonymity, queries the ethical standing of the common practice of sending reminder letters to survey respondents. Bruce Curtis, Douglas Hoey and Steve Matthewman, in a discussion of research in business and universities, argue both that "there is no such thing as business ethics," and that "research in universities cannot be understood to be qualitatively different from research in business contexts" (p. 141). Both areas of research, they argue, are heavily influenced by profitability that, at least at times, counters any assiduous pursuit of ethical considerations. While their readiness to bite the university hand that feeds them counts against their understanding of the vulnerability of university research, their chapter is a reminder of the environment in which research is conducted.

Stephen McKernon's chapter takes us to the current frontier of formal ethical consideration. He indicates that at present qualitative market research in New Zealand has no ethical code and projects require no prior ethical consideration. His article is a plea to rectify the omission.

There is also questioning of ethical standards and their implementation. Rumball, in a discussion of genetic testing, asserts

“the right not-to-know the results of genetic testing needs to be acknowledged on an equal footing with the right to know” (p. 175). Alton-Lee argues the usual ethical requirements may actually generate ethical problems in classroom research. Catherine Casey’s is one of the more reflective of the chapters. Hers is a careful working through of the need for, and nature of, research consent in respect of organisations as opposed to humans. She is questioning of the new order and notes “the recent trend toward excessive conservative risk avoidance and nay-saying to social research by university ethics committees” (p. 132).

*Research Ethics in Aotearoa New Zealand* is a well-produced book. The text needs a more considerable introduction than it is given. However Tolich has selected a good variety of chapters that together offer a useful and enlightening view on the new conduct of social research, a matter that has undergone a revolutionary change in recent years. The book deserves attention.

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Reviewed by Celia Briar

Paul Callister is a Wellington-based independent researcher who has a long-standing interest in work and family issues, and a particular focus on the roles of men as paid workers and fathers. In this 88 page monograph Callister explores two main questions.

Firstly, he asks whether there is a link between labour market status and family arrangements. If so, did this change between 1986 and 1996. Using data from the 1986 and 1996 Censuses, Callister

concludes that there was a strong correlation between paid employment and couple status for prime-age men in both 1986 and 1996. However, the strength of the association weakened during the decade (p. 63).

Secondly, Callister asks whether there is an association between formal education and employment amongst New Zealand men and women. If so, did this change in the period mentioned above (p. 33). He finds that education and employment opportunities became more strongly linked during this time. There was a severe decline in employment for New Zealand men with no formal qualifications between 1986 and 1996 (p. 12), whereas, despite an overall drop in full time job vacancies, the employment rates for young men with university qualifications rose slightly (p. 13). Callister regards a sizeable proportion of men as having become disadvantaged in both work and family life. He writes:

The changes in employment prospects have been particularly dramatic for low-skill men, in terms of both job loss and a decline in real income. There is now a group of perhaps up to 20% of young men who are likely to face long term disadvantage in the labour market. Yet young and relatively unskilled men see being in paid work as a critical factor in their well being and many cannot see how they could be a good father without being a good economic provider (p. x).

One of Callister's findings is that in New Zealand, as elsewhere, people tend to form partnerships with others who have similar levels of education to themselves. Because of the increasing association of education and employment, this means that there is a division of households into those which are 'work rich' and those that are 'work poor', and the widening gap between rich and poor in New Zealand that has occurred since the mid 1980s is exacerbated by the concentration of disadvantage within 'work-poor' families and communities (p. 26). However, Callister then overstates his argument by treating as 'work rich' all couples where both partners are employed, irrespective of their levels of earnings (p. 61). In many households both partners are obliged to work because of low pay, and may be additionally disadvantaged by 'time poverty'.

Callister asks whether ethnicity affects associations between employment, education and family status. He finds that Maori men are highly represented in both the groups with low skills and low employment (p. 15, 16 and 63), and are least likely to be living with a partner, whether married or cohabiting (p. 36). However, this does not necessarily mean that disadvantage in the labour market leads men to become 'loners'. Cultural influences are important; as for example Asian men are the group most likely to be living in a couple relationship, despite also having low rates of labour market participation (p. 37). Although the title of the monograph suggests a New Zealand focus, Callister mentions a growing literature from the UK, USA and Australia on men who are disconnected from the labour market, on the margins of society and long-term socially and economically excluded, living alone or with parents or in prison; but he does not cite evidence that such men are an increasing phenomenon in New Zealand (p. 21-22).

If this monograph were aimed simply at illuminating the changing position of men at work and suggesting policies which would improve their situation as well as that of women, this would be a most welcome addition to the literature on work and family life. For example, it could have included suggestions on how both fathers and mothers might be given assistance to combine their roles as parents and employees. Economic policies that would ensure sufficient training and job opportunities for men and women could have been proposed. Instead, however, this booklet presents the position of working women as more favourable than it actually is and proposes policies which would favour men relative to women.

Callister points out correctly that employment rates have fallen for working-age men in the period 1986-9, and argues that for women they have risen. He does not mention in the text that women's participation rates in New Zealand have never approached that of men, although this is shown in the graph he presents (p. 6). In fact any increase in women's employment took place in part time jobs predominantly in the service sector. Women's full time employment actually decreased from 1986 and according to Callister's own data had not regained its mid 1980s level by the end of the 1990s (p. 8).

In short, both women and men were affected by the loss of full time jobs in the 1980s, but women then took up poorly paid part

time jobs to a greater extent than men. However, Callister gives the impression that women have taken jobs at men's expense. He cites the "increase in traditional female service sector jobs" (p. 10) as a possible reason for the decline in male employment rates without then going on to acknowledge that men would generally not take such jobs. He also appears to assume that women will come to dominate the New Zealand employment market, based on the fact that in one age range (20-24) in 1996, for the first time slightly more women than men had a Bachelors degree or higher qualification. In all other age ranges more men than women have a degree or higher. In fact, there is no reason to assume that this is the case, since even well qualified women are disadvantaged in the labour market relative to men.

Callister exaggerates the numbers of women who have economic independence (p. 62). Women have numerically increased their participation in paid work, but tend to be employed for fewer hours on work that is lower paid and lower status. Moreover, men have not significantly increased their average participation in unpaid work - most of this is still borne by women.

He assumes that women want to marry a man upon whom they will be financially dependent, and that women, especially black women, are facing a "shrinking pool of marriageable men" (p. 22), although he does not provide any evidence of this. However, he notes that women who do have economic independence and thus more choice are the ones most likely to postpone marriage and leave unsatisfactory relationships.

The main policy recommendation put forward by Callister (and also foreshadowed in the foreword by Arthur Grimes) is that young unemployed men should be given priority for assistance such as training and paid employment and so become capable of supporting children:

In the US, policy makers have been trying to assist low-skill men improve their labour market position, with a goal that this will help them retain links to their children if they have them. It would be useful if the costs and benefits of schemes to move low-skill, non-custodial fathers into work were investigated in the New Zealand context (p. x).



In fact Callister is giving the impression here that many of these low-skilled unemployed men are non-custodial fathers, and that a policy of prioritising men for work and job-related training would enable policy makers to collect child support from these men. Yet elsewhere in the monograph (p. 23-4), he claims that in the UK and New Zealand there is a lack of evidence that men who are long term unemployed and single are fathers.

However, Callister does appear to assume that prioritising employment for low skilled men will make them more marriageable. The implication of this proposal is that low-skilled men would be transformed into 'breadwinners' and women into their dependants. The sub-text is that men have the right to be husbands and fathers but that women should not have the right to refuse to be dependent wives.

It is possible to recommend social-democratic economic policies that would improve the level of employment of low-skilled fathers and mothers alike. Callister is dismissive of such an approach (p. xi), advocating instead a liberal-conservative approach to policy (p. vi) which attempts to recreate a trend back towards a traditional male-dominated family form, accepting uncritically that there will be a minimal amount of state assistance for families. As such this monograph is likely to encounter criticisms from both social democrats and feminists.

Fuller, S. (2000). *Thomas Kuhn: A philosophical history for our times*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

#### Review Essay by Steve Matthewman

Steve Fuller is one of the sociology of science's better-known practitioners and with this iconoclastic account of the best-known sociologist of science of all - Thomas Samuel Kuhn - his fame is sure to rise.

Kuhn was one of a number of trained physicists who migrated into the history and sociology of science following the Second World

War. Peers included Paul Feyerabend, Stephen Toulmin, Derek de Solla Price and John Ziman. But the subject area was still in embryonic form; it had yet to realise the level of a profession. Accordingly, Kuhn “drift[ed] from the sciences to the humanities without having made a clear mark in any field” (p. 383), and was denied tenure at Harvard in 1956. Six years later he would write the book that changed the academic world.

When The Arts and Humanities Citation Index examined the records for 1976-1983 to determine the most cited work of the twentieth century they found it to be Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Franklin, 2000). It has made almost one million sales and has been translated into 20 languages. Such an accomplishment is unparalleled. Fuller acknowledges *Structure* as “probably the best-known academic book of the second half of the twentieth century” (p. 1). Kuhn’s book is remarkable not only for its original reception, but for the way it has remained influential across a generation of natural and social scientists.

Kuhn’s appeal can be easily explained. He was amongst the first to subject scientists to serious critical inquiry. His account shattered the textbook orthodoxy of Whig history, that ‘development-by-accumulation’ undertaken by heroic individuals. Kuhn also challenged the conventional viewpoint of the open-minded scientist constantly questioning received wisdom. Instead, he brought a political lexicon into science studies. Where most saw scientists as disinterested researchers, he argued that they were socialised into a specific worldview in order to solve the puzzles at hand. Kuhn’s fame rests on the simplicity of this final notion; he called the worldview a paradigm.

Kuhn (1962) defined paradigms as “universally recognized scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners” (1962, p. x). Paradigms were crucial for the conduct of ‘normal science’. Most anomalies could be absorbed or ignored, but at times they provoked crisis and the move to ‘revolutionary science’. “Scientific revolutions are inaugurated by a growing sense...that an existing paradigm has ceased to function adequately in the explanation of an aspect of nature to which that paradigm itself had previously led the way”

Kuhn (1962, p. 91) explained. The ultimate result is the acceptance of a new paradigm, characteristically initiated by younger scientists or those working on the peripheries. Kuhn was quick to point out the "incommensurability" between paradigms as paradigm change also involves "changes in the standards governing permissible problems, concepts, and explanations" (1962, p. 105). However, the infrequency of scientific revolutions maintains the general belief in scientific progress.

At 461 pages long, it would appear that Fuller's *Philosophical history for our times* has a great deal to say about Kuhn and the book that made him famous. However, much of the discussion is devoted to stage-setting. Those with an interest in Kuhn alone will not stray from the introduction and conclusion. Much of the material Fuller presents is of severely limited appeal. This is compounded by a dense writing style that has irked several reviewers (see the comments of Hollinger, 2000; Hughes, in Sharlett, 2000; and Raymo, 2000).

Chapter two sees Fuller launch into the scientific debates between Ernst Mach and Max Planck over the nature of science. Their inclusion is justified on the grounds that they exemplify subsequent debates. Where Mach praised technology, Planck advocated abstract theorising. Mach saw science empowering citizens; Planck wanted science removed from the public realm. In the former account science is libertarian, in the latter authoritarian. Fuller places Kuhn firmly on the dark side. Chapters three and four discuss post-war intellectual culture at Harvard and the thoughts and strategies of its cold warrior President, James Bryant Conant, Kuhn's mentor-come-patron. Chapter five focuses primarily on Kuhn, before the discussion drifts to post-Kuhnian philosophy in chapter six. Chapter seven looks at the state of science studies today in the wake of "Kuhnification" (p. 318). The final chapter makes concluding comments about Kuhn's work and its legacy. So, how does Fuller judge him?

Towards the end of his book, Fuller claims to have "neither the interest nor the evidence to deliver a verdict on Kuhn's life, let alone indict the man of crimes of the intellect" (p. 381). Yet most of the preceding pages are aimed precisely at cutting Kuhn down to size. He is portrayed as an academic minnow, the idiot mistaken for the

great intellect in the tradition of Peter Sellers' *Chance* (p. xiii), ultimately a peddler of "*Theory Lite*" (p. 301). "To be sure...Kuhn saw as far as he did because he stood on the shoulders of giants," writes Fuller. "Indeed, he inhabited a kingdom of giants. But it only takes a dwarf standing on the shoulders of giants to see beyond them, and from a distance, the dwarf may look like the head of the tallest giant" (p. xii).

This condemnation may seem unduly harsh, but it is not surprising to find a philosophically trained scholar attacking Kuhn. Along with Feyerabend and Toulmin, Kuhn advocated historicism as an alternative to the prevailing currents of positivism and Popperism. They urged that logic and philosophy be replaced with history and sociology - hence the ire. However, Fuller's critique rests on the charge that Kuhn is neither historical nor sociological *enough*. Kuhn failed to acknowledge the Cold War context that gave crucial shape to his work. His "internal sociology" (p. 324) of normal scientific activity detached scientific work from its wider moral, political and economic implications. The message was clear: the scientific pursuit of truth should be free from public control. Thus under Conant's guidance Kuhn "provide[d] a philosophical defence of the Big Science initiatives that increasingly characterized American research in the Cold War era" (p. 391).

Fuller's criticism of Kuhn can be distilled down to a single word: 'vagueness'. He writes:

[t]hus, a common thread that runs through the formal and informal comments that people make about *Structure* is that it is quite thin on matters in their own field of expertise, but truly enlightening in some other field, one in which they have long had an interest but could not locate a suitable point of scholarly intersection. It might be said that *Structure* has a philosopher's sense of sociology, a historian's sense of philosophy, and a sociologist's sense of history (p. 32).

For a start, there is the lack of historical details. Kuhn extrapolates from the experience of physics to provide a model for *all* of the sciences. *Structure* is notoriously thin on case studies. This disciplinary limitation is matched by a geographic one: Kuhn's vision is Eurocentric. Kuhn studies European physical science from

approximately 1620 to 1920. Fuller notes that this period “coincides with the ascendancy of Western capitalism” (p. 257), yet these historic associations are ignored. The economic and technological dimensions of science are also ignored (p. 321). Fuller writes of *Structure's* “overall success in repressing the industrial vision of normal science” (p. 216). And, we might add, for someone who spent the Second World War jamming German radar signals for the U.S. Air Force, Kuhn is suspiciously silent on science’s military linkages. This oversight is all the more notable for the fact that the Department of Defence was then the biggest single funder of scientific research. Fuller identifies further historical oversights, for instance the notion of normal science does not find concrete referents until “the correspondence between a full-fledged sense of a paradigm-driven science and the modern nation-state in the nineteenth century” (p. 195). Nor can scientific developments in the twentieth century be made to fit comfortably into Kuhn’s schema. James Franklin (2000) adds that historical study of the sciences beyond physics reveals many that *are* cumulative. He writes that Kuhn’s appeal lay in the fact that “[h]e gave permission to anyone who wished to comment on science to ignore completely the large number of sciences which undeniably are progressive accumulations of established results – sciences like ophthalmology, oceanography, operations research, and ornithology, to keep to just one letter of the alphabet.”

In addition to its historical vagueness Kuhn’s work suffers from conceptual vagueness. The distinction between revolutionary and normal science is problematic, and there is no explanation of how and why paradigms should replace each other (p. 193). Fuller also revisits the criticisms of Lakatos and Masterman. Scientific change such as it is presented appears to Lakatos (1968-9) to be a matter of “mob psychology” (p. 183). Equally troubling is Kuhn’s core notion, the paradigm. It is an extremely loose concept. Kuhn admitted that his usage was “badly confused” in the first edition of *Structure* (Perry, 1977, p. 39). Margaret Masterman (1970) identified 21 different applications of the term. This helps to explain its wide appeal. The paradigm is attractive to any would-be science builder: simply develop your own objects, laws and definitions and you’re away. The fact that paradigms run on their own internal logic, that they

parse the world in different ways, and that they do not take on a progressive character, also leads to charges of relativism: *Feng Shui* is placed on the same epistemic footing as Newtonian physics. Thus Kuhn produced more of a Rorschach test than a rigorous text, a vague inkblot or 'servant narrative' in which people see what they want to. This, says Fuller, explains *Structure's* "appropriation by a broad church ranging from 'normal scientists' to 'postmodernists'" (p. 380).

There is one final point on which Kuhn can be criticised, and given the tone of Fuller's work it is surprising that more was not made of this: Kuhn's lack of originality. Conant's decisive influence is discussed at length, yet there is scarcely a mention of Kuhn's intellectual debt to Polish bacteriologist Ludwig Fleck. In the Preface of *Structure* Kuhn admits that Fleck's 1935 monograph "anticipated many of my own ideas....Fleck's work made me realize that those ideas might require to be set in the *sociology* of the scientific community." Yet in some accounts Kuhn did more than derive influence from Fleck, he did nothing short of plagiarise his work.

Whispers in the corridors of academia were first heard in the early seventies. The story went something like this: the leading light in the sociology of science pilfered his ideas from the sole surviving German language monograph of a Jewish scholar who had perished in the concentration camps at Auschwitz. In fact Fleck survived Auschwitz and Buchenwald. Following the war he became a professor of microbiology at Warsaw University before migrating to Israel in 1957. He worked at the Institute for Biological Research in Ness-Ziona until his death in 1961. But it did at least seem that Kuhn took his refusal to admit of scientific progress and his concept of the paradigm from Fleck.

Fleck's monograph is built around a case study, the discovery of the Wasserman test to diagnose syphilis – a process that took thirty years. At the centre of his analysis is the paradigm, defined as *kollektiver Denkstil*, a collective style of thought that governs individual scientific efforts (Baldamus, 1976, p. 41). Being a part of a *Denkgemeinschaft* (cognitive community) "shapes and develops the choice and definition of problems, anticipated solutions, theoretical preconceptions and methods, techniques or instruments

of observation" (1976, p. 42). As Baldamus writes, "[t]he metaphor of the "paradigm" must rank among the most poignant inventions in the modern development of the sociology of science" (1976, p. 43-4). The paradigm was Fleck's creation yet Kuhn has received the credit, and "one cannot help experiencing a sense of injustice" (1976, p. 43-4).

Still, Fuller is not looking for another paradigm shift; he's looking to shift paradigms altogether. He advocates instead social epistemology. In an earlier work he defined the basic question of social epistemology as:

[h]ow should the pursuit of knowledge be organized, given that under normal circumstances knowledge is pursued by many human beings, each working on a more or less well-defined body of knowledge and each equipped with roughly the same imperfect cognitive capacities, albeit with varying degrees of access to one another's activities (quoted in Hess, 1997, p. 7)?

In finding the answer Fuller advocates a closer critical scrutiny of the scientific community and the incorporation of that which Kuhn sought to exclude – the public. In this regard at least, all power to him.

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Reviewed by Lucy Marsden

New Zealand may be a small country but it has been richly documented since the early days of European settlement. We have long runs of statistical series and government reports, an official yearbook that is the envy of other countries, and a *Dictionary of National Biography* running to five substantial and scholarly volumes plus several off-shoots. And the tradition of writing about our country and our activities established by missionaries and early settlers continues to the present day; family and local histories jostle for space on the shelves of public libraries. Around 4,800 titles were published in New Zealand in 1999, and a myriad reports were mounted on the internet. The only problem for the beginning researcher is how to navigate a route through the maze of sources. Fortunately G. A. Wood is an expert pilot.

This book's antecedent was *A Guide for Students of New Zealand History*, published in 1973. *Studying New Zealand History* followed in 1988, and a second revised edition appeared in 1992. All have been a *vade mecum* for students of New Zealand history, and this latest edition will be no exception. Significantly the word history no longer appears in the title, and while students of history will still be those most likely to use the book the aim is to help "anyone



wishing to find out more about a New Zealand topic" (see back cover). Those looking in here for a collection of facts about New Zealand will be disappointed. It is rather a roadmap that will lead the researcher to hundreds of carefully chosen, fact-filled beauty spots.

How much revision has there been since the 1992 edition? The material has been substantially reorganised into ten sections, making it more accessible to those not in an academic or research environment. For example, instead of starting with libraries and archives, then bibliographies, the 1999 edition has two new sections that guide the reader directly to readily available sources. The first is a necessarily selective list of key publications on New Zealand, the second advises on use of the internet and electronic databases. Appendix A, on writing and publication, has been significantly rewritten for the general reader rather than for the student writing an academic thesis. It gives a useful list of stylebooks, including one on how to cite electronic sources, a suggested layout for a book, and helpful notes on compiling a bibliography. Appendix B on copyright law is totally rewritten to take into account the 1994 Act. A notable innovation is a new chapter on Finding Maori Information, by Kirsten Stewart, which will be a great boon to anyone, Maori or Pakeha, who has not known where to start researching a Maori topic.

How up to date is this guide? Of the 24 monograph titles listed in the first section 14, have post-1992 imprints, and the list is not restricted to conventional published works. Museums are recommended as sources of information, and Te Papa in particular is singled out as a place where "one can, as it were, walk into New Zealand society" (p. 5). The second section, on electronic databases, is inevitably somewhat outdated already, since databases are evolving fast, but it will point the beginner in the right direction. Of the 113 subject bibliographies in section five, 23, or 29%, are post-1992 publications. On this evidence it appears that Wood has made strenuous efforts to capture works appearing since the 1992 edition.

The section on reference works is particularly thorough and up to date, including information on several databases and websites. Genealogists will find the five pages on biographical and genealogical reference works a great help; the *Dictionary of National*

*Biography* is covered in all its manifestations, and the website for the important Mormon family history network is given. Official documents and records are clearly described, as are guides to archival and manuscript collections.

As any librarian knows, a reference book stands or falls by the quality and accuracy of its index and Wood scores highly here. The index to the 1992 edition was in two separate sections: an index of authors and subjects, and one of titles. Here they have helpfully been merged into one sequence, and a spot check of 15 items revealed no inaccuracies. Likewise the list of contents is clearly set out, and cross-referencing is thorough.

The attractive glossy cover, of advertisements for Lane's Emulsion and Cyclone Gates, whets the appetite for more visual material, but unfortunately there are no other illustrations to enliven the densely written text. Perhaps in the next edition.

That very small quibble aside, this book is highly recommended; it stands alone as the AA map of New Zealand research. A bargain at \$29.95, it is essential buying both for those who have an earlier edition, and for those who believe the internet supercedes all conventionally published sources.

Elsmore, B. (2000) [first published 1985]. *Like Them that Dream: The Maori and the Old Testament*. Wellington: Reed.

#### Review Essay by Edgar Burns

This text is a new issue of a book originally published in 1985, and I must say I was surprised that Elsmore had not attempted to connect with the decade and a half since she first published it. That said, the early chapters in which she outlines the socio-political context of nineteenth century New Zealand have weathered the passage of time well, allowing her central thesis to integrate diverse elements in New Zealand's colonial period that would otherwise remain merely curious, irrelevant or unconnected. For students of New Zealand society it is a considerable service to have assembled the

large mass of information about Maori movements into one place. For sociologists this book is a case study of the subject of cultural formation, cultural change and where agency lies in these processes.

Just what Elsmore's purpose is in re-issuing this book, unchanged after fifteen years, is not clear. The one additional new sentence in her preface simply acknowledges the passing of many of those who assisted her in the original study. It provides no clues to an agenda for re-issue. Nor does she comment on further scholarship in her area, or changes in New Zealand historiography, or changes in the social sciences more generally. Since it is hardly the same thing to be reviewing a book long available to the academic community as though it was a new text, I propose to comment on issues the book raises, rather than to re-examine Elsmore's original presentation. The carefulness of her text provides an excellent basis for a wider analysis.

The three parts of her book run as follows. The chapters of Part One give a general outline of the nineteenth century situation for Maori. Part Two analyses Maori responses to their changing world; Elsmore outlines her central thesis here. Part three occupies the second half of the volume and covers some fourteen separate movements in different parts of New Zealand. These are all brief sketches, varying in amount of detail, reflecting evident reduction to gain the appropriate balance for the book's purpose.

The central theoretical contribution is that Maori, in responding to the influx of Pakeha in the new colonial context of the nineteenth century, sometimes rejected or managed the interaction of people, ideas and technology, and did not simplistically adopt or acquire elements of the new society. Elsmore posits that one important strategy in this response was to take ideas from the new society's sacred text, the Bible, but make use of them in ways that made sense on Maori terms - doing their 'own thing' with the text. In particular, Elsmore shows how frequently the nineteenth century Christianity of either the missionaries or the colonists in general was only in part received. In many instances Maori found in the Old Testament Jewish teachings ideas that allowed them to interpret their own current experience. This became the basis for resisting the official line of belief with which the Pakeha message came. More concretely,

it provided a platform for theorising resistance to the new colonial economic and hegemonic cultural powers. Social units of iwi/tribe common to the Hebrew and Maori experience, and the relations these implied, including warfare, spoke to the urgent Maori collective need.

Cultural researchers spend considerable reflexive effort in trying to understand how the 'other' is created. In Elsmore's work we have one such window within our own society. Maori adopted much of the new society's ideas and ways, but at the same time adapted, rejected and synthesised the new with the protocols of their own society. For a number of reasons, as this impact became increasingly onerous and destructive, either through purchase, war, disease or confiscation, the burden of comprehending and trying to manage the transition became a difficult intellectual and metaphysical task. In the end, as we know, the westernisation/colonialisation process was not stopped or reversed.

The attempts at synthesis, Elsmore shows, frequently took the form of retreat from contact with Pakeha society to consciously reiterate the value of the old social order, or co-opt the Old Testament text of the newcomers as a model akin to Maori social structure and modes of belief. Elsmore remarks that this had the ironic effect, among a number of groups, of subverting the very message the missionaries were promoting. The point that comes through to me strongly is that although we can be tempted to think of this as a religious response, it was the reflective part of the whole reaction to the political, economic and spiritual encroachment of the newcomers. That is, while the religious response can be viewed as one amongst several, other responses, such as military activity, commercial production of crops etc., it should be seen as the programme of countering the changing hegemonic control of Maori social and corporate life.

Elsmore's book describes a multitude of Maori responses that can be seen from our present viewpoint as one pattern of response to contact. To me her theme has two elements: first, the Hebraist argument about Maori response to the Pakeha influx and second, the implied colonialist models of take-over. Elsmore refers to religious responses in other countries, to the twin processes of

colonisation and christianisation, but does not develop the colonisation argument in her book. It is simply implicit in such comments as her observation that later religious movements were more approximately Christian in the balance of their synthesis, for example, Ratana, than were the earlier ones which were more specifically Tohunga-based or influenced by the Hebrew scriptures, for example, Papahurihia, Maketu.

Elsmore stays close to her argument that in the process of Maori-Pakeha convergence, Maori responded to the necessary re-theorising of life and society by taking from the newcomers the words and stories of their central sacred cultural icon, the Christian scriptures, and used these to comprehend and explain what was happening to them. She describes many examples of a Hebraic use of these texts to protect from the twin scourges of the new religious-secular beliefs and the sheer pressure of settler numbers and activity. We see the dialectical processes of adoption, resistance, and marginalisation being played out.

The book makes sense in a number of ways because its central thesis is able to provide a linkage to otherwise fragmentary data. For example, it is not infrequently observed by Pakeha that Maori are more plural in their approach to church involvement across a range of denominations. On one view this can be understood in terms of the issues that gave rise to those denominational formations in English culture and belief in the post-feudal to early modern period. Elsmore's analysis, however, allows us to see this process as it is happening in Maori society, as Maori are interpreting it, a key ingredient of which is the common colonial reality and hence commonalities in patterns of response to the settlers and missionaries flooding in to the country. Taking the new Pakeha religious ideas and co-opting them, including the use of the Hebrew text, provides a solid explanatory link between geographically diverse movements.

There are other ways we might make use of the project presented in this book. In the remaining paragraphs I want to locate us as social theorists in relation to Elsmore's work. If we simply read the Maori response as a study in an historical religious phenomenon, or of religiosity in general, I believe we simply perpetuate the dualistic thinking that social theory has in recent years criticised as

characteristic of modernity. I would amplify this in the present discussion to say that such critique characterises this, at least by implication, as a modernist secular outlook. Such a viewpoint is inherently colonialist when used in consideration of any indigenous group, not just Maori.

This brings me to borrow a phrase I think Raymond Williams used of himself, that sociology in this country is religiously tone-deaf. This lack of interest in, or perceived irrelevance of, religious themes of belief and meaning to social and cultural formation, reflects the more general orientation of our society. A range of causes for this could be described. I noticed a marked contrast at a recent TASA conference I attended in which a variety of spiritual formations and activities attracted academic sociologists' interest along with other areas we might expect. And I must say I hardly think of Australia as the apogee of religious interest!

But why, one asks, is this relevant? Several reasons: So long as we have this theoretical disjunct in our thinking towards cultures and beliefs of other peoples, we limit our ability to transcend the modernist capture that most of us would aspire to escape. It is all very well to formally embrace insights from post-modernism, structuration theory, communicative rationality, post-feminisms, discourse analysis or any one of a plethora of other useful models outlining the way to get past the limitations of modernism. But if we persist in this modern resistance to the pertinence of the sacral and axiological dimensions of society, that in itself is probably sufficient for us to remain modernists. All our academic protestations of inclusivity, plurality, etc. are negated by our personal praxis. Alternatively, you may feel you are in a position to convince the world that whatever is beyond modernity and its post-modern edges is definitely going to be non-transcendent.

In our ivory towers alone, this may do little harm. However, it makes us vaguely irrelevant to the global community. It limits our usefulness to effectively theorise issues of equality between peoples that have been the focus of much sociological attention in recent decades. It has other consequences for us, too, such as moving academic clarity on such issues into a mode of expression sometimes characterised as political correctness. There is inauthenticity in the

articulation of matters of fairness and equality between peoples because of vacillation between two ways of framing the issues – the formal and the personal. This is put in popular terms in the movie *First Contact* when the central figure, a woman scientist, is challenged by her theologian boyfriend: what right did she have to represent the 95% of the earth's population who have some religious perspective on life? That we can, perhaps accidentally, continue to maintain such views in our present-day academies is surely a sign of the modernist hegemony under which we work.

Elsmore's book does more than point us to reviewing the deeper reality of our cultural pluralism or monocultural modernism, it also offers a New Zealand jumping off point to reflect on how religion as a social institution constructs, integrates or challenges the wider social order. This is hardly a call to personal piety but a comment on the professional adequacy of our larger theoretical framing of society and social change. All the great sociological thinkers incorporated analysis of the religious dimensions of society, admittedly in as many takes as there are theorists. While sociologists range widely in their focal interests and preoccupations, this epistemological hiatus in New Zealand seems out of character within the long-run of the discipline. Even with today's emphasis on sociological skills that can make graduates employable I suggest care in losing the critical thinking skills that come from engagement with the wider social philosophic concerns that have always shaped our discipline.

Elsmore's book also prompts me to two specific observations about how New Zealand teachers of sociology engage with religious themes. First, it is a useful and proper pedagogical contribution to undergraduates to challenge their certainty about whatever beliefs they hold – these may be religious, but may equally be about science or the place of the western world in the scheme of things. How ideological is science? As we relativise the certitudes of modern science, personal beliefs, technology and economy, the dichotomy between 'our' way, our knowledge and other cultural epistemologies substantially dissolves, at least in theory. What about in practice?

My second observation is that considerable numbers of current students appear to be keen to look into things religious. I don't mean the 'religious type' of student. Students mostly wish to eschew any

particular commitments and they mostly prefer to use terms such as spirituality rather than religion. My point is that even if on personal or theoretical grounds we are not especially interested in such perspectives on our disciplinary subject matter, there could be a pragmatic argument to be heard. As a vehicle from which to articulate a sociological viewpoint and generate a sociological imagination for a wider audience, we should reconsider how best to present these cultural and meaning systems that at least count as sociology of knowledge and cultural change.

This book is raw data describing New Zealand cultural formation every bit as much as Gallipoli or the 1981 tour. It is part of an immense project re-framing New Zealand social history that has been occurring over the past several decades. Contributions across all disciplines make this possible. It is studies such as this that dig deeply into one aspect of New Zealand society that will form the components of an authentic New Zealand Sociology, as much as any positioning of ourselves in relation to larger far-away powers. Contemporary issues of agency, co-option and determination find a ready canvas here. What I mostly fear is that we in the mainstream may continue to see these issues only dimly, unlike them that dream.



OPINION

Two issues ago, *New Zealand Sociology*, 14 (2) carried a symposium dedicated to discussing the state of sociology in New Zealand today. Occurring at a time when sociology enrolments nationwide are in sharp decline, the topic is probably more relevant now than ever in the past. Having digested the debate that emanated from the symposium, and having been involved in the study and teaching of the discipline for the past 30 years, Greg Newbold now responds with this view:

**Why study sociology? Are students wasting their time?**

*Greg Newbold*

When the discipline of sociology was first created early in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, it came at a time of dramatic change in European society. Medieval philosophy, which for a thousand years had taught that since God knoweth all things, unquestioning obedience to His law could create a perfect world, was being challenged. Scientific discoveries were showing that a significant amount of Medieval doctrine was wrong. The invention of the printing press in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century allowed the proliferation of this new knowledge and philosophy to the masses. The three great revolutions of the 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries – a commercial revolution, which challenged the wealth of rural aristocracy and helped the growth of prosperous cities; political revolutions, such as those of America and France, which tossed out monarchic rule in favour of democracy; and the industrial revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century – were all partial consequences of the explosion of knowledge and reason during this period.

Sociology developed to fill a need to explain the revolutionary changes that were taking place in Europe and to seek a scientific formula for a better community. The philosopher Karl Marx, for example, dreamed of revolution and the creation of a world where everyone would be equal; the Frenchman Emile Durkheim wanted

inequality based on individual merit and the abolition of inherited wealth; the German Max Weber tried to rationalise and explain the stifling processes of the new bureaucracies. The 'founding fathers' of sociology disagreed about many things, but to one idea they were committed: that the role of the social scientist should be to study the social world in order to develop systems of understanding that would pave the way to modernity.

The writings of Marx, Durkheim and Weber made them famous and their work had a profound impact on history. Marx, of course, provided the philosophical foundations of the great communist revolutions in Russia and China, which directly impacted on almost a third of the world's population. Emile Durkheim was so well regarded in his time that he took a leading role in overhauling the French education system at the beginning of the 20th Century. In the 1950s, Durkheim's ideas became adopted in the justification of the Cold War politics of anti-communism and pro-capitalism. Weber's critique of modern bureaucracy caused his students to question democracy and drove some to the support of fascism. Later disciples of Weber, along with the Marxists, were responsible for the great critiques of capitalist power elitism, which back-grounded the international protest movement of the 1960s.

Many of these grand social experiments that were inspired or supported by sociologists were unsuccessful. Fascism, of course, failed dismally, and communism has, for the most part, also withered with time. But the lessons of both have informed later generations of sociologists about the structure of society and the way people function within it. Sociology has not always been concerned with reform at a macro level. A lot of modern sociology has developed a more explicit focus. Since the war, some of the more important sociological inquiries have shed new light on areas such as social inequality, racism, sexism, industrial relations, religion, crime, urbanisation, riots, and the processes of personal interaction. These have been vibrant and exciting works which have not only added to our understanding of important social phenomena, but also given us clues about managing social policy in relation to them.

In spite of this rich legacy, however, the impression that New Zealanders today often have of sociologists is of a bunch of crusty

old bores sitting in the ivory towers of universities, pontificating about issues in which they have no personal experience and little real understanding. Sociology is often seen as synonymous with sophistry and 'sociological mumbo-jumbo' has even been openly derided in Parliament.

A great deal of the bad reputation that sociology now owns is well-deserved. When I first started studying it in Auckland in 1971, I found that much of the theory I was taught had little apparent connection to real-life issues and problems. Much later I discovered that the theories were relevant, but my teachers were unable to explain what the relevance was and I still wonder whether they actually knew themselves. The fascinating potential of sociology's intellectual history was lost. But even when we studied manifestly important social issues, such as crime, for example, my lecturers' knowledge was clearly limited, and so we spent most of the time messing around with abstract ideas such as 'what is deviance?', without ever getting to grips with the issue. Fascinating topics were thus murdered with toxic overdoses of tedium, and many of my fellows left sociology for lusher pastures.

I know why I persevered. Some of the material I loved, and it truly changed my view of the world. Religion, for example, and the impact of dogma not only on a person's ethos, but on the course of history itself, captivated me. I was desperate also, during this time of turmoil over the Vietnam War, to learn about how powerful minority interests in advanced economies can manipulate financial and ideological resources to their own advantage, and how, at an international level, rich countries dominate and exploit those that are poor, behind a facade of benevolence. Sociology exposed things to me that I'd never even thought about, and helped me to understand how they occur. So for me, that's what brought the subject to life. I began to realise that all in the world is not as it seems. The good guys aren't always the good guys at all; they just make us think they're the good guys by manipulating the news and other systems of public information so that it comes to appear that way.

The early 1970s was in fact a pretty vibrant time to do sociology if you got into the right areas. People were questioning society and

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'establishment' definitions at all levels: foreign policy, economic policy, criminal justice policy, issues to do with gender and race. Then somehow in the late 1970s and early 1980s, everything sort of changed. I wasn't there when it happened. I'd been busted for drugs in 1975 and when I got out of jail at the end of 1980 the protest movement was over. A new social era – which emphasised individual more than communal responsibility – and a new age in the discipline of sociology, was beginning. The new sociological era was called 'postmodernism'.

Postmodernism entered New Zealand sociology in the late 1970s through the writings of European philosophers like Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard. Difficult to define, postmodernism commences by questioning the existence of objective reality. Reality is simply a culturally determined concept and may differ from person to person according to experience and social environment. Thus, for postmodernists, one person's 'reality' is no less valid than any other's.

This is nothing at all new. In fact it's a pretty fundamental caveat of all knowledge. The problem with postmodernism is that it takes this line of thought to an extreme and in so doing it drives a stake through the heart of traditional, empirical sociology by undermining the value of objective analysis. In holding that any person's version of 'reality' is as valid as any other's, it denigrates the worth of science itself. There is no objective truth. Sociology is thus 'reconstructed' as a discipline which offers everything or nothing, depending on your perspective. And remember, any perspective is valid. Couched in its own convoluted jargon which is almost impossible to understand, postmodernism takes the art of sociological mumbo-jumbo to new heights, invalidating at one stroke more than 150 years of scientific enterprise. In denying the existence of empirical facts it reduces sociology to a non- progressive and pointless exercise in gelded intellectualism.

Not all sociologists today are postmodernists, but the discipline does tend to be a bit faddish, and postmodernism is a fad that has gripped a large number. Thus postmodernism has contaminated social scientists as a whole and eroded their overall credibility. A lot of people think sociologists have lost their grip on reality. It is because

so many of us are seen to have lost the plot or never to have had the plot in the first place that nowadays you don't often hear sociologists being asked by the media to give their opinions about social events and phenomena that they are supposed to be experts in. Not many sociologists are consulted by government agencies over important matters of policy. Those jobs generally go to scholars who have maintained an image of scientific rigour and reason – such as the economists, the lawyers and the psychologists.

But sociology doesn't have to be that way. Sociology is still a fascinating discipline with great substance, and there is a large core within it whose feet are firmly on the ground. The fact that few of us are sought by government agencies nowadays should not be a deterrent to the budding sociologist but an incentive, because it means that employment potential in this area is wide open. The lack of competition creates fertile ground for hard-headed, straight-thinking people who take sociology degrees. Areas where sociologists are needed include health, justice, corrections, policing, social policy, women's affairs, Maori development, local government and, of course, education. For the practical, career-minded, serious graduate, there are huge opportunities in either the public or private sectors for jobs that are not only well-paid and interesting but which, in the tradition of sociology's great founding fathers, give ample scope for contribution to the betterment of the world in which we live.

## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**Jo Barnes** lectures in the Social Science Research Programme and the Sociology Programme at the University of Waikato. Her doctoral thesis was on a sociological exploration of murder followed by suicide. Her teaching and research interests include social research methodology, qualitative and quantitative research methods, and social welfare issues, particularly inequality and poverty.

**Donn Bayard** was raised in Chicago, USA. He studied anthropology and linguistics at Columbia University and the University of Hawai'i before immigrating to New Zealand in 1970. After carrying out considerable archaeological fieldwork in Thailand and Laos he began full-time research into the sociolinguistics of NZE in 1984. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Anthropology Department of the University of Otago.

**Dianne Beatson** is Director of the Institute of TESOL at International Pacific College, New Zealand. She works with teachers from New Zealand and overseas who are undertaking Trinity College London certificate and postgraduate programmes for teaching English to speakers of other languages.

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**Allan Bell** is Professor of Language & Communication, and Director of the Centre for Communication Research at Auckland University of Technology. His career has combined academic research with journalism and media consultancy. His research interests include language style, media language, science communication, New Zealand English and the maintenance of Pasifika languages. He has published widely in international journals and collections, authored or edited several books, and is co-founder and editor of the *Journal of Sociolinguistics*.

**Richard Benton** has been involved in efforts to promote the study and use of the Māori language since he was a student at Auckland University in the late 1950s. He has researched, written about and lectured on language policy and the place of minority languages in education and public life in the Pacific, Southeast Asia, North America and Europe. He is currently Director of the James Henare Maori Research Centre at the University of Auckland and Associate Director of Te Mātāhauariki Institute, School of Law, the University of Waikato.

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**Susan Copas** is an interdisciplinary doctoral candidate in the Departments of Sociology and Management and Employment Relations at the University of Auckland. Her doctoral case study - a collaborative action research project - focuses on the interconnections between work and life for entry level staff in a large New Zealand Call Centre.

**Nicola Daly** has a background in sociolinguistic research. In 1999 she completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Victoria University of Wellington where the focus of her research was gender differences in intonation patterns in New Zealand English. She is currently teaching at the University of Waikato.

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**Margaret Franken** is a Senior Lecturer in the Linguistics and Second Language Teaching Programme at Massey University. An Applied

Linguist, she teaches Discourse Analysis and also a language and gender component in the Sociolinguistics papers.

**Elizabeth Gordon** is an Associate Professor at the University of Canterbury where she teaches sociolinguistics. Her research area is New Zealand English and in particular New Zealand pronunciation. She has written three books with Tony Deverson on New Zealand English. At present she is involved in a project which is supported by the Marsden Fund investigating the origins of the New Zealand accent. Elizabeth has also been closely associated with secondary English teachers and was the principal developer of *Exploring Language*, the handbook for teachers brought out by the New Zealand Ministry of Education in 1996.

**Janet Holmes** holds a personal Chair in Linguistics at Victoria University of Wellington, where she teaches a variety of sociolinguistics courses. She is Director of the Wellington Corpus of Spoken New Zealand English and of a FRST-funded research project on Language in the Workplace. She has published on a wide range of topics including New Zealand English, language and gender, and most recently on language in the workplace. Her publications include a textbook, *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*, now in its second edition, and a book on language and gender, *Women, Men and Politeness*. She was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand in 1994.

**Koenraad Kuiper** teaches linguistics at the University of Canterbury. Kon has published on morphology, formulaic performance and literary theory. He has published three books of poetry, one academic monograph, a textbook for first year students and two edited volumes, one on New Zealand English (edited with Allan Bell) and one of readings in semantics published in Shanghai for Chinese students.

**Zita McRobbie-Utasi** is an Associate Professor at the Department of Linguistics, Simon Fraser University, Canada. She has been doing research on the phonetics of endangered languages such as Skolt



Sámi (a Finno-Ugric language) and more recently Oroqen (a Tungusic language).

**Lucy Marsden** holds a M.Phil. in New Zealand history, and is currently Massey University Archivist. Prior to that she worked in the Massey University Library for 29 years, including ten years as Head of the Reference Department there.

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**Georgina Murray** is a Senior Lecturer teaching political economy at Griffith University, Brisbane. Between 1979 and 1989 she worked as a tutor and Assistant Lecturer at the Auckland University Sociology Department.

**Greg Newbold** is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Sociology at Canterbury University. He began studying sociology in 1971 and has been teaching at Canterbury since 1988.

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**Ann Winstanley** is attached to the Sociology Department, Canterbury University as a tutor and research associate working on the House and Home project (Thorns and Perkins). She has just had her PhD entitled *Housing, Home and Women's Identity* accepted. Her interests include issues relating to house and home in New Zealand, and the relationships between fiction and sociology.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONTRIBUTORS

**Submissions of Manuscripts.** All manuscripts submitted will be considered for publication, on the understanding that they are original material and are not being considered for publication elsewhere. Please submit only finished manuscripts.

**Length.** Manuscripts should not exceed 6 000 words.

**Number of copies.** Three (3), preferably laser-printed, copies of manuscripts should be provided for consideration. These should be sent to:

The Editor, New Zealand Sociology  
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Massey University  
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Palmerston North  
Phone: 06 356 8251  
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In addition to the hard copies, articles should be sent on a 3.5 disk clearly labeled with the name of the file; the name of the operating platform (IBM compatible or Apple Mac - Rich Text Format [\* .rtf]).

**Specifications for manuscripts.** Text will be double-line spaced on one side of A4 paper. Authors should consult articles in current issues of *New Zealand Sociology* on general matters of editorial style, e.g. titles and headings, indentation of paragraphs, form of referencing, etc. Do **not** underline any words in the text. Manuscripts must begin with an **abstract** of about 100 words. Please ensure that your text conforms to UK spelling rather than American.

**Graphics.** 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. Drawings (graphs, figures, etc.) should be on good quality white paper and on separate sheets.

**Footnotes and references.** Footnotes are to be reserved for substantive commentary. Number them from 1 upwards. The location of each footnote in the text must be indicated by the appropriate superscript numeral. Footnotes will appear at the foot of the page where they are located.

**Citations.** These must conform to the style set out in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 1994, (4th Ed.). Citations in the text should be indicated in parentheses, e.g., "It has been argued (Smith, 1995, p. 47) that..."; It has been argued by Smith (1995, p. 47) that..."

**References.** A reference list consisting only of those references cited in the text should be arranged alphabetically using the following American Psychological Association style:

- Book: Keane, J. (1996). *Reflections on violence*. London: Verso.
- Chapter in Book: Matei, S. (1999). Virtual community as rhetorical vision and its American roots. In M. Prosser and K.S. Sitaram (Eds.), *Civic discourse: Intercultural, international, and global media*. Stamford, Connecticut: Ablex.
- Article in Journal: Lichtenstein, B. (1996). Aids discourse in parliamentary debates about homosexual law reform and the 1993 Human Rights Amendment. *New Zealand Sociology*, 11 (2), 275-316.
- Unpublished paper: Ryan, W. (2001, June). *Globalisation and governance*. Paper presented at the Association of Asia-Pacific Social Science Research Council's (APSSREC) Seminar on New Zealand and the World: The impacts of globalisation - social, economic and cultural dimensions, Wellington.

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