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Neoliberalism, Welfare Dependency and the Moral Construction of Poverty in New Zealand¹

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What some writers are calling 'the coming welfare wars' will be largely wars about, even against, women. Because women constitute the overwhelming majority of social-welfare program recipients and employees, women and women's needs will be the principal stakes in the battles over social spending likely to dominate national politics in the coming period. Moreover, the welfare wars will ... be protracted, both in time and space... 'the fiscal crisis of the state' is a long-term, structural phenomenon of international proportions... And the fiscal crisis of the welfare state coincides everywhere with a second long-term, structural tendency: the feminization of poverty

Nancy Fraser (1989:144).

Introduction

During 1991 the National Government in New Zealand introduced the most far-reaching changes to the ideal, nature and scope of the welfare state since its inception more than half a century ago. These changes issue

¹ Part of the title — 'the moral construction of poverty' — is taken from the title of Handler & Hansfield's (1991) recent study of welfare reform in America.

primarily from a marked change of political ideology concerning the nature and proper role of the state which began with the introduction of a version of neoliberalism by the New Zealand Treasury in the early 1980s.² In essence, the shift represented a change from the conception of 'the good society' which predominated in New Zealand prior to the early 1980s, to a conception of 'the free society' which gained ground in the 1980s and became institutionalised in terms of welfare with the National Government's 1991 Budget.³

The welfare state as 'the good society' was based on the principles of social democracy. It emphasised the notion of equality of opportunity, social justice for all and the ideal of full employment. The state's role was seen as one of mediating the worst excesses of market capitalism, of attempting to redress the inequalities created by the market through interventionist strategies designed to redistribute wealth more fairly and to provide appropriate forms of income support. The welfare state as 'the good society' was universalist in orientation; it was premised on a set of values designed to promote a sense of participation in and belonging to the community based on a reasonable standard of living for all. Such a view of society, it was thought, would develop both a

² See, for example, The Treasury (1984, 1987). For accounts of neoliberalism and 'the New Zealand experiment' or model see, Boston (1990, 1992), Kelsey (1993, 1995), Boston et al (1996).

³ I provide an account of this ideological struggle between these two competing conceptions of society in 'Welfare and the Future of Community' (Peters, 1993).

sense of community responsibility and a set of collective values which would help comprise a socially and culturally integrated, politically stable nation.⁴

The so-called free society is one, as Simon Upton (1987:21) — a senior member of the present National Government's cabinet — has argued, following Hayek, in which 'free individuals pursue their own interests in the marketplace according to agreed rules of conduct'. Such a view rests upon a philosophy of individualism. It emphasises individual freedom in a privatised market society at the expense of social equality, a sense of community and collective values. This 'neoliberal' view wants to restrict the role of the state to that of a regulator, to establishing clear rules of conduct. It wants to substitute the role of the market for that of the state in all areas, including that of providing social services. It is argued by neoliberals, such as Simon Upton, that social

⁴ This is, of course, not to argue that 'the welfare state' as it developed historically was not open to criticism. Simplifying in the extreme, it could be argued that the criticisms levelled at the welfare state by neoliberals in the early 1980s are, in essence, the same criticisms levelled by the new left during the 1970s: that the welfare state was excessively bureaucratic and too centralised; that it was paternalistic and discriminatory (against women and Maori); that it created dependency; that it was too costly. One of the major differences between the two positions was the political conclusion drawn from such a critique: the neoliberals drew a conclusion for a reduction in the role of the state, whereas the new left understood the critique as arguments for improving the effectiveness and responsiveness of the welfare state.

needs are best met by allowing the market to allocate scarce public goods and that the bureaucratic state is an impediment to smooth resource allocation. This political ideology postulates an intimate connection between capitalism and individualism, championing the economic and political freedom of the individual against the state and, indeed, against all forces of collectivism. Hence, neoliberals are committed to policies of deregulation and privatisation in the realm of welfare as in other spheres of society and economy.

It is against this shift in political philosophy that recent changes to the welfare state introduced by the National Government in the 1991 Budget must be understood. Those changes represent a major shift in the underlying philosophy of the welfare state, a drastic redefinition of the Government's social responsibilities, and an alteration of the means of delivering social assistance. In general terms, the changes can be described in the following terms:

- a shift away from a universalist welfare premises based on citizen (or wage-earner's) rights to a reduced conception of a 'modest safety net';
- the abandonment of the traditional goals of promoting participation and belonging, established by the Royal Commission on Social Security in 1972;
- the institutionalisation of user-charges for social services across the board;
- substantial cuts in benefits and other forms of income support, together with much stricter eligibility criteria;

- the introduction of targeting of social assistance as an underlying 'philosophical' principle and important changes in the method of targeting;
- a radical institutional redesign of the means by which the state provides assistance, particularly in the areas of housing, health care and tertiary education;
- a shift to a greater policing and surveillance role of the welfare state aimed at reducing benefit fraud through the development of new information systems, with an emphasis on 'information sharing' between government departments.

These are fundamental changes to the principles underlying the welfare state in New Zealand. They must be assessed not in isolation but more generally against the political economy of reform and, in particular, policies of privatisation and labour market reform. The programme of privatisation initiated by the Fourth Labour Government and continued under the present National administration, has disposed of some \$14 billion worth of State assets since 1987.⁵ The Employment Contracts Act 1991 complements changes to the welfare state and consolidates the move to a privatised market society in the sense that it is anti-working class, shifting the focus of labour law away from the power of the trade unions to individual contracts, thus favouring the employer.⁶ State policy has effectively given up on the possibility of

⁵ For an account of the privatisation process in New Zealand see Bollard & Myers (1993), Bollard (1994).

⁶ See, for example, Walsh (1992).

equalising the imbalance between the supply and demand sides of the labour market and neoliberal reforms of the public sector have removed traditional means for pursuing a policy of full employment.⁷

Changes in the related social policy areas of superannuation, health, housing and education, all point in the same direction: the establishment of a privatised market society based on the targeting of social assistance and the introduction of user-charges. Under the market approach, as a first step towards a privatised welfare system access to social services are regarded not as a citizen's right but rather as part of society's reward system where those on higher incomes are permitted to buy better quality services. In the words of Ruth Richardson (1990:20), Minister of Finance in the first term of the Fourth National Government:

in 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 most of the cost of their social services.

⁷ Francis Castles (1985) provides a convincing historical account of the development of the welfare state in New Zealand as 'wage-earners' welfare state', distinguishing it from structural, institutional and residual models. See also Castles & Mitchell (1992) who, on the basis of the best international data available, identify New Zealand (in the '80s and '90s) as belonging to a 'radical' fourth world of welfare capitalism, outside the traditional 'three worlds' of welfare capitalism: liberal, conservative and social democratic.

As a second step, the redesign of the welfare state under a National administration, focused on the notion of targeting social assistance. The notion was first introduced as a dominant underlying principle for social policy by the Treasury in an annex 'A Framework for Assessing Social Policy' to *Economic Management* (1984). It surfaced again to become a recommended principle for reform of the welfare policy regime in 1990 with the establishment of the Change Team on Targeting Social Assistance.⁸ The Change Team's (1991) report provided the underlying rationale for and prefigured the proposal for a new integrated system of targeted social assistance that was announced as part of the 1991 Budget under the title of *Welfare that Works* by the then Minister of Social Welfare, Jenny Shipley.⁹ It is, perhaps, the notion of targeting as a principle and its implementation which, more than any other single policy change or issue, contributed to the 'constitution of the poor' and the 'feminisation of poverty' in New Zealand during the 1990s.

⁸ Mark Prebble, an advisor from the Social Policy branch of the Treasury (and brother of Richard Prebble, SOE Minister in the Fourth Labour Government and currently President of ACT) acted as Manager of the Change Team. Prebble (1990 a&b) was the architect of the new 'integrated' welfare system and a strong advocate of smart card technology.

⁹ For an account which focuses upon the technical issues that arise from an aggressive approach to the concept of 'only for the poor' and the lack of consistency in the various and numerous targeting measures introduced since 1990 see St. John & Heynes (1994).

If most of the arguments advanced for these changes to the welfare state initially were largely economic ones, recently the emphasis has changed to moral arguments. There has been a shift in the nature and style of argumentation by neoliberals both in government and business away from an exclusive and overwhelming attention on economic arguments to moral arguments against the welfare state.¹⁰ This paper depicts this shift as 'the moral construction of poverty' (see Dean, 1991) and traces the shift in the kind of argument advanced against the welfare state in Aotearoa/New Zealand in recent policy discourse. It also examines some dimensions of the 'constitution of poverty', focusing on the limited statistical evidence available and the so-called poverty debate.

¹⁰ In popular terms, Roger Douglas as Minister of Finance in the Fourth Labour Government, used the slogan 'no gain without pain' to legitimate both the restructuring policies and the speed of their introduction. During this period the style of argumentation focused primarily upon economic concerns. Once the fruits of economic restructuring began to become evident in budget surpluses and a much lower external debt ratio, the style of argumentation tended to emphasise moral concerns of individual responsibility and self-reliance which were advanced as reasons to deny the redistribution of new accumulated national wealth to those who had suffered most through benefit cuts. At the same time as denying more generous benefits on moral grounds, the National Government in the 1996 Budget have initiated a \$3 billion tax reduction programme which clearly favours middle and higher income groups.

The Discursive Shift in Welfare Argumentation: From Economics to Morality

Most conveniently, one can track the discursive shift in argumentation of conceptions of welfare and social policy beginning with the New Zealand Treasury's document *Economic Management* (1984).¹¹ In an annex to the main report 'A Framework for Assessing Social Policy' the Treasury argues that the achievement of social policy objectives are dependent upon the growth of the economy as a whole: 'social welfare is in fact essentially dependent on the ability and opportunity to earn an income' (p.250). The presumption is that 'efficiently functioning markets can be expected to maximise opportunities for welfare gains' and that 'in general individuals ... can pursue their own interests satisfactorily' (p.251). This 'responsibilisation' is argued primarily on economic grounds and there is no attempt to dress up arguments in moral terms. The Treasury states: 'When the government assumes responsibility for individuals' decisions, an inevitable consequence is the reduction of freedom of individuals to make their own choices' (p.253). The argument is construed by the Treasury primarily in terms of an economic calculus of individual choice. In social policy and welfare provision, the Treasury argues, considerable weight must be given to the reasonableness of this presumption. It is with this Treasury document that the notion of 'targeting' social assistance is given explicit statement.

¹¹ I discuss this document in some detail in relation to the failure of social policy in 'New Zealand: The Failure of Social Policy' (Peters, 1996).

By 1991, a significant discursive shift in argumentation has taken place.¹² In the Foreword to *Social Assistance: Welfare that Works* (1991), the then Minister of Social Welfare, Jenny Shipley, lays out clearly the rationale for changes she is about to introduce:

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. To achieve that objective we must be prepared to make bold changes and strike a new balance between the state's responsibility for the citizen and the citizen's responsibility for their lives and those their families.

The welfare changes, including benefit cuts, introduction of user charges in health and education, withdrawal of subsidised rental housing accommodation, stricter eligibility criteria and so on, are defended on both fiscal *and* moral grounds. The old policies 'discouraged effort'; the new reforms 'are designed to encourage self-reliance by providing people with sufficient motivation to move from state dependence to independence' (p.4). By the word 'motivation', Shipley, at one and the same time,

¹² This is not to argue (as one anonymous reviewer pointed out) that the discursive shift from 1984 to 1991 is more important than the shift in ideology that took place from the 1972 Royal Commission (which as the same reviewer comments 'codified a rationale for the post 1936 welfare state) to the issuing of Treasury's *Economic Management* in 1984.

both psychologises and individualises welfare dependency.

The issue of welfare dependency is again addressed by Shipley (1992:8) in a speech to Massey University's Winter Lecture Series entitled 'The Health of the Welfare State'. The Minister begins with the theme of dependency on the state and argues that the welfare state has finally over-stretched itself:

I believe that during a long period of time there have accumulated many serious disturbances in the role and function of families and other historic institutional influences such as the church, law and education systems. A consequence of these disturbances is that the Welfare State itself through its mechanisms, *produces* young illiterates, juvenile delinquents, alcoholics, substance abusers, drug addicts, and rejected people at an accelerating speed (emphasis added).

Shipley is advancing a *causal* story: the welfare state has caused illiteracy, delinquency, alcoholism, drug addiction and the like. She does not distinguish between a *correlational* analysis of the increase of welfare spending and increasing rates of illiteracy, delinquency, alcoholism, drug addiction etc. and a causal analysis; she simply assumes the latter without evidence, attributing the causes of destructive behaviour to the welfare state: 'it has sapped our will to be responsible for ourselves and reduced us to moral and material poverty'

p.6).¹³ The Minister then proceeds to criticise the artificiality of society and television-induced violence, counterpoising 'rampant welfarism' to 'individual initiative and effort', arguing that welfare legislation has contributed to the erosion of individualism and personal responsibility. This constitutes for Shipley the underlying rationale — a moral fundamentalism emphasising 'the poverty of our value system' — for the introduction of changes to our welfare system. The welfare discourse in New Zealand, represented in Shipley's account, shifts its register from predominantly economic to one that is predominantly moral.

Shipley's argument that the welfare state has itself *produced* dependency (illiteracy, delinquency, alcoholism, etc.) and her moral construction of welfare, has been given a similar formulation by Roger Douglas, immediate past president of ACT (Association of Consumers and Taxpayers), a right-wing party contesting the first MMP (mixed member proportional representation) election to be held on October 12 1996.¹⁴ Douglas in a speech at a recent ACT

¹³ Shipley's 'argument' here is like saying that because most people die in hospitals, hospitals are dangerous places and ought to be closed down. The same logical fallacy occurs.

¹⁴ Sir Roger Douglas, a former Labour MP, representing one of the poorest Auckland suburbs (Otara), was Minister of Finance in the Fourth Labour Government. He was forced to resign as Minister under David Lange, when Lange called for a halt of the juggernaut of New Right economic policies. Douglas was instrumental in setting up ACT first as a lobby group and later (1995) as a political party.

conference (April, 1996) blamed a Government monopoly in the delivery of social welfare services for encouraging the growth of 'dysfunctional families'. Here, there are early signs of a redescription of welfare dependency in pathological terms. Douglas describes a typical dysfunctional family as a one-parent household, with poor parent-child bonding, a constant change of parental care, and an environment of drugs, violence, sexual abuse, alcohol and crime. He claims that dysfunctional families make up five percent of the total, against one percent 30 years ago and a predicted ten percent by the year 2010. Unless the nature of the system was changed over the next decade, he claims, there will be a social crisis of at least the same proportion as the economic crisis in 1984.

Douglas complains that Government runs welfare, health, education and accident compensation the way it used to run railways and the Post Office. ACT, by contrast, is the only party, he claims, with a principle based on self-help; it has a welfare policy of appointing mentors to work with welfare-dependent families to try to sort out their problems.¹⁵

¹⁵ Douglas' views are considerably more complex than this. He spells out his ideas in Douglas (1980, 1987, 1993). From his earliest publication Douglas has sought to simplify the benefit system and argued to drop all income tax. In his more recent work, where he seems to have been influenced by public choice theory and the conservative American social scientist, Charles Murray (see e.g., pp.54-55, p.194), Douglas argues that the disadvantaged have a 'deep need' for 'opportunities and the incentives to make real

Similar sorts of comments have been made by members of the New Zealand Business Roundtable (NZBRT) and by 'visiting experts' who have been sponsored by the Roundtable. Douglas Myers (1996), Chairman of NZBRT, in a speech to the Canterbury Manufacturers' Association, emphasised the economic and social gains made since 1984. He disputes that there has been an increase in income disparities or loss of national sovereignty. He refers to the new NZBRT report *Moving into the Fast Lane* based upon policies of further privatisation, deregulation and tax reform. Most importantly, he identifies the area of social and welfare policy as the major source of dissatisfaction. The common problem with areas of social policy — accident compensation, health and education — are that 'they are monopoly or quasi-monopoly services and that they are run by the public sector' (p.9). These services, in Myer's

advances themselves through their own efforts'. By 1993 Douglas has shifted his grounds from purely economic arguments to moral and economic arguments concerning welfare and social policy: 'A fundamental rethink of social policy is needed. Personal and family responsibility and support should be placed first once more... The ultimate question of all social policy must be: Under what conditions can we reasonably expect a welfare transfer to accomplish more good than harm?' Douglas (1993:196) argues that welfare dependency and middle class welfare capture are the twin problems of our welfare system and he explains that one of the principal purposes behind his proposed policies is to change the incentives in the welfare system, 'to wean the middle class away from benefits they don't need and ... to give the disadvantaged a hand, not a hand-out'.

view, 'need the discipline of market forces just as manufacturing did' (ibid.).

He suggests that there has to be a fundamental rethinking of welfare policies because 'more spending is creating more problems, not fewer'. He continues:

The basic argument against welfare in its present form is not that it wastes money, but that it wastes people. It destroys families and blights hope. So the main impetus behind welfare reform is not fiscal; *it is moral* (emphasis added) (Myers, 1996:9).

Bob Matthew (1996), Vice-Chairman of NZBRT, begins in a similar manner to Myers, emphasising the gains and the 'remaining social problems'. He disputes any relationship between social problems (such as the increasing crime rate and number of people on the Domestic Purposes Benefit) and underlying economic conditions, denying any causal story. His view, based on 'expert' arguments, is that markets are inherently ethical rather than amoral. The problem has been that the welfare state has tended 'to deliver benefits as of "right"' which has led 'to a serious loss of personal responsibility' and detracted 'from people's status as moral ... beings' (Matthews, 1996:4).

Both Myers and Matthews refer to David Green who is the Director of the Health and Welfare Unit at the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA). Green was supported by NZBRT to write a report on the welfare state in New Zealand. His report *From Welfare State to Civil Society: Towards Welfare that Works in New Zealand* (Green, 1996) undertakes two main tasks, as he remarks in the

Preface, to describe both the true liberal ethos and 'the ideal of private welfare which, before the development of the welfare state, permitted the government an essential but limited role whilst the chief burden was assumed by the unpoliticised community' (p.v.). Significantly, Green begins his summary with the following remark: 'The welfare problem is moral as well as financial. Welfare programmes have tended to impair human character, above all because they have undermined the older ethos of 'community without politics'' (p.vii). Green argues that the market is not amoral; it is 'morally educational'.¹⁶ He seeks to 'remoralise' liberty in terms of the liberal tradition beginning with Adam Smith to provide a new moral economy for welfare. If the market is 'morally educational' teaching us the virtues of personal responsibility, then the proper ethos for welfare is one based solely upon voluntary assistance and mutual aid. Green's major policy recommendation for the benefit system in New Zealand is the encouragement of 'a genuinely independent voluntary sector' which is not dependent on government grants. In terms consistent with Shipley and Douglas, and with the NZBRT, Green (1996) emphasises: that the welfare state has created the dependency of the poor (p. 70); that the problem for the state is 'how best to maintain [a] ... safety net without

¹⁶ Green's (1996: 14) claim is that enlightened self-interest is not sufficient and the market does not generate its moral prerequisites autonomously; however, 'within a framework of law, a market economy tends to encourage openness' and honesty. Within such a framework, competition has an educational role to play, encouraging self-denial, self-discipline, regularity, temperance, moderation, foresight and self-command.

doing more harm than good' (p.105); and that private relief of poverty is preferable to public sector monopoly of welfare (p.133).

In terms of the definition of poverty, Green (1996:46) argues that, at least in Britain, various groups have exaggerated its dimensions: poverty should be defined in terms of hardship rather than in relation to average earnings. The problem in his eyes is that 'wide support for relief of hardship has been exploited by egalitarians to cultivate support for equality'. He derives lessons for reforming the welfare state in New Zealand from Charles Murray's analysis of American welfare, arguing that the emergence of an underclass in New Zealand is associated with the loss of certain values; respect for work, family duty and respect for the law. He argues for the private relief of poverty, with a minimum safety net despite its harmful side effects. Any state policy of assisting the poor ought not to be based upon the concept of welfare rights for 'the demand for rights removes the relationship between giver and the receiver from the moral domain. It *de-moralises* the relationship' (p.106). Green (1996:107) clearly believes that 'private philanthropy is capable of assuming responsibility for assistance of the poor'.

James Tooley, another IEA 'expert' sponsored by the NZBRT, was brought out to New Zealand for two and a half weeks in May 1996 to write a report on the direction of education reforms. Tooley is Director of the Education Unit at the IEA and is the author of the IEA publication *Education Without the State* (1996). Tooley (1996) argues that there is no justification for state intervention in education, except for a funding safety-net. He, like

Green, argues the case on what he considers to be moral grounds.¹⁷

Welfare Dependency and the Feminisation of Poverty

In much of the right-wing preoccupation with poverty the emphasis has been on accounts which purport to explain poverty through an inquiry into the behaviour of those who are poor. A contemporary variant of this line of argument is that which construes the problem of welfare dependency as one of incentives, and proposes as a solution various schemes of negative income tax (e.g., Friedman & Friedman, 1980). The argument is that the welfare system produces perverse incentives such that potential beneficiaries refrain from work rather than working to escape their poverty. Another variant of this line of thinking, which expresses a moral political economy associated with a renewed commitment to individualism, is that which returns to questions of moral character to stress notions of self-reliance and personal responsibility (e.g., Mead, 1992; Gilder, 1981).

By contrast, Handler and Hasenfield (1991:1) in *The Moral Construction of Poverty* turned these discourses on their head to explore the symbolic construction of poverty as a means of accounting 'for the convoluted history of America's response to poverty, particularly of single mothers and their children'. Handler and Hasenfield are concerned to inquire into the ways in

¹⁷ See also Roger Kerr's (1996) 'Transforming Education: The Case for Vouchers', Speech to the Epsom Business Breakfast Forum, Auckland, March 4. Kerr is Executive Director of the Business Roundtable.

which society constructs 'the poor' as moral outcasts on the basis of welfare policies which both reflect and enforce normatively sanctioned social roles, and which punish any deviation from those roles.

Others have also reflected upon the way in which both the moral status of poverty carries political implications and public policy can become an instrument for expressing and creating moral categories. Evelyn Brodtkin (1993:649-50), in a perceptive review of Handler and Hasenfield, argues that:

what is really being morally constructed is not poverty as a condition but 'the poor' as an enemy of society. It is 'the poor' as a social group that is peculiarly vulnerable to moral disapprobation ... public policies have constituted effective, albeit imperfect, mechanisms for defining and sanctioning poverty as a form of social deviance. This occurs not only through formal statutory regimes but also through the informal bureaucratic practices that give policy its concrete expression.

Brodtkin begins the process of demystifying 'the moral construction of poverty' which was given a particular expression by a series of popular works emerging during the Reagan era: Michael Kaus' *The End of Equality*, Lawrence Mead's *The New Politics of Poverty*, George

Gilder's *Wealth and Poverty*.¹⁸ Her remarks are worth recording:

These writings are significant, not only for who they blame for America's ills, but also for what they absolve. Implicit, and at times explicit, is the assumption that the larger social and economic order within which poverty occurs holds no systematic biases, barriers, or other impediments to a general realization of the American dream. From this perspective, disproportionate poverty among minorities and women is attributed to the deviant behavior of individuals within these groups, not to contemporary social prejudice, labor market stratification, the availability of suitable child care, or the unequal distribution of harms associated with the changing structure of the American economy.

She proceeds to examine historical constructions of the poor and the moral dictates involving work, marriage and the domestic code. Brodtkin is concerned to explore the way in which adjustments to welfare policy occur around the questions of who is morally excused from work, constructions of the domestic code, and who is excused from childbearing and child rearing outside of marriage. She notes that already — in what some fear as the next wave of welfare reform — 'some states are revising policy to provide marriage bonuses ('wedfare') and procreation penalties ('family caps')' (p.667).

¹⁸

It is these very works that Green (1996) uses, in part, as a basis for redirecting the reform of New Zealand's welfare regime.

Following a similar line, Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon (1994) ask why debates about poverty in the United States are being reframed in terms of welfare dependency. They analyse *dependency* as a keyword of the U.S. welfare state used by both conservatives and liberals, and reconstruct its genealogy. They argue that dependency is an ideological term and that in current debates it refers to the 'condition of poor women with children who maintain their families with neither a male breadwinner nor an adequate wage and who rely for economic support on a stingy and politically unpopular program called Aid to Families ...' (p.313). They continue:

Still, naming the problems of poor, solo-mother families as *dependency* tends to make them appear to be individual problems, as much moral or psychological as economic. The term carries strong emotive and visual associations and a powerful pejorative charge. In current debates, the expression *welfare dependency* evokes the image of 'the welfare mother', often figured as a young, unmarried black women (perhaps even a teenager) of uncontrolled sexuality. The power of this image is overdetermined, we contend, since it condenses multiple and often contradictory meanings of dependency. Only by desegregating those different strands, by unpacking the tacit assumptions and evaluative connotations that underlie them, can we begin to understand, and to dislodge, the force of this stereotype (pp.313-314).

They distinguish four registers of meaning for the word dependency: economic, sociolegal, political and moral/psychological. Shifts in the semantic properties of

dependency have reflected historical developments. Preindustrial dependency, in its English usage, meant simply subordination: while women were subordinated their labour was visible and valued in the network of labour which constituted the fabric of social hierarchies. With the emergence of industrial capitalism and forms of individualism dependence/independence became sharply dichotomised in economic terms. Under the hegemony of wage labour, women's domestic and parenting labour was both occluded and devalued. In the modern period *dependency* shifts register to the moral/psychological, as an expression of individual personality. Independence expresses an ideal whereas dependency expresses a kind of social deviancy. The dichotomy between independent/dependent personality or moral types maps onto a series of hierarchical oppositions central to modern culture: masculine/feminine, public/private, work/care, success/love, individual/community, economy/family and so on.

Most recently, welfare dependency emerges as a postindustrial pathology. Social scientists and others began in the 1980s to write about chemical, alcohol and drug dependency — euphemisms for addiction. Often welfare claimants are (falsely) assumed to be addicts or are categorised alongside those suffering addictions, such that the pathological connotations of dependency (as an addiction) infected the category of welfare dependency. Contemporary policy discourse, Fraser and Gordon (1994:328) argue, exemplify exactly this kind of stigmatisation in two major streams:

The first continues the rhetoric of pauperism and the culture of poverty. It is used in both conservative and liberal, victim-blaming or non-victim-blaming ways, depending upon the structure of the argument. The contention is

that poor, dependent people have something more than a lack of money wrong with them.

The flaws indicated may be located in biology, psychology, or in upbringing or cultural background. Fraser and Gordon identify the conservatives, Gilder (1981) and Mead (1986), and liberals such as William Julius Wilson and Christopher Jencks, with this first stream.

A second stream of thought begins from neoclassical economic premises. It assumes a 'rational man' facing choices in which welfare and work are both options. For these policy analysts, the moral/psychological meanings of dependency are present but uninterrogated, assumed to be undesirable. Liberals of this school ... grant that welfare inevitably has some bad, dependency-creating effects but claim that these are outweighed by other, good effects like improved conditions for children, increased societal stability, and relief of suffering.

Conservatives of this school, like Charles Murray (1984), argue with liberals over the question of incentives¹⁹, and

¹⁹

On the question of the relation between welfare and work incentives see Atkinson & Mogensen (1993) who present a north European perspective (based upon cases of Sweden, UK, Germany and Denmark). They conclude their major study: 'There are undoubtedly ways the welfare state, and taxes necessary to finance it, cause people to work less than they would otherwise have done. In the medium and long term there may be adverse consequences for economic performance. In this sense there are leakages from the bucket in

while there are real and significant differences, both schools rarely historical situate the notion of dependency nor interrogate its presuppositions.²⁰

There are elements of both kinds of discourse in New Zealand²¹, together with more empirical attempts both to plot the growing dimensions of poverty and to analyse policies and strategies for reducing 'welfare dependency'. The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project (see Waldegrave et al, 1996; Stephens et al, 1995), in the first comprehensive analysis of poverty in New Zealand since the major changes introduced to the welfare state in 1991, found that in 1992/3: 18.5 per cent of New Zealand households and 32.6 per cent of all children existed below the poverty threshold; single parent households with children were by far the largest household type living in poverty (73 per cent of all single

carrying our redistribution. However, the extent of such disincentives should not be exaggerated. Our review of the evidence suggests that a number of effects which have been identified are relatively small in size. Perhaps, more importantly, there are relatively few situations in which a disincentive effect has been clearly established: there are many areas where we have a great deal to learn. To dismantle the welfare state on the grounds that it causes disincentives would risk losing its very definite advantages for the sake of an uncertain pay-off in terms of unproved economic performance' (pp.296-7).

²⁰ For a recent book that does examine presuppositions of *dependency* see Schram (1995).

²¹ Gareth Morgan (1995) has provided a 'conservative' interpretation of the so-called 'new Victorians' in relation to New Zealand's welfare policy.

parent families live below the poverty line, comprising 21 per cent of 'the poor'); the incidence of poverty is two and a half times greater among Maori and more than three and a half times greater among Pacific Island families than it is among European families; housing costs are the largest single cause of poverty (Waldegrave, 1996: 1). The Project provides clear evidence that 'in absolute terms, the incidence of poverty more than doubled from 4.3% in 1984 to 10.8% in 1993' (Stephens, 1995: 107).

It is clear that even in its own terms neoliberal social policy — first formulated by the Treasury as early as 1984 and institutionalised as a targeted regime of social assistance by the National Government in 1991 — has failed.²² Paradoxically, perhaps, neoliberals, while advocating moral values of self-reliance, individual effort and freedom from dependence upon the state and, accordingly, cutting back on benefits to improve incentives, have been responsible for deepening the 'culture of dependency' and institutionalising poverty. In spite of targeting social assistance, of restructuring social policy to avoid middle class capture, 'the poor' are worse off. Specifically, targeting has led to the pauperisation of beneficiaries. This is clearest in the case of sole parent families, especially those headed by a female parent.

The Department of Social Welfare (1993:4) have reported upon changes to family structure in the following terms:

²²

For a summary of the evidence in regard to unemployment and income distribution see Peters (1996). See also Kelsey (1995), Chapter 11, 'The Social Deficit'.

The sole parent population increased rapidly over the 1981 to 1991 period, until a quarter of all families were one parent families in 1991. The increase has been particularly rapid in the Maori population, with 44 percent of all Maori families with children being one parent families in 1991. This compares with 32 percent of Pacific Island families and 18 percent of European families. When compared with partnered parents, sole parents generally showed characteristics of disadvantage in terms of employment, income, education and housing tenure. Within the population of sole parents, 29 percent were Maori and 7 percent Pacific Island. These sole parents stand out as the disadvantaged of the disadvantaged in terms of the same variables.

The report from the Department of Social Welfare does not indicate the number of sole parent families headed by women yet, overwhelmingly, they make up the greatest proportion of sole parent families. St John (1994:3) reviews current financial assistance policies for families in New Zealand and maintains that not only has the welfare system 'become much less generous since 1991' but that 'direct family assistance, at least since 1986, has been seriously eroded'. St John argues that redistributive mechanisms now in place for families are inappropriate. On the one hand, current financial assistance to families does not recognise the changing nature of the New Zealand family²³; on the

²³ St John (1994:2) writes: 'In 1981, just one in six families with dependent children had one parent. By 1991, this proportion has risen to one in four with the fastest growth in sole parenting among those who had never married. Among two parent families, it is now more common for both parents to work than for one to

other, changes to family support, in particular, a move to a more tightly targeted system, has created a poverty trap making 'it difficult for those in the lowest income groups, including many in full-time work, to improve their position, especially when the targeting is based on the family unit not the individual' (p.3). St John (1994:34) argues that the restoration of the real value of family assistance is the starting place for reform and that this restoration should be accompanied by the inclusion of a universal child benefit component.

While St John does not use the term 'feminisation of poverty' it is, perhaps, implicit in her analysis. It is clear that an increasing proportion of the poor in New Zealand are women; women, on the whole, are the ones who retain custody of children; women earn substantially less than men; and the effects of poverty on children have been well documented.²⁴ The old equation 'community care=family care=care by women' becomes doubly true with the shift to a residual welfare state.

be the sole earner and the other a full-time homemaker... As well, second marriages, blended or reconstituted families, extended families, parents with responsibilities to children in more than one households, young adults dependent on their parents for longer periods of time, and same sex couples with and without children are all much more common'.

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For a discussion of the feminisation of poverty in New Zealand see Nola (1994: 3) who writes: 'Economic gains made by women as a whole over the last 30 years have been slipping away under the monetarist economic policies followed by both the Labour and National governments since 1984'.

The Director of the Social Policy Agency, David Preston (1996) identifies the problem of 'dependency' that New Zealand faces with the continued increase of those receiving income-tested benefits as a proportion of the working population: from 2.1 percent in 1961, remaining stable until 1966, the proportion increases quickly to 3.6 percent in 1976, 6.2 in percent in 1981, 7.5 percent in 1986, 15.4 percent in 1991, and over 20 percent in 1996. According to these figures, the greatest proportion of dependency (those on Domestic Purposes Benefit, Sickness Benefit and Invalid Benefit) showed no positive response to the decline in unemployment following the upturn in the economy after 1993-94 (in fact, it appears that there has been a transfer of beneficiaries from the unemployment benefit to other forms of benefit). What is of interest in the statistics Preston presents is not simply the growth in the sole parent beneficiary population or unemployment benefit. One would expect an increase of both these indices as a direct result of 'restructuring' by successive governments since the administration of the Fourth Labour Government. Unemployment began to decline after the high point in 1993-94 and yet while the proportion on the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) remained static briefly for time during 1991-93 — largely a result of welfare cutbacks introduced by the then Minister of Social Welfare, Jenny Shipley — they continued to rise thereafter. Perhaps, even more importantly, is the fact that the origins of increasing 'dependency' for those receiving the DPB indicates that this trend was firmly established well *before* the advent of neoliberalism. The trend becomes obvious in the mid-1970s and seems to originate in the complex changes in the nature of the New Zealand family which which pre-date the advent of neoliberal economic and social policies. This is not to argue any causal simple relation between the welfare state and the rise of the sole female parent family. It certainly provides no grounds for suggesting that neoliberal strategies to 'responsibilise'

beneficiaries through the provision of 'incentives' or to 'remoralise' the relation between individual welfare and earning an income, have in any way had a beneficial effect in either strengthening 'the family' or relieving 'the feminsation of poverty'.

Preston, on the eve 'Beyond Dependency' — a major international conference sponsored by the Social Policy Agency of the Department of Social Welfare²⁵ — proposed six major initiatives as strategies to move 'beyond dependency'. He specifies these as: (i) making work pay; (ii) strengthening families; (iii) introducing greater conditionality;

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The conference caused great controversy and protest because it excluded participation from organised benefit groups and lobbyists (the cost of attending was \$1500) and was seen as window-dressing or legitimisation for future government policy. In particular, Jean Rogers presence (Jean Rogers is an administrator in the Division of Economic Support in the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and a former executive director of the Wisconsin Republican Party) was seen by some as a way of softening up the public to radical welfare reforms based on 'workfare'. It is important to note that the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB) became work-tested as of April 1st. The work test applies once the beneficiary's youngest child reaches the age of 14 years. failure to take up a job or training opportunity without sufficient reason will be penalised. In this context, it is constructive to note that Belinda Cass, a sociologist and key speaker at the conference, maintained that the real issue to be confronted was not dependency but entrenched levels of unemployment and the increasing casualisation of jobs.

(iv) support services and active labour market policies; (v) active case management and customised services; (vi) greater community involvement. The thrust of these strategies is, perhaps, both more bureaucratic and pragmatic rather than openly ideological. While the strategies recognise the neoliberal 'incentives' argument at the same time they ignore 'the feminisation of poverty', the risks of social pathologisation, and the way in which neoliberal policy discourse of welfare dependency morally constructs 'the poor'. While the language of Preston's paper does not openly risk the rhetoric of 'remoralisation' of work and dependency, nevertheless it operates uncritically with the same concepts and categories.

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'Here Be Dragons': The New Zealand News Media and International News.¹

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*Enlighten me now O Muses,
tenants of Olympian homes
For you are goddesses, inside on
everything, know everything
But we mortals hear only the news
and know nothing at all.
The Iliad²*

Abstract

This paper presents the New Zealand component of a cooperative international research project mapping international newsflows in the 1990s, one of the largest and most extensive research projects undertaken in the

¹ Earlier versions of this paper have been presented at the Asia Pacific Regional Conference of Sociology, Manila, Philippines, in May 1996, and at the 1996 annual conference of the Sociological Association of Aotearoa(NZ). I am grateful to my colleagues, journalists and the *New Zealand Sociology* referees for their pertinent and helpful comments in the preparation of this paper.

² Homer's *The Iliad* quoted in Stanley, R.H., (1987), *Mediavisions*, N.Y: Praeger.

field of international communication. A content analysis of key media in 41 countries was undertaken during September 1995 with the purpose of mapping the current geography of international news coverage by major national media outlets in order to produce baseline data on international newsflows in the globalizing, post-Cold War era. While the value of the New Zealand data on its own is limited, it nevertheless provides an opportunity for a preliminary examination of New Zealand news media representations of international affairs and geopolitical realities in the 1990s. At this stage, the use value of the data is largely heuristic, indicating future research directions for developing a more complete analysis of the organisational and discursive attributes of international news coverage in the New Zealand media.

Introduction

In the past decade, traditional geopolitical relations and realities have been transformed. New communications and information technologies have wrapped the world in a web of connections, facilitating the flow of capital and the consolidation of a global marketplace. At the same time, relationships between nation states are being redefined in the post-Cold War era as economic imperatives take precedence over militaristic concerns, and new hierarchies of political, economic and social relations are articulated.

Regional economic communities of interest are emerging as the new forces within a rapidly globalizing economy. In the Asia/Pacific region, there is an increasing number of official visits, conferences, meetings and initiatives as prime ministers, politicians, officials and entrepreneurs

seek to establish a common regional forum for 'growing' economies and profits, and to provide an effective counterbalance to the EC and NAFTA, the trade blocs of the North. Take the New Zealand situation for example. Recent visits by senior Chinese finance officials to the high priests of economic rationalism at the New Zealand Treasury, and between China's People's Liberation Army Deputy Chief of Staff and New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the opening of the New Zealand Embassy in Hanoi - all illustrate at a local level, global shifts away from entrenched oppositional ideological positions towards a mutual interest in fostering regional stability and economic growth.

"Asia Pacific exists as part of a world that is in an extreme state of change. The disintegration of communist regimes has meant that the traditional rivalries between the superpowers are no longer relevant and that a different set of forces is emerging to determine the new world order." (Dobbs-Higginson 1993:ix). The opportunities offered by the uncertainties of social and economic transition are not lost on politicians intent on the strategic repositioning of their nation within the new world order. A growing emphasis on the politics of identity is exemplified in a speech by Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahatir when opening the New Zealand Asia Institute in March 1996.

The Far East, that exotic place, is no more...
East Asia is in the West, West of America that is.
The Eurocentric world is finished, as much as
(China's) Middle Kingdom is no more. The world
is round. Any part or any point of it can be the
centre; the reference point. Everyone must
orientate himself. The people of the West Pacific

are Asians. So when you study the Asians and Asia... think of them as Westerners. America is in the east and Europe is the Far East.³

Over the last two decades, New Zealanders have become familiar with the discursive repositioning of their own country's location and identity as different local communities of interest assert that the traditional identification with Britain and its other europeanized colonies, Northern Europe and North America has become redundant. Alternatives have emphasized the importance of recognizing New Zealand's indigeous polynesian character, its geographical location in, and historical ties with, the South-west Pacific and/or its growing economic interests in, and integration with, the Pacific Asia region, (i.e. Asian nations with a Pacific seaboard).

The fracturing and politicization of subjectivities and identities within the New Zealand social formation reflects the global resurgence of nationalism and identity politics. Numerous bitter and bloody ethnic and religious wars, all domestic conflicts, indicate a world-wide state of *disorder*. While the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union, and the rapidly globalizing world economy are shifting the conceptual contours of 'the world', to proclaim a '*new world order*' seems premature. The fragmenting of nations through internal *disunity* reveals the mythic nature of the idea of a 'global village' implicit in the rhetoric about the globalizing nature of contemporary life. As Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi

³ Quoted in Asia 2000 Foundation of New Zealand Newsletter, No.8, May-June 1996, p.5.

has noted:

What seems clear is that, far from an end to history, or the loss of the subject, identity politics and cultural preservation are going to be amongst the hottest issues of the next century that will be fought out internationally and intra-nationally, with profound political and economic consequences. The apparent triumph of late capitalism in 1989-90 and the demise of the so-called second world of state socialism, suggest that ideological politics in the classic sense is going to be less important than the revival of identity politics in the future. (Sreberny-Mohammadi, 1991:135)

A critical site where struggles over personal and political identity will be played out is the international news exchange system. This global 'news net' (Tuchman 1978:196) is constituted of international news agencies, transnational and domestic news organisations bound together by contractual arrangements that facilitate the efficient filling of the daily 'newshole'. Digital and satellite technologies have enhanced the integration of media infrastructures, and the speed and ease with which stories circulate within this system. The new communications technologies and the consolidation of corporate media infrastructures have created the possibility of a 'global newsroom' (Gurevitch 1991) with the capacity for near-instant communication to globally-distributed audiences.

The immediacy of electronic journalism enables the news media to make compelling interpretations of critical events still in the process of unfolding, to the millions

who consume news as part of their daily routine. While academics may debate the degree of media influence on the formation of political culture and popular attitudes, the global newsroom with its global audience is taken seriously by those in power. The speed at which decisions and events are reported internationally means that often, they use the media as a source of information, as well as an instrument for managing public opinion. The agenda-setting power of the international news media is also recognised by those groups seeking visibility, legitimacy and ultimately, cultural power. "One of the major projects of new nations, or people anticipating or promoting nationhood, is to develop national media, telecommunications and information systems" (Mosco 1996:207) in order to gain some degree of control over the mediated processes of representation within the international news exchange system and the distribution and consumption of its products.

Critiques of global news flow imbalances have dominated international communications debates since the 1970s when it became widely recognised that economic and cultural colonization of developing countries continued despite having acquired political independence. (Schiller 1976, 1977; MacBride 1980). These inequities were formally acknowledged at the UNESCO General Conference in Paris in 1978, where the call was made for a 'new, more just and more effective world information and communication order'. "The international movement to create a New World Information and Communication Order was largely based on a coalition of nations united principally by their lack of power to control their own communications systems, to influence their own position in the transforming space of flows, and to create their own communication

policy." (Mosco *ibid*)

A number of empirical studies in the 1980s confirmed the continued dominance of international news flows by the 'big four' Western news agencies - Reuters, Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Press (AFP) and United Press International (UPI) and that the Third World received far more news about the First World than vice versa (Sreberny-Mohammadi *et al*, 1985; Kariel and Rosenvall 1984; Stevenson 1984; Masmoudi 1980; Boyd-Barrett 1980, 1977). Since these studies were done, there have been many changes in international relations and economics, media technologies and the political economy of the news industry. It is therefore time for a fresh assessment of international news gathering and global newsflows.

This paper gives a preliminary reading of data from the first stage of a research project conducted by an international team undertaking such an investigation. The International Newsflows in the 1990s Project is a cooperative, world-wide study of international news flows co-ordinated by Professor Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi, Director of the Centre for Mass Communication Research at Leicester University, and Professor Robert Stevenson of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. Under their direction, researchers from 41 countries participated in a content analysis of key national media during September 1995, looking at the stories told, where they come from, and whose values and interests they represent. The purpose of the project is to construct a baseline data set for project participants to conduct their own investigations into national and international patterns of usage of news agency services,

convergences and differences in story usage across services, the degrees of independence and dependency of national media on the international news agencies, the news values and discourses structuring international news in each national context, and the cultural and political implications of these.

International Newsflows Project Design

The co-ordinators of the 1995 International Newsflows in the 1990s project, Sreberny-Mohammadi and Stevenson, have had a long association with this field of inquiry. In 1978, they were part of a five-person IAMCR⁴ team that developed and implemented a research design for examining coverage of 'foreign countries representing different social systems and development stages' in the international news media, at the request of UNESCO. The research methodology drew on the design of Golding and Elliot's project for the International Broadcast Institute⁵ and McQuail's 1977 British newspaper content analysis for a Royal Commission on the Press (Sreberny-Mohammadi *et al* 1985:14). The conceptual frame and research instruments, detailed in the 1985 report, *Foreign News in the Media: International Reporting in 29 Countries*⁶, have been replicated in the 1995 design with one exception - in the

⁴ International Association for Mass Communication Research

⁵ Now the International Institute for Communication (IIC).

⁶ Also known as the 'Foreign Images' study, it was written by A. Sreberny-Mohammadi.

latter study, sports and business news were included in the list of topic variables to be coded.

Sample:

The sample size required for the 1995 content analysis was at least three domestic news media. The criteria for sample selection was the 'elite' or most influential national daily newspaper, a popular, high circulation newspaper, the leading national primetime television newscast and a 'elite' (public service) newscast with a limited audience size but influential in shaping public opinion and debate. However the structure of the New Zealand media does not allow these criteria to be met exactly as there is no *national* daily newspaper and no public service television.

In the absence of a national daily, *The New Zealand Herald* was selected for the leading newspaper. A metropolitan daily published in Auckland, its daily circulation is around 246,000⁷, which is a quarter of total daily newspaper sales in New Zealand. *The New Zealand Herald* is owned by Wilson & Horton, a long-standing local company which, in mid-1995, became 30% owned by Dr Tony O'Reilly's Ireland-based Independent Newspapers .

The second newspaper chosen for the New Zealand sample is *The Dominion*,⁸ a metropolitan daily published in

⁷ New Zealand YearBook 1995

⁸ Owned by the other party of the duopoly controlling New Zealand newspapers, INL (Independent Newspapers Ltd).

the nation's capital, Wellington. Its circulation of 65,000, is the next largest to *The New Zealand Herald*.⁹ *The Dominion* is owned by Independent Newspapers Ltd, whose major shareholder is Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation Ltd.

Between them, Wilson & Horton and INL own 84% of the country's 33 daily newspapers and command 37% of the news media market in New Zealand.¹⁰ Their flagship dailies, *The New Zealand Herald* and *The Dominion*, are similar in look and number of news pages. Greater volumes of classified advertising are carried by *The New Zealand Herald*, which is one of the largest in the world.¹¹ The newspapers are similar in editorial style and ideological orientation, reflecting the liberal democratic interests and values of their middle-class readers. Both are required reading for the country's political and business elites.

Television New Zealand was New Zealand's publicly-owned (and only) television service until 1989,¹² when it became a commercially-oriented 'state-owned enterprise'. Its nightly hour-long news programme *One*

[INL 46%, Wilson & Horton 38%].

⁹ *Information about Newspapers* (1995), The Newspaper Publishers Association of New Zealand (Inc).

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Tucker (1991).

¹² 1989 was also the year New Zealand got its third television channel, TV3, which is owned by Westpac Bank (42%) and the Canadian television company Canwest Global Communication Corporation (20%).

Network News at 6 is New Zealand's highest rating regular television programme, averaging an estimated nightly audience of around 600,000¹³ viewers, or just under a quarter of the total population.

In the absence of a public television news service, I chose Radio New Zealand's Public Radio newscasts *Morning Report* (6.00 am - 9.00am) and *Checkpoint* (5.00pm - 6.00pm) for the 'elite' broadcast news source.¹⁴ *Morning Report* attracts an estimated 323,000 listeners and *Checkpoint*, 131,000¹⁵. These programmes constitute a significant site in the defining and contesting of public affairs and social issues in New Zealand because of their public broadcasting orientation. The programmes provide the only mainstream news alternative to the commercial news media, providing continuous updates on running stories as well as in-depth analysis and interviews with the newsmakers of the day.

Table 1 shows audience/circulation size of the four news organizations making up the research sample.

¹³ AGB:McNair 1995.

¹⁴ I did not code news items which were updated in the hourly bulletins.

¹⁵ Cumulative audience figures for 1995. Personal communication, Radio New Zealand Research Department, 1996.

Table 1:
Research Sample Audience/Circulation Sizes

TVNZ:	600,000
New Zealand Herald:	246,000
RNZ (Public Radio): am/pm	323,000/131,000
The Dominion	65,000

Notwithstanding differences in production and reception, the sample represents four key sites in the New Zealand public sphere. Their centrality within the prevailing liberal democratic structures of political and economic power, and their interpretive engagement in symbolic production, make them influential agenda-setters. With regard to international affairs, they largely determine what New Zealanders hear about, and how we position ourselves in relation to those events and issues, i.e. who we see as 'our' friends and enemies abroad, what and who we think and care about.

Time Sample:

For the 1995 international newsflow study two chronological weeks were selected. The weeks chosen for the content analysis were the first and third weeks of September, 1995, starting on Sunday 3. However, for the New Zealand content analysis, I did not include weekends. Radio New Zealand does not have *Morning Report* or *Checkpoint* on the weekends. With regard to the newspapers in the sample, neither is published on Sunday. Therefore the time-sample for the New Zealand study is the 4-8 September and 18-22 September.

The time-frame of the content analysis is unusual in that it samples only 2 consecutive weeks. The sample is also atypical in that it combines print and broadcast media although the most effective methods of sampling differs for each. Riffe, Aust and Lacy's 1993 study indicated a constructed week procedure is preferable to random or consecutive day samples for newspapers. In 1996, Riffe, Lacy, Nagovan and Burkham found that a random selection of two days from each month was the most efficient method of sampling for broadcast news. Consecutive week sampling is particularly problematic for television content analyses due to their structure which limits the amount of news broadcast daily within a programme compared to the volume carried by newspapers. Thus a longer time sample is required as too short a period exposes research results of a television programme content analysis to the risk of being skewed by continued coverage of a highly newsworthy event unfolding over a period of days or even weeks.

Because the rationale underlying the September 1995 content analysis was to examine international coverage within a number of national contexts simultaneously, the research designers decided an abbreviated combined print/broadcast sample would be sufficient for mapping global news flows and comparisons between countries to be made. However, it must be acknowledged that the combined and abbreviated sample does compromise the validity of a data set for one country only, as is the case in this paper. While acknowledging such methodological limitations, the New Zealand data still contains analytic potential in that while it is unable to provide conclusive proof of trends in news media coverage, it nevertheless

suggests patterns that may be explored and tested in future research.

The Core Coding Schedule:

The coding instrument used for the content analysis is “a general purpose technique for quantification of news content” (Sreberny-Mohammadi, *op.cit.*). The basic unit of analysis is a news report, in print or broadcast form, dealing with an event that has or is occurring outside the country where the researcher is located. Twenty-nine specific variables were coded for, the most important being: focus, type, length, source, dateline, country or countries, topic themes, actors and the gender of correspondents and actors.

The variable ‘focus’ enabled identification of whether a story dateline was domestic or international, and in either case, whether there was significant or no involvement of the home country. This allowed inclusion of stories that may have a domestic origin but are about events with a significant international component. e.g. New Zealanders protesting the French nuclear tests at Mururoa.

The variable ‘story type’ enabled identification of international items in terms of whether they are news reports, editorial/commentary or a photograph. For the print media, ‘length’ was not measured in terms of column inches but according to the emphasis it was given, i.e. whether the story was a major, medium or minor item within the overall paper/page or bulletin. Items in the print media that had large headlines, occupied more space than other items, and had graphics and/or photographs were considered ‘major’. Major television news items included live footage with original voice-over, and possibly an interview. Brief filler stories

which, in the print media, are compiled into a column with a title like 'World in Brief', and in the broadcast media, are only a few seconds in length, were identified as 'medium'. 'Medium-sized' stories were all those which fell between the two, being neither leaders nor 'filler'.

Provision was made for identifying two sources, on the basis that often an item by the organisation's own correspondent may include acknowledgment of an agency source which has been used in producing the report.

The variable 'dateline' recorded a geographic code for the country where the item originated, as did the code for the variables 'most important country' and 'other countries'. The variables for 'type of event' were broken into four categories, allowing distinctions in item construction to be noted such as whether the item dealt with an event or a process, whether it emphasized disruption/conflict or not, whether it covered routine or exceptional matters, and whether the item was a product of journalistic initiative or a reaction to the activities of others.

There thematic categories for coding topics given in the coding schedule were:

international politics, international economics/trade,
international military/defense/conflict,
international aid/ development/relief,
domestic politics, domestic economics,
social services/problems/education, crime/justice/police,

culture/art/history/performance/review, sports,
entertainment/ personalities, oddities/animals/human
interest, energy/conservation/environment/pollution,
natural disasters/ accidents/weather,
civil war/domestic conflict, religion, human rights,
globalization/internationalization, migration/immigration,
gender issues,
ethnic issues/identity politics/assimilation, other.

I added another 5 categories to the topic , e.g. peace issues, environmental issues, but these were statistically insignificant in the final analysis as were the additional geographic codes I added to the 752 provided.

The September content analysis coding data was processed using *Statistica* software.

The New Zealand Data

This preliminary analysis of the New Zealand data produced from the September 1995 content analysis looks at three variables only : the subject/topic of international news items in the four New Zealand news organisations making up the New Zealand sample, the attributed source of the item and the country where the story was based.

Table 2:
Common Topics

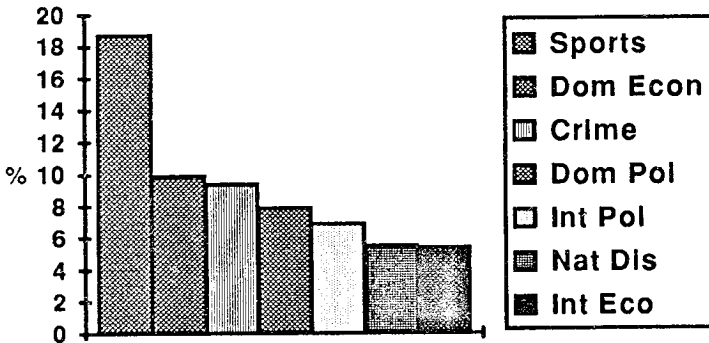
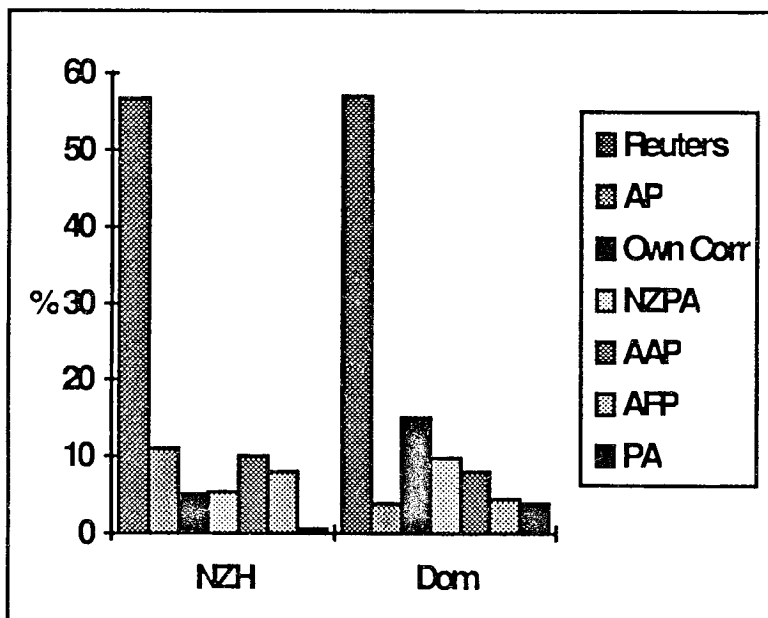


Table 2 shows topic coverage as a percentage of the total coverage within the sample. Sports is clearly the most common subject of international news, making up 19% of total coverage. The fact that sports news dominates international coverage justifies its inclusion as a topic variable in the core coding schedule. It is significant that the next most frequently reported topic rates only half the coverage given sport, reflecting the importance given to the subject by editorial staff. 10% of coverage was about domestic economics and 9% were stories about crime, the police and 'justice', followed by domestic politics (8%), international politics (7%), natural disasters and international economics (5%) and terrorism/political violence (4%).

Because of the structural differences between print and broadcast news production, these are looked at separately with regard to sources.

**Table 3:
Sources - Print**



The marked predominance of Reuters as source – curiously providing 57% of international items for both *The Herald* and *The Dominion* – reflects the enduring historical relationship between Reuters and the New Zealand Press Association, the principal source of international news for New Zealand's 33 daily newspapers. Reuters cable service supplied New Zealand's first national press association, the United Press Association (UPA) which was formed in 1880, four years after the laying of the Australian–New Zealand link

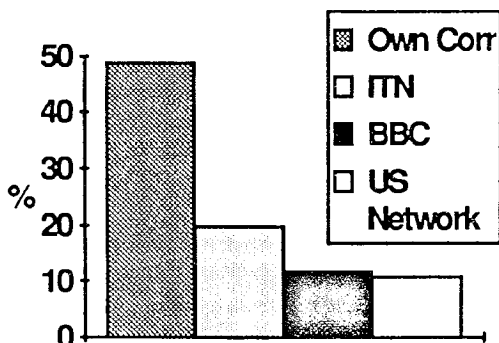
of the undersea telegraph cable¹⁶. As principal shareholders in the present-day NZPA, *The New Zealand Herald* and *The Dominion* continue to rely on this long-standing arrangement with Reuters.

Table 3 tells us more about the limitations of the content analysis method than the true nature of international news sources in the New Zealand print media as it does not show the extent of the NZPA's involvement in selecting and packaging international news for its member newspapers. While items may be attributed to various international agencies, these have come through the NZPA whose editors decide the menu of stories from the international news agencies NZPA members can select from. Nor does it show the organisational arrangements shaping the menu, which in turn explain the large Reuters contribution. The NZPA has three wires – one dedicated to the Reuters service out of Hong Kong, an Australian Press Association (AAP) collation of material from the other international news agencies; AP, AFP, PA, Kyodo, Knight-Ridder, Reuters and AAP correspondents, and a wire dedicated to financial news from AAP and its own correspondents (Atkinson, 1995). Thus there is a need for further research which will allow the organisational arrangements and editorial assumptions determining selection to be more clearly analysed. Another research area deserving further investigation is the differences in editorial preference for various international agencies, for example, the significant difference in proportions of news sourced from

¹⁶ Day 1990:230; Sanders 1979.

Associated Press (AP) in *The New Zealand Herald* and *The Dominion*.

Table 4: Sources - TVNZ



Leaving for the moment, the high proportion provided by their own correspondents (49%), which will be discussed shortly, TVNZ's sources show a preference for ITN (19.8%) and an interesting balance in their use of British and American television news sources: BBC 11.6%; U.S. network (CBS, ABC, NBC) 10.7%. Once again a potentially fruitful study is indicated. It would be worthwhile to investigate the editorial rationales underpinning contractual arrangements with international suppliers, particularly with regard to the weight given to cultural and economic factors by TVNZ news executives.

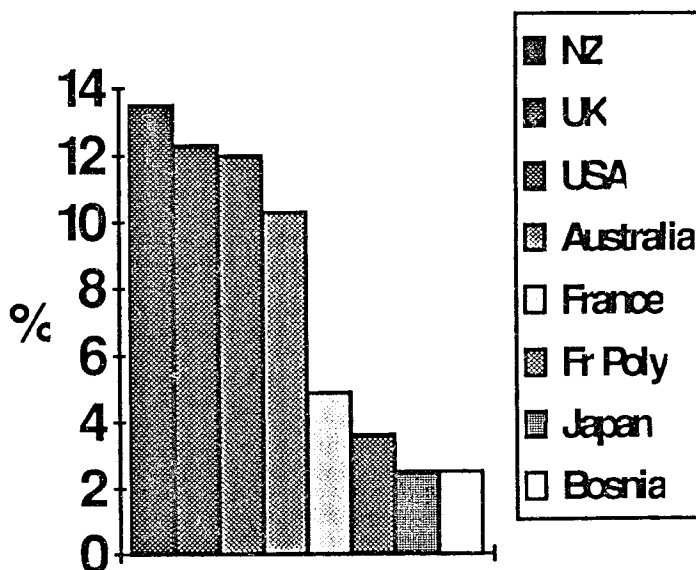
As for Radio New Zealand, while it subscribes to AAP, AFP, Reuters, CNN and the BBC services, 99% of its international news items in the sample were provided by their own correspondent. Unlike TVNZ and the print media who tend to rely on items as they were provided by wire or satellite services, RNZ uses agency material as the basis for compiling their own reports. Unlike the

two newspapers in the sample, who have only one foreign correspondent, based in Australia, and TVNZ who has two – one in Sydney, the other in London, RNZ has nine overseas correspondents and draws on an international network of over 200 stringers, which it uses to prepare their own independently researched and produced coverage. (Henry 1995).

However, the September 1995 content analysis figures for 'own correspondent' for all media in the sample cannot be considered typical. There would have been much higher proportion of sources during the time of the content analysis than was normally the case due to three big, drawn-out international stories which were occurring near where their own correspondents were located, and which were highly relevant to domestic interests, i.e. the UN Women's Conference, VE Day celebrations in Britain, or the French nuclear tests at Mururoa. For example, this latter event dominated both international and domestic news in the New Zealand media. It was the lead story for weeks, and was the subject of extensive reporting, analysis and commentary, from the moment the French government announced its intentions to resume testing. New Zealand's nuclear-free policy, the government's decision to send a navy frigate to observe the test site, stories being filed by journalists present on the navy frigate and the Greenpeace vessel at the test site observing and protesting France's decision to resume the tests, the diplomatic dramas in New Zealand and France, all these factors blurred the boundaries between domestic and international news, preventing a representative picture of typical coverage of world affairs and the international community by the New Zealand media during the time of the content analysis.

Other events with a peculiarly high-New Zealand involvement also occurred during the time sample. VE Day celebrations commemorating the end of WWII in London were covered by New Zealand correspondents located in London, increasing the rate of 'own correspondent' coded for as sources in the content analysis, and the extent to which the United Kingdom rated in the measurement of country coverage. The return of New Zealand soldiers who had been on U.N. service in Bosnia also dominated international coverage in the New Zealand media at the time.

Table 5: Common Countries



The composite data on the variable 'country' reveals what seems to be an anomaly in a study of international news flows, for New Zealand scored highest as the most frequently reported country (13.5%). One explanatory factor could be the dominance of sports stories as a percentage of the total topics since many of these cover the progress of New Zealand sports teams travelling overseas. The figure also reflects the exceptional situation that was occurring at the time of the content analysis of New Zealand when most of the big international stories had an unusual degree of New Zealand involvement.

Then again, the high profile of the home country figuring significantly in the scores for the 'country' variable could be a typical attribute of international coverage by the news media. After all, most news services are produced with a domestic readership/audience in mind and, inevitably, selection of international items will proceed on the basis of editorial determinations of what the readers/audience are interested in *viz a viz* the international arena. This is to be expected. The issue here is just how broad or how narrow are the set of editorial assumptions about reader/audience interests that underpin the newsroom 'rule of relevance'. Furthermore, should these be limited by what the consumer wants, or should the news media be responsible for providing a range of news items and features that extends common cultural horizons and breaks down prejudice and ignorance rather than reinforcing cultural insularity, xenophobia even, and the objectification of human communities as 'foreign' and 'other'?

These are important questions which deserve close attention for the data indicates a clear editorial preference for news from the United Kingdom (12.3%) and the U.S.A. (12%), with Australia not far behind (10.3%). The prominence of France (4.9%), French Polynesia (3.8%), Japan and Bosnia (2.8%) as the next most frequently mentioned countries reflect the 'story-driven' nature of media coverage which spotlights a particular location due to the occurrence of an event determined newsworthy by international news agency and domestic editors. During the time the September 1995 content analysis was conducted, France and French Polynesia were newsworthy due to the nuclear tests, Bosnia because of the scale of the war tragedy, and Japan, due to a political scandal that was rocking the boat in a regional superpower. But at the time of writing, they do not feature prominently in the news, in comparison with the consistently high proportion of items dealing with people and events in the UK, the USA and Australia.

In the 1990s, New Zealand's historical identification with Britain, Europe, the USA and South Africa is being challenged by the growing 'asianization' of its markets and communities. Eight out of New Zealand's top ten export markets are in Asia and, in 1994, 40% of its exports went to the region compared with 15% in 1971. 45% of tourists in 1995 came from the Asian region, rising by nearly 18% to 89,000 on the previous June quarter.¹⁷ Of the 54,811 immigrants approved in 1995, almost 50% were Asian. Taiwanese replaced the British

¹⁷ New Zealand Immigration Service, February, 1996.

as the largest group of immigrants (22% of total)¹⁸ and significant numbers came from China (9%), South Korea (7%), India (6%) and Hong Kong (6%).¹⁹

Immigration, trade and tourism statistics reflect increasing interaction and exchange between Asia and New Zealand, and the growing relevance of the region to New Zealanders. Given the importance of 'relevance' within the normative framework guiding editorial judgment in the New Zealand news media²⁰, one might reasonably expect to see these trends reflected in a significant proportion of international news coverage focusing on the Asian region. Greater awareness of New Zealand's geographical location within the South Pacific, and enduring political, defence and economic ties with the region (Dick 1996), suggests that the Pacific microstates should also be considered relevant and newsworthy by New Zealand news editors.

¹⁸ By the middle of 1996, the largest group of immigrants to New Zealand were once again British. The reduction in numbers of Asian immigrants is due to a politically manipulated backlash that resulted in a change in selection criteria in immigration policy.

¹⁹ New Zealand Immigration Service, *op.cit.*

²⁰ For a discussion of this editorial norm, see Winter (1993, 1994).

Table 6: Asia/Pacific Coverage

	REGIONAL COVERAGE	TOTAL COVERAGE
French Polynesia	23%	3.6%
Japan	16%	2.5%
China	14.3%	2.2%
Hong Kong	9.8%	1.5%
Philippines	6.7%	1.0%
Indonesia	3.6%	0.6%
South Pacific	3.6%	0.6%
Papua New Guinea	2.6%	0.4%
Malaysia	2.2%	0.3%
Vietnam	1.7%	0.28%
Thailand	1.3%	0.2%
Sth Korea	1.3%	0.2%
Solomon Islands	1.3%	0.2%

Despite the geographical proximity and historical relationship between New Zealand and the South Pacific island nations, the growing Asian constituency within New Zealand politics and the increasing integration of New Zealand into the regional economy, Table 6 shows media coverage of the Asia/Pacific region is minimal. Of the 37 nations represented in the Asia/Pacific geographic codes, 23 received less than 1% or no

coverage during the period of the content analysis. The most frequently mentioned country was French Polynesia (23% of Asia/Pacific coverage but only 3.6% of total coverage) but as has already been discussed, this is atypical due to the nuclear testing. The high proportion of news about Japan is perhaps more typical, given the well-established trading relationship between the two countries and its powerful economy.

The most commonly covered aspects of life in the Asia/Pacific region are economic and trade-related activities, politics and natural disasters. The high proportion of sports and crime news that dominated coverage when all countries are considered is not repeated here. Only Japan and the Philippines has crime news as a significant component of its coverage in the New Zealand media. For the latter, this correlates with the democratization of the Philippines and the consequent liberalization of its media, some of which routinely report on crime and corruption in high places. The absence of crime news from the other countries (with the exception of Hong Kong) reflects the regional media's co-option into supporting the nation-building agendas of paternalistic governments typical of most Asian and Pacific Island nations, and the lack of public acknowledgment by their officials of criminal offending and crime-control activities.

Table 6 indicates a narrow definition of 'relevance' operating in New Zealand newsrooms, particularly when Asia/Pacific countries and peoples are concerned. The relatively high rates of coverage for Japan and Hong Kong, when considered in the light of item topic, suggests these countries dominate news of the region

because of their significance to New Zealander business interests as strong regional economies. Hong Kong is also newsworthy because of the unique political situation faced by the former British colony as it prepares for its return to China's sphere of influence. In the case of China, while an emerging economic force in the global market, coverage here reflects media interest in the U.N. Women's conference being held at the time of the September '95 content analysis. The South Pacific Forum's conference in Papua New Guinea is the reason for its, and the Solomon Island's, relative prominence in regional coverage at the time of the study. Finally, the data demonstrates the invisibility and near-invisibility of South East Asian states, and the South Pacific micro-states within international news coverage by the New Zealand media.

Conclusion

This preliminary examination of the September 1995 content analysis data clearly indicates the pronounced eurocentric focus of international news coverage in the New Zealand media, suggesting support for the view of Sreberny-Mohammadi that "while the map of global cultural flows is more complex in [the 1990s] it is not as yet fundamentally realigned." (Sreberny-Mohammadi 1991:130)

This reading suggests parallels between contemporary journalistic practices in New Zealand and the practices of early medieval European cartographers who labelled the unknown regions of their maps with the warning 'here be dragons'. While these maps indicate expanding physical and technical horizons, they also revealed the cultural insularity of their makers. Time passes and realities shift. The technical capacity now exists to report on matters

from all over the globe with an immediacy that transforms traditional notions of time and space. Yet though the technology exists to create a global village of neighbours chatting across an electronic back-fence, Table 5 clearly shows that we prefer to talk to ourselves. New Zealand is the most frequently mentioned country in overseas news in the New Zealand news media, and overall, international coverage tells us more about ourselves, our interests and concerns, than about the other countries constituting the international community. Its representation of the international arena indicates that the New Zealand media's traditional gaze to its 'western' allies endures as does the representation of 'the world' in terms of the dualistic construct of familiar and the foreign. In sum, international coverage is predominantly inward-turned and narrowly defined, dominated by stereotypes and archetypes that persist like a residual limb, no longer justified by geopolitical conditions or conducive to breaking down cultural myths and enhancing understanding across cultural barriers.

New Zealand news executives justify their cultural insularity on the grounds that New Zealanders are not interested in overseas news unless a New Zealander is involved, or an event occurs of such dramatic impact that it cannot be ignored (Winter, 1994). Their market is domestic and the first rule of the news business is relevance. But do the criteria by which relevance is currently defined by New Zealand news executives and editors reflect the interests and concerns of New Zealanders? Are they justified by contemporary international relations and realities?

The Eurocentric focus and lack of willingness of news

managers to invest in placing their own correspondents in the region was the subject of a seminar held last year by the Asia 2000 Foundation, an agency established by the National Government to promote trade and cultural links between New Zealand and its Asian neighbours. In the address given by John McBeth, Jakarta Bureau Chief of the Far Eastern Economic Review, he compared the reliance of New Zealand news media on the major news agencies to the Australian situation which has "20 fulltime correspondents or cameramen based in Asia, along with a network of stringers and other contributors." (McBeth 1995:1) McBeth criticized the local journalistic assumption that New Zealanders are not interested in news about Asia, arguing that "if you don't provide readers with a taste, how do you know whether they want to sit down for a meal?" (*ibid*) He cites the growing number of economic partnerships and New Zealand tourists visiting Asia as indicative of a much greater interest than is assumed by the business managers of these organisations. He also points to the ignorance of New Zealanders about the 'dramatic transformations' occurring within the region "that modern communications should have brought to their doorstep." (*ibid*:3) Another speaker at the same conference typified the attitude of the New Zealand media towards Asia as like an old man approaching a young bride: "fascinated, sluggish and apprehensive (Davies 1995). But why? What structural and cultural factors make this so? This is the question that will be guiding me as I continue with my research.

The data used here was generated from a research methodology that had been developed for another purpose, that of producing a baseline data set for mapping international news flows. I have used it as it stands for drawing some conclusions about patterns of

international coverage and sources within the New Zealand national context. But as I have made clear, these should be regarded for what they can tell us about what was happening at the time of the study and should not be considered representative of typical patterns.

While the composite data set from the September 1995 content analysis will enable better understanding of how international news flows within global communications networks are structured within the wider systems of global capitalism and its transnational industrial and financial networks, on its own, the New Zealand data raises more questions than it provides answers. At this stage, its value is largely heuristic. While it is of some use to indicate significant patterns and trends, it is rich in its suggestiveness for future research directions. The principle value of the September content analysis and news production site visits has been to prepare for further fieldwork and content analyses so that a strong empirical base can be laid for a comprehensive understanding of the structure and implications of international newsflows in New Zealand to be developed.

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**The Social Scientist at Pooh Corner: In which
Winnie-the-Pooh and some Friends elucidate
Research Methods**

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Since the publication of A.A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928), a veritable cottage industry has emerged attempting to interpret what these books 'really' mean (see Thwaite, 1992: 158-190). The most recent products of that industry suggest that the Pooh stories need to be read as philosophy (Williams, 1995) or, alternatively, as exemplifying the principles of Taoism (Hoff, 1993;1982). This paper argues that the Pooh stories can only be fully understood from a social science perspective, and that such a perspective reveals Winnie-the-Pooh as a model social science researcher.

Using the issue of social research ethics as an illustration, the paper demonstrates how Pooh (with a little help from his friends) provides a number of refreshing insights into the realities of social science research. Whatever else there may be at Pooh Corner, first and foremost there is a thriving social science research community.

To illustrate this point, this paper will consider the issue of social research ethics and demonstrate how Pooh (with a little help from his friends) provides important insights into what the consideration of ethics involves. However, similar illustrations can just as easily be drawn using Pooh to exemplify survey research methods,

fieldwork techniques, the experimental method, discourse analysis, feminist research, the relationship between theory and research, how to use statistics, or how to write about research¹. Why Pooh should prove such a model researcher begins to make sense once you focus on the *process* of social research. The research 'process' can just as easily be understood as a research 'expedition', and if Pooh and Friends can go on a successful expedition to the North Pole (Milne, 1988: 99-117), then a research expedition should prove no trouble at all.

Ethics in Social Research: What can we learn in the 100 Aker Wood?

I have chosen the issue of 'ethics' in social research to champion the idea of 'the social scientist at Pooh Corner' because it is one that is often made unnecessarily complex (for instance Lee, 1993; Bulmer, 1982). Part of the justification for labelling Pooh a 'model' social scientist arises from the way he (and friends) provide clear insights into social science research. While these insights may require us to grasp with subtlety, they rarely ask us to deal with unnecessarily complexity. As elsewhere, on the topic of ethics, the Pooh stories get straight to the point

Pooh was so busy not looking where he was going that he stepped on a piece of the Forest which had been left out by mistake (Milne, 1981:39)

¹ For those of you already way ahead of me here, Yes, the Pooh stories provide rich teaching resources in any of these areas!

Here, clearly, the lesson is that the consideration of ethics in social research is *precisely* about looking where you are going to ensure you *don't* step on a piece of the forest that has been left out by mistake. To put this another way, 'ethics' tell the researcher that they must think carefully about where they step, and that it's not good enough to say that it wasn't us who left that piece of Forest out in the first place. From this general statement about the purpose of ethical principles, the Pooh stories move on to deal with a number of those ethical principles in detail.

In the interests of brevity, the rest of the paper focuses on how the Pooh stories exemplify the 'core' ethical principles which underlie all social research (and form the basis for more detailed 'codes' of ethics). That 'core' are the ethical principles (de Vaus, 1995; Babbie, 1992)

1. First, do no harm
2. Ensure all participation is voluntary
3. Guarantee anonymity or confidentiality
4. Avoid deceit
5. Report faithfully

1 First, Do No Harm

As we are all aware, the social researcher's first obligation is *to do no harm* to anyone who takes part in their research. Usually this means paying special attention to the information that is released from the study, but it is also about treating those in the study with consideration and sensitivity. In this instance the Pooh stories demonstrate the importance of such sensitivity by providing an example of how *not* to act. This demonstration is provided by Tigger,

who is deliberately portrayed in an insensitive manner to make this point.

When Piglet had finished jumping he wiped his paws on his front and said "what shall we do now?" and Pooh said "Let's go and see Kanga and Roo and Tigger" and Piglet said "Y-yes. L-lets" - because he was still a little anxious about Tigger who was a very bouncy animal, with a way of saying How-do-you-do which always left your ears full of sand, even after Kanga had said "Gently Tigger dear" and had helped you up again (Milne, 1981:58)

Here, clearly, the message to other social researchers is to ensure their 'how-do-you-do's do not leave those in the study with their ears full of sand. A simple enough lesson. But Tigger provides a further demonstration of the how not to 'do no harm'² while out climbing in the Forest. Pooh and Piglet are taking a stroll and mistake Tigger for a Jaguar. Piglet, not wanting to participate in any research where Jaguars might be involved, expresses his scepticism

"What do Jaguars do?" asked Piglet, hoping that they wouldn't.

"They hide in the branches of trees and drop on you as you go underneath" said Pooh.
"Christopher Robin told me"

² The repeated use of Tigger to demonstrate unethical behaviour makes it clear that he has been set up as the 'straw person' in the Pooh stories. I would like to have described him as the 'straw Tigger' to make this point, but that sounds altogether too much like 'paper tiger' and I didn't want to run the risk of getting lost in all those mixed metaphors.

"Perhaps we hadn't go underneath, Pooh, in case he dropped and hurt himself"

"They don't hurt themselves" said Pooh. "They're such very good droppers".

Piglet still felt that to be underneath a Very Good Dropper would be a mistake, and he was just going to hurry back.... (Milne, 1981:64)

This passage needs to be read in tandem with the previous one because it provides the complementary lesson about how research can 'do harm' (and, hence, be unethical) despite the best intentions to the contrary. The second of the two passages also contains an extra lesson for social researchers; note how Piglet begins from a position that *wants* to look for the best in any research situation - his first concern is for the well-being of the researcher ("...in case he dropped and hurt *himself*"). This then changes with the realisation that it is Piglet himself who may be at risk in this particular research setting. And deciding that any research which may harm him is not the kind of research he wants to participate in, he hurriedly withdraws from the project.

Implicit in this passage is an understanding of what it is that ethics is all about; social research is based on the trust of those being researched, and no research project can continue without it. Moreover, the entire enterprise of social research depends equally on the trust of those that have not yet taken part in any research (but who could potentially do so in the future). If those people were to shy away from participation because of the fear of being dropped on, even by a Very Good Dropper, social research would soon become fruitless. Finally, the real brilliance of this passage is contained in the way it makes the point that this remains the case regardless of your ability at Dropping.

2 Ensure All Participation Is Voluntary

The second major ethical principle in social research is that everyone who participates in the research needs to do so *voluntarily*. As a researcher you cannot compel them to take part. This time it is Rabbit who provides social researchers with a model of how *not* to act³. In *The House at Pooh Corner* (1981; 125-143) we read about a great storm which destroys Owl's house. In the aftermath to the storm, Rabbit organises the search for a new house for Owl. But while his intentions are laudable, his methods are laughable. Overlooking the need to make all participation voluntary in this particular research initiative, his first step is to leave a message for everyone which reads

I AM SEARCHING FOR A NEW HOUSE FOR
OWL SO HAD YOU RABBIT (Milne, 1981:143)

While Rabbit's punctuation leaves a lot to be desired, his intentions are clear; he will compel everyone to take part in his plan. However, the lesson for social scientists inclined to imitate this kind of research design is contained in the desultory results. We read

Pooh followed slowly. He had something better to do than to find a new house for Owl.... he had promised Piglet days and days ago that he would [make up a Pooh song about Owl's old house] (Milne, 1981:143)

Pooh's reluctance to take part in Rabbit's research gives us an insight into the paucity of good quality material that comes from those studies where people feel compelled to

³ A 'straw Rabbit' too?

take part. The conflict with a prior commitment results in resentment towards the researcher, and ensures poor data is gathered. The lesson here is clear, even in the Hundred Aker Wood, research that compels people to participate can only provide artificial, not natural, settings.

Often social scientists attempt to compromise on the notion of 'voluntary participation' by 'encouraging' people to participate in their research. Such encouragement may be in the form of the promise to provide a complete copy of the final report or it might take the form of some small token of appreciation. While the research community agrees that this is acceptable and often commonsensical, it introduces the ethical requirement that the researchers deliver what they promise. Rabbit's anger at Very Small Beetle provides an insight into the feelings of one who has not had their expectations of participation realised.

"Did he say Good-bye and thank-you-for-a-nice-time?" said Rabbit.

"Ha!" said Rabbit. After thinking a little, he went on: "has he written a letter saying how much he enjoyed himself, and how sorry he was he had to go suddenly?"

Christopher Robin didn't think he had.(Milne 1981:45-6).

Clearly, Rabbit's growing frustration at Very Small ('Small', for short) drives home the lesson that people will only remain willing to participate in future research if they are treated well.

3 Guarantee Anonymity or Confidentiality

The third obligation social researchers have is protecting the identity of those who take part in the research. Participants are 'anonymous' when no-one (not even the researcher) knows who provided what responses. Participants are 'confidential' when the researcher *can* put a name to a set of responses but agrees not to. The important point here is to distinguish between them and never promise anonymity if all the research can really deliver is confidentiality. As always, Pooh understands the subtlety of this distinction. In the story where Pooh and Piglet nearly catch a Woozle (Milne, 1988:30-39), we catch up with them both as they are walking around a Spinney larch. There, they find some unknown tracks and Piglet becomes very excited

"Tracks" said Piglet, "Paw-marks". He gave a little squeak of excitement. "Oh Pooh! Do you think it's a - a Woozle" (Milne 1988:32).

Pooh, ever conscious of the need to protect the identity of his research participants, provides a circumspect answer

"It may be" said Pooh. "Sometime it is, and sometimes it isn't. You never can tell with paw-marks" (*Ibid.*)

The lesson here is beautiful in its simplicity: if Pooh really did not know if those tracks were the tracks of the Woozle, then its anonymity has been assured. However, if Pooh did know that they were its tracks, his circumspection perfectly guarantees confidentiality for it.

4 Avoid Deceit

For those new to social research, being 'ethical' is sometimes seen as something which gets in the way of finding things out. Anyone who has taught research methods has had to respond to some student or other arguing that 'surely if we could just observe people without telling them or if they didn't know we were social scientists, we could find out more about them? And if we are interested in finding out about what is true, surely that must make a little deception all right?'. As a research community, social scientists know deceit constitutes serious misconduct but it is rarely communicated with the force that matches the one at Pooh Corner.

In the very first chapter of *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Milne, 1988: 1-19), we read about how Pooh attempts to steal honey from a bee hive high in a tree⁴. This attempt is thwarted by a breaking branch, and Pooh falls into gorse-bush, after bouncing off several large branches on his way down. Emerging from the bush, feeling very sorry for himself, Pooh tells us

"It all comes of *liking* honey so much. Oh, help!"
(Milne, 1988:7)

To drive home the point that deceit is no way to conduct research (in this case, some clever market research about consumer resistance), Pooh attempts to reconceptualise his

⁴ Here this 'theft' can be interpreted narrowly as the theft of plagiarism or, as I prefer, more widely as a reflection of the 'theft' of legitimacy which is demanded by the use of deceit.

research design by using a balloon. As though wanting to push the point home about the inappropriateness of this attempt, Pooh says

"I shall try to look like a small black cloud. That will deceive them" (Milne, 1988:11)

Once Pooh has floated up towards the hive, and fails to distract the bees as hoped, he enlists Christopher Robin into his deceitful plan.

"Christopher Robin" he said in a loud whisper
"Hallo!"
"I think the bees *suspect* something"
"Perhaps they think you're after their honey" (Milne, 1988:12)

Then, Pooh asks Christopher Robin

"Have you an umbrella in your house?"
"I think so"
"I wish you would bring it out here and walk up and down with it and look up at me every now and then, and say 'tut-tut, it looks like rain'. I think if you did that it would help the deception which we are practicing on these bees" (Milne, 1988:13)

To summarise what happens next, not only does Christopher Robin's antics fail to 'help the deception' but the whole endeavour ends in tears. In the mad scramble to leave this particular research site, Pooh is attacked by the bees, Robin shoots Pooh, Pooh tumbles to the ground, and, much later, Robin is forced to flee the hundred acre wood in shame. Who can fail to see the guilt implicit in his final words to Pooh

"Pooh" said Christopher Robin earnestly, "If I - if I'm not quite -" he stopped and tried again - "Pooh, *whatever* happens, you *will* understand, won't you?" (Milne, 1981:176)

A similarly unpleasant fate meets Tigger's own attempts at deceit. Tigger, who has no idea what it is that Tigger's do, boasts to everyone about his ability to do, well, everything.

"Can [Tiggers] fly?" asked Roo
"Yes" said Tigger, "[Tiggers] are very good flyers"
"Oo!" said Roo "can they fly as well as Owl?"
"Yes" said Tigger. "Only they don't want to" (Milne, 1981:58)

Having told everyone that Tiggers can fly as well as Owl, jump as far as Kanga, and swim too, his bluff is finally called when he claims they can climb trees 'much better than Poohs'.

"Climbing trees is what they do best" said Tigger.
"Could they climb this one?"
"They're always climbing trees like that" said Tigger "Up and down all day"
"Oo Tigger, are they *really*?"
"I'll show you..." (Milne, 1982:60)

While Tigger *does* manage to climb *up* the tree successfully, the realisation that he would also need to climb *down* again fills him with horror (and leaves him wishing he had gone swimming instead). As a consequence, Tigger is trapped high above the ground. Forced to face the full weight of his deceit, he contemplates remaining in the tree, with his shame, 'for ever and ever'. Eventually rescued by the quick thinking of his colleagues,

the implicit message could not be clearer: deceit is a one way climb up the tallest tree in the forest that will only leave you stranded and wishing you had gone swimming instead. It's an important lesson.

5 Report faithfully

As the person who carried out the research, the researcher is the only one who really knows about the shortcuts that were required to actually complete it. Consequently, they have an ethical obligation to share these short-cuts with their readers. Unfortunately, often the model of research that is presented to students in text-books and methods classes is a seamless one, and this may give rise to the temptation for researchers to omit their short cuts and underestimate the research's short comings. This is certainly what Rabbit did when he roped Pooh into his devilish plot to drive Kanga from the Forest (Milne, 1988: 81-99), and its consequences provide a clear lesson for all social researchers.

"The best way" said Rabbit, "would be this. The best way would be to steal Baby Roo and hide him, and then when Kanga says 'where's Baby Roo?' we say 'ah!'".

"We say 'Aha!' so that Kanga knows that we know where Baby Roo is. 'Aha!' means 'we'll tell you where Baby Roo is, if you promise to go away from the Forest and never come back'..." (Milne, 1988:84)

Pooh went into a corner and tried saying 'Aha!' in that sort of voice. Sometimes it seemed it seemed to him that it did mean what Rabbit said, and sometimes it seemed to him that it didn't. "I suppose it's just practice" he thought. "I wonder if

Kanga will have to practice too so as to understand it" (*Ibid.*)

Pooh's discomfort with his 'aha!'s reflects the discomfort that affects us all when we try to bluff our way through the thin patches with clever words or jargon. Unfortunately for the plotters, Kanga refused to be convinced by *their* version of events. Seeing through their superficial attempts to disguise their real intentions, Kanga vents her frustration on Piglet. Demonstrating why Kangas are 'Generally Regarded as One of the Fiercest Animals', especially when deprived of its young, she proceeds to nearly drown, then poison, him. Only Christopher Robin's arrival saves him from prolonged indignation. This story should provide a suitable warning to those who wish to bluff their way through their research reports.

The same point about admitting short cuts is made again in the story where Pooh and Piglet build a new house for Eeyore (Milne, 1981:1-18). Unfortunately, with the best intentions in the world, they succeed in destroying Eeyore's original house in the process of building him a new one in a different part of his field. When they realise their mistake, they foolishly try to cover their tracks

"Well" said Pooh ... "the fact is" said Pooh... "well, the fact is" said Pooh... "you see" said Pooh... "it's like this" said Pooh and something seemed to tell him that he wasn't explaining this very well, and he nudged Piglet again.

"It's like this" said Piglet quickly... "Only warmer" he added after deep thought (Milne, 1981:15)

Clearly, the 'something' that seemed to tell Pooh that he wasn't explaining himself very well was an implicit awareness of his unethical behaviour. In the case, Pooh's guilt has important emphasis simply because it was all so unnecessary - a clear research plan, complete with a statement about their commitment to ethical principles, would surely have been greeted with a housing re-location grant. Or at least some seeding money for a scoping study. Instead, Pooh and Piglet attempt to displace their guilt with humour, and bury their shame with song

... and Christopher Robin went back to lunch with his friends Pooh and Piglet, and on the way they told him of the awful mistake they had made. And when they finished laughing, they all sang the outdoor song for snowy weather the rest of the way home (Milne, 1981:16)

Another aspect of reporting the shortcomings of any research is the principle that you should do so in a full and frank manner. People less experienced at research need to be made aware that those who have more research experience will likely know when someone is trying to mislead them. Outright lying (see above) is a dead giveaway, but even fudging the story a little will eventually be caught out. This time it's Piglet who falls into this trap.

"Did I really do all of that?" [Piglet] said at last
"Well" said Pooh, "in poetry - in a piece of poem - well, you did it, Piglet, because the poetry says you did. And that's how people know"
"Oh!" said Piglet. "Because I - I thought I did blinch a little. Just at first. And it says 'did he blinch no no' That's why"

"You only blinched on the inside" said Pooh, "and that's the bravest way for a Very Small Animal not to blinch that there is"

Piglet sighed with happiness, and began to think about himself. He was BRAVE... (Milne, 1981:150)

Here it's obvious to anyone familiar with the rest of Piglet's work that he may be many things, but he is certainly not 'brave'. Pooh misleads, while Piglet deludes. Even with the best intentions in the world, it is a recipe for disaster.

Conclusion: Towards a Reconceptualisation of Pooh Corner

In this paper I have drawn on Winnie-the-Pooh, and some of his friends in the Hundred Aker Wood, to demonstrate the core ethical principles of social research. These demonstrations have shown how the issue of 'ethics' can usefully be reduced to the idea of ensuring you are looking where you are going in your research, and hence ensuring you don't 'step on a piece of the forest that has been left out by mistake'. We have seen how disregard for this core set of ethical principles can result in

1. Being attacked by bees, shot by a close personal friend, and having to flee your research setting in shame
2. Being stuck in the dark, damp, undergrowth listening to the delusional ramblings of a meglamaniacal Rabbit.
3. Being nearly drowned, and in real danger of being poisoned.

4. Tumbling into a gorse-bush, after bouncing off several large branches on the way down.
5. Having your 'how-do-you-do's providing those in the study with their ears full of sand
6. A one way climb up the tallest tree in the forest that will only leave you stranded and wishing you had gone swimming instead.

Interpreted against the backdrop which Pooh and Friends provide, the lesson to all social researchers is simple - The price of overlooking ethics in your research is simply too high. Don't!

But while Pooh and Friends *do* provide an insight into research ethics in a novel and refreshing way, the larger point of this paper is to argue that the very best way of all to understand the Pooh stories is to read them from a social science perspective. Reading these stories as 'The Social Scientist at Pooh Corner' shows us just how many important lessons they contain for those new to social science research. Pooh, along with Christopher Robin, Piglet, Rabbit, Owl, Eeyore, Kanga, Baby Roo, Tigger, the Jaguar, and the Heffalump, provide many lessons about the practice of social research. Sometimes by showing us exactly what to do, but more often by pointing out what not to. It is for these reasons that I am sure that, whatever else there may be at Pooh Corner, first and foremost there is a thriving social science research community. One that all of us should think about forming closer ties with.

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Davidson

who visit there with me. This remains so even though everyone of them has beaten me at Pooh sticks.

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**Music Scenes and National Identity:
Popular Music and the Press in
Aotearoa/New Zealand**

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Introduction

Sarah Thornton identifies three broad categories of print communications media which document youth music subcultures. Micromedia include publicity fliers and listings, as well as fanzines; niche media, largely consisting of the professional music press and lifestyle magazines, function as 'subcultural consumer magazines' and 'construct as much as they document subcultures'; and the various forms of the mass tabloid press, which 'develop as much as distort youth movements', often by negative coverage of music trends and their social manifestations, and by creating moral panics which 'baptise transgression' and provide disapproving coverage which 'legitimises and authenticates youth cultures.' All three types of media, Thornton argues, 'do not just represent but actively participate in the processes of music culture' (Thornton 1994:176, 181, 183, 188).

National music cultures and subcultures are particularly dependent on these media for self-reflection and self-definition. The function of music micro-media is generally supportive, as marketing operations or 'grass

roots' organs establishing a communications network or community within a music subculture, while fanzines serve as 'the active voice of the consumer and the quintessence of subcultural communications' (Thornton 1994:185). Niche media such as the professional music press offer a more public, critical forum of taste formation, consumer guidance and constituency maintenance. What follows will focus on print outlets of micro, niche and mass media as they relate to the construction and documentation of popular music scenes and subcultures in Aotearoa/New Zealand, presenting a typology of the local music press.

As a small, peripheral and geographically isolated country of less than three and a half million inhabitants, New Zealand is particularly dependent on the printed word for information about itself and the rest of the world. This is reflected by the fact that it has the highest reading rate of any nation in the world. (A Special Survey of New Zealand in the *Australian* newspaper of July 11, 1996, p.29, stated that the literacy rate was 99.8%). It also has a relatively high number of local newspapers and magazines, a wide range of magazines that deal with both local and international popular music, and many more which include music reviews. The music magazines fall into a number of fairly clearly identifiable categories, based on their differing musical aesthetics or emphases, their socio-cultural functions, and their target audiences. Each occupies a particular place in a segmented market, in which popular music journalism has become collapsed into, and often indistinguishable from, music publicity. Despite this symbiosis, journalist critics of popular music continue to function as significant gatekeepers and arbiters of taste.

Dailies and weeklies

Local community papers, the student press, the weekly nationally-distributed *Sunday Star-Times*, and the major NZ dailies all have regular segments devoted to previews and reviews of popular entertainment and the arts, which include several pages of music reviews and articles. The coverage of popular music in these usually includes regional or national chart listings, reviews of local concerts, record releases, and, largely associated with the latter, mini-biographies of performers. Some journalists have established reputations associated with their writing on popular music, most notably Colin Hogg in the Auckland-based *New Zealand Herald* and the *Sunday Star-Times*, and Stephen Hill in Wellington's *Dominion*. While there is significant attention to New Zealand popular music and musicians, especially in the student press, the majority of the coverage is of overseas artists.

In a 1994 study of New Zealand rock music reviewing, former rock critic David Cohen claims that the first regular newspaper review column on rock and roll, entitled 'Middlebrow', appeared in the weekly tabloid and scandal sheet *The Truth* in 1956. Cohen states that this column simply reflected mass media trends in the UK and the USA: 'In name ... and accent it was no different from any rock coverage of the time - merely an antipodean extension of Tin Pan Alley, where every record was a Hit or Miss' (1994:157). The moral panics surrounding rock and roll which filled the tabloid press throughout the English speaking world in the wake of Bill Haley's *Rock around the Clock* also occurred in New Zealand, where in 1959 local rock and roll star Johnny Devlin was

regularly mobbed by teenage female fans who fought for pieces of his shirt, and headlines such as 'Rock 'n'Roller Mobbed by Clawing Fans, Police Powerless as Devlin Has Shirt Torn From Back' became commonplace (Dix 1988:19-30).

Throughout the 1960s, urban tabloid daily newspapers such as the *Auckland Star*, the *New Zealand Herald* (which, despite its name, is an Auckland-based daily, not a national newspaper) and the Wellington *Dominion* carried pop record review columns as well as regular feature and news coverage of both local and touring musicians, as did the popular *New Zealand Women's Weekly*. Coverage in the popular tabloid press was often of the 'moral panic' variety, as in the case of the 1965 New Zealand tour by the wild English rhythm and blues group the Pretty Things, who created a series of widely-reported scandals throughout the country due to their abrasively raucous music, outrageous appearance and disruptive, drunken behaviour. As a result of this tour and its shocked media coverage, the Pretty Things became one of the major influences on mid-sixties New Zealand 'garage' rock bands, who have enjoyed something of a rediscovery in the 1990s. (The second issue of the Auckland 1960s revival fanzine *Social End Product*, published in 1996, was entirely devoted to the Pretty Things tour and its influence on the local music scene. Ironically, the Pretty Things were forced to 'clean up' their act on their return to Britain after reports of their outrageous behaviour in Australia and New Zealand reached the UK.) 'Moral panic' stories in the tabloid press also fuelled the vibrant punk scene in the late 1970s in New Zealand, where John Dix claims punk rock had a stronger impact than any other country in the world with the exception of Britain (1988:205).

The rather sedate, but prominent and long-standing weekly national political and cultural magazine, the *New Zealand Listener* (loosely based on the British weekly of the same name), has attained very high circulation, partly because of its provision of detailed television and radio programming. This 'market penetration' makes the *Listener's* regular fortnightly review column on popular music one of the most influential. The *Listener* extended its rock and roll coverage in 1968, and recruited national 1960s rock hero Ray Columbus to write a record review column entitled 'Soundcheck'. Other prominent contributors have included Arthur Baysting in the late 1960s, Gordon Campbell from the mid-1970s until 1985, and Chris Knox and Gary Steel in the late 1980s. Since 1989 the column has generally been written by Nick Bollinger, who combines considerable knowledge and verbal acumen.

A rough analysis of the album releases reviewed, over six of Bollinger's columns in late 1995, showed half to be of bands from the United States, with a clear emphasis on 'alternative' (albeit commercially successful) bands, eg. Veruca Salt, Foo Fighters, and Throwing Muses. Another quarter of the reviews were of UK performers, with the remaining quarter made up of New Zealand releases (eg. Neil and Tim Finn). The *Listener* also regularly includes articles on musicians, usually overseas performers who are currently touring, but also on local musicians (recent stories feature the Finn brothers, Martin Phillips and Maori guitarist Billy TK). It also carries reviews of popular writing on music, and notes on coming concerts. Much of this, however, is based on press releases, representing 'easy journalism'.

Teen Glossies

These music magazines are aimed at a teenage market, particularly young girls. They emphasise vicarious identification with pop stars whose music and image is aimed at this youth market. The British weekly *Smash Hits* is the most well-known and successful British model in this field in the 1980s and 1990s, but there are a number of New Zealand examples of teen glossies, all very similar in format, with the majority of coverage devoted to exposing the private personas of current pop stars whose careers are tied to the teenage market. The magazines thereby make these stars accessible to adolescent fantasies, forming part of what McRobbie (1976) has termed the culture of the bedroom, complete with pin ups.

The major New Zealand magazine of this type has been *RTR Countdown*. First published in October 1987, this was created by the *N.Z. Listener* as a print media counterpart and complement to the long-established *Ready to Roll (RTR)*, a popular television music programme. This obviously useful marketing tie-in was consolidated in 1988 when *RTR* added the word 'Countdown' to its name. This link 'provides a unique opportunity for cross promotion between the two very different but complementary mediums', and a link up for many successful competitions (*Networks*, September 1990:3). *RTR Countdown* became the most successful New Zealand publication of its kind, and by late 1990, readership had climbed to 354,000, accounting for an impressive market share of some 40% of the teenagers in New Zealand. But after the demise of the associated

TV programme, sales of *RTR Countdown* declined, and its last issue appeared in November 1993.

In common with other similar music magazines, *RTR Countdown* was 'officially a teen music/film/TV/lifestyle magazine' (editor Steel, private correspondence, June 1991). *RTR Countdown's* target audience, stated editor Gary Steel, was 10-19 year olds, male and female. While both genders were catered for in the performers covered in the magazine, the focus on good-looking, 'trendy' male performers had particular appeal for younger girls, generally referred to as 'teeny-boppers'. The magazine also catered to adolescent males through 'cock-rock' performers who project aggression, sexual prowess and a rebellious image (eg. Guns 'n' Roses). *RTR Countdown* featured pop stars rather than rock music, concentrating on gossip, fashion, performer's personal lives and opinions, and pictures. Only those New Zealand performers who fitted this mould were include; for example, Crowded House, the Fan Club, Ardijah, and the Holyday Makers all featured in issues during the late 1980s.

Specialist Rock/Pop Magazines

Rock/pop music magazines play their part in the economics of popular music, encouraging consumers to buy records (and posters, t-shirts, etc), and generally partake of associated consumer culture. Similarly, rock music critics also act as a service industry to the record industry, lubricating the desire to acquire both new product and selections from the back catalogue. Both the music press and critics, however, also play an important ideological function. They distance popular music consumers from the fact that they are essentially purchasing an economic commodity, by stressing the

product's cultural significance. Furthermore, this function is maintained by the important point that the music press and critics are not, at least directly, vertically integrated into the music industry. A sense of distance is thereby maintained, while at the same time the need of the industry to constantly sell new images, styles and product is met.

The New Zealand magazine market sees local publications competing with their overseas counterparts. In some cases, particular market niches are so effectively filled by the imported products that there is no real need for a local equivalent publication. This is evident with the industry-oriented magazines (*Billboard*, *Music Weekly*), the collector magazines (*Goldmine*, the *Record Collector*), and the proliferation of newer magazines 'designed for pop music's vanguard in high-tech musical instruments and recording devices - the popular musicians themselves' (Theberge, 1991:270). These musicians' magazines serve a general pedagogic function, informing their readers of new hardware and instrumental techniques, and, Theberge argues, contribute to a transnational sense of community among musicians. One notable local publication of this kind is *New Zealand Musician*, a monthly giveaway magazine edited and published in Auckland by Richard Thorne. Exclusively local in content, this magazine regularly features profiles of local recording artists, studios and venues, reviews of local recordings, several features on new instruments and equipment, music-oriented columns on such topics as vocal technique and arpeggios and even a column providing hints on how to survive in the music business.

In the 1960s, entertainment magazines in New Zealand, following British and American models, began to include pop music columns written by local pop musicians. The rather gossipy film and show business magazine *Playdate*, which had evolved out of the 1950s monthly *Cinema* in 1960, and which Dix describes as 'for many years the most prominent promotional avenue open to local entertainers' (92) employed middle-of-the-road pop singers Lou Pryme and Max Cryer to review recent releases. Cohen claims that both readers and writers of such music and entertainment publications in New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s shared 'an awe-struck adoration (and emulation) of the time's international critics', and suggests that local content was regarded as secondary to UK and US artists and releases, although local releases were regularly reviewed. But Dix, in his exemplary and exhaustive history of New Zealand rock music from 1955 to 1988, *Stranded in Paradise*, records that *Playdate*, which lasted until 1972 under the editorship of Des Dubbelt, maintained an active policy of supporting local performers (Dix 1988:92). Dix also mentions the Wellington-based *Teen Scene*, which lasted from 1965 to 1967, and gave considerable coverage to local acts, often featuring them on the cover. *Teen Scene* was edited by Dene Kellaway, who on its demise took over *Groove* from 1967 to 1972, a magazine which contained less local information but succeeded in temporarily establishing Wellington as the capital of the New Zealand entertainment industry (Dix 1988:92).

In the early 1970s, specialist rock music magazines such as *The Rock Express* and *Hot Licks* came on to the market, but these, like at least two attempts to create a New Zealand edition of *Rolling Stone*, which simply added half a dozen pages of local content to issues of

the US *Rolling Stone*, were relatively short-lived, failing to find a large enough readership base to survive. *Hot Licks*, a free monthly giveaway distributed in record stores and supporting itself on advertising revenue, lasted from February 1974 to July 1976, edited by Roger Jarrett. According to Dix, it was 'the first New Zealand pop/rock magazine to give adequate coverage to local bands' (1994:156) as well as giving extensive coverage to Split Enz, who were emerging as New Zealand's first rock group to achieve international success. The August 1975 issue of *Hot Licks*, which featured Split Enz on the cover, introduced a 40 cents price tag, which Dix partly attributes to its demise, although it was also often highly critical of the local music industry.

Dix also mentions short-lived late 1970s glossies *Pop Score* and *Rock Express*, and the irregular Wellington-based *In Touch*, which evolved into *TOM (The Other Magazine)* (Dix 1988:252). The fragility of these publications reflected a music scene which was still struggling to achieve an identity in the face of the 'cultural cringe' - a widespread conviction that most forms of local culture were inferior imitations of British and American models. Nonetheless they remain vital sources for reconstructing histories of Kiwi pop and rock in the 1960s and 1970s, an activity which is gaining currency in the 1990s, as signalled by Roger Watkins' books on the Auckland Scene from 1955-1970, *Hostage to the Beat*, and the parallel Wellington scene in *When Rock Got Rolling*.

The most prominent, distinctive and long-standing New Zealand rock music magazine, which has spanned nearly two decades, is the monthly *Rip It Up*, whose first issue appeared in June 1977, hot on the heels of the emerging Kiwi punk rock scene. (The first performance by a New

Zealand punk group, the Scavengers, took place in Auckland on June 8, 1977) *Rip It Up* has also succeeded in defining and reflecting the national music scene which has flourished in the 1980s and 1990s and made inroads into the international market. It was founded by student and musician Alastair Dougal, who became the editor, and Murray Cammick, an Auckland University Fine Arts graduate, who was responsible for lay-out and advertising. Both raised \$1,000 to finance the first issue, by issue 5 12,000 copies had been printed, and by the mid 1980s the monthly print run was 30,000. Like a number of other music monthlies (such as *New Zealand Musician* and *Good Groove*) *Rip It Up* was distributed free of charge through record stores. Dougal left in 1979, and Cammick took over as editor, which he continuing to do so as well as running one of New Zealand's half-dozen major independent record labels, Southside. As Dix has stated: 'More than any other New Zealand pop/rock magazine before or since, *Rip It Up* has remained dedicated to Kiwi Rock, and it has played no small role in the public's growing awareness of the homegrown product' (1988:205). Loosely based in format on British music weekly 'inkies' *New Musical Express* (NME) and *Melody Maker*, which continue to be highly influential within New Zealand music subcultures, *Rip it Up* runs interviews with local and touring overseas musicians and groups, reviews of recent releases on CD, film and video and local live performances, industry news, a dance music column (with local dance music news), a letters page, a national gig guide, a series of brief news items about local and overseas music events, and 'rumours' from the main cities (Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin) as well as smaller centres such as Hawes Bay, Palmerston North, Hamilton and New Plymouth. In early 1994 the magazine changed to a glossy colour cover format, with

glossy centre pages, a more industry-serving approach, and more emphasis on British, American and Australian coverage, and began to charge \$2 per issue. This coincided with a drop in the proportion of local content and the departure of its assistant editor and most prominent writer in the early 1990s, British migrant Donna Yuzwalk, whose abrasive and direct style Cohen compares to former *NME* writer Julie Burchill. Yuzwalk was one of the few prominent women writers in a field dominated by male journalists.

The degree of *Rip It Up*'s local content has fluctuated from issue to issue at between 20% and 50%, and a New Zealand recording artist has usually been featured on the cover in at least one in every ten issues. Musicians from Maori and Pacific Islander ethnic minorities have also been given regular coverage. Issue no.223, for March 1996, for example, contains roughly 30% NZ content and 70% overseas content, with US group Smashing Pumpkins, who were about to tour the country, as the cover feature. Local artists profiled were Martin Phillipps and the newly-reformed Chills, new Auckland group Shaft, Flying Nun group the Able Tasmans, and Christchurch sound system Salmonella Dub. The following issue carried a letter to the editor entitled 'Patriot Moans', which took *Rip It Up* to task for 'looking over the neighbour's fence' and duplicating overseas music magazines with cover stories on artists such as Iggy Pop, Black Grape and Smashing Pumpkins, while only giving half a page to Able Tasmans' first album after a two year absence, and failing to give Martin Phillipps a cover feature. The editor, Murray Cammick, replied: 'Rip It Up has always covered both foreign and local music. Foreign music magazines have tiny circulations in New Zealand compared to Rip It Up. In choosing Smashing Pumpkins for a cover we're not looking over the

neighbour's fence, we're just reflecting local, indigenous, New Zealand purchasing patterns' (*Rip It Up*, April 1996:9).

Readers' letters to *Rip It Up* have also on occasion accused the editor of a conflict of interest, and bias in the magazine's local content towards Cammick-owned labels Southside and Wildside. In the May 1996 issue, for example, a letter entitled 'Taking Liberties' complained: 'If it isn't another Wildside band, it's a band from one of your other dinosaur mates' labels, such as Flying Numb (sic) or Chronic. There is a lot of other great bands in New Zealand who deserve credit and attention for what they're doing, and who do it independently, without handouts from major labels or free press from magazines with a vested interest in their future'. Cammick's reply side-stepped the issue somewhat by generalising it: 'The label ownership question is a yawn, as without exception, every person employed in music media or the music industry has "vested interests" of some sort. The fact my "vested interests" are well known, hopefully keeps them in check' (*Rip It Up*, May 1996:9). This reliance on a form of open 'self-censorship' illustrates the difficulties of providing coverage of a small local music scene without being accused of bias. While historically speaking, *Rip It Up*'s local coverage has been exemplary, its recent record shows an increasing reliance on overseas touring bands, major labels and more popular mainstream artists. Between issue no.200 (April 1994) and 226 (June 1996), only 7 issues of RIU have featured New Zealand artists on the cover, and even these have tended to be of the more mainstream variety: the Muttonbirds in 200, Head Like a Hole in 202, Supergroove in 203, Exponents in 204, Shihad in 213, Jan Hellreigel in 214, and then none for a year until issue 226, which featured Flying Nun band Garageland. In the same period, US groups

the Red Hot Chili Peppers and the Foo Fighters were both featured twice.

Cohen's rather disparaging article on New Zealand rock journalism, which was published in the Auckland lifestyle monthly magazine *Metro*, profiles a range of rock music writers and reviewers, many of whom have both tabloid press and music press connections: *New Zealand Herald* and *Billboard* correspondent Graham Reid, Wellington *Evening Post* rock reviewer Mike Houlahan, occasional *Rip It Up* reviewer, prominent musician and *Herald* cartoonist Chris Knox, *Listener* reviewer and former *Real Groove* editor Nick Bollinger, *Auckland Star* and *NZ Herald* writer Colin Hogg, freelance author and *Rolling Stone* writer Jeremy Chunn, *Herald* writer and *Real Groove* editor Russell Baillie, *Listener* reviewer Gordon Campbell, and *Rip It Up* writer, film critic and editor of the quarterly *Music in New Zealand*, William Dart, whom he describes as 'the only active New Zealand critic ... whose work continues to show an emotional, technical and theoretical knowledge of rock music' (Cohen 1994:158). Initially a magazine devoted to classical and 'serious' music, *Music in New Zealand* has increasingly incorporated in-depth articles on Polynesian popular musicians and local rock groups, offering a form of legitimation to groups who have recorded on the Flying Nun label.

Cohen's vote for the best local music magazine goes to the monthly *Real Groove*, which is distributed free of charge and run by a chain of record stores, Real Groovy Records. Devoted to 'interactive music beyond the mainstream', *Real Groove* is described by Cohen as 'a standard bearer in rock criticism, neatly eschewing most of the listed faults - musical illiteracy, hip pretentiousness, youth cultism, bad language and bad manners - among

other reviewing outlets. The 25 or so pages of reviewing it presents each month are determined, intelligent, on-the-street-corner' (1994:163). Reviews of local releases are always included first in this review section, and local content has become a priority in recent issues. Under Russell Baillie's editorship, *Real Groove* has included 'The Real Pits', a regular monthly cartoon-format review column drawn by noted Flying Nun recording artist Chris Knox and occasional pieces by Martin Phillipps. (In the November 1995 issue, Phillipps wrote an article about Brian Wilson & Van Dyke Parks, the latter having scored the track 'Water Wolves' on The Chills' album *Soft Bomb*, and the April 1996 issue featured a 2 page spread from Phillipps' dairy about recording his most recent album *Sunburnt* in the UK.) Other notable local content has included a cover-feature interview with US surf guitarist Dick Dale by King Loser's Chris Heazlewood, and a cover feature in the April 1996 issue entitled 'Top Form! the New Class in NZ Pop'. This surveyed new local pop acts Second Child, Bic Runga, Teremoana Rapley, OMC, Garageland and Maree Sheehan. The same issue also included an interview with Roger Shepherd and preview of Nunfest, the four-city celebrations of the 15th anniversary of Flying Nun records held in March 1996. *Rip It Up's* attempt to match this in its May 1996 issue with a rather lame review of the Nunfest by Bats' singer-guitarist Robert Scott only served to illustrate that despite its long history of widespread and comprehensive coverage of the local music scene, it appeared to be slipping behind its rival.

'Style Bibles'

Cohen also refers to the 1990s fashion and lifestyle magazines *Planet* and *Stamp* - both of which became defunct in 1995 - and *Pavement*, as important chroniclers

of local and overseas music trends. *Planet* included in-depth features on Maori and Polynesian music and culture, while *Stamp* ran a regular political column by Maori rapper Dean Hapeta of the Upper Hutt Posse, and *Pavement* has included a valuable survey of the buoyant multicultural New Zealand hip hop scene among its music features.

Pavement is currently the main NZ version of the 'style bible' paradigm set by British monthlies *The Face*, *Sky* and *Elle*. Like *Planet*, it is a glossy A3 size publication, which runs to around a hundred pages, covering fashion, music, film, art and culture, and the intersection of these. While based in New Zealand, it has also been marketed in Australia; accordingly it includes features of interest in both countries. Now in its fourth year of publication, *Pavement* retails for \$4.50 (NZ), and is clearly aimed at fashion- and style-conscious young people (teens to twenties) with disposable income. Approximately half of the magazine is devoted to fashion, with these features often almost indistinguishable from the welter of images and advertising present throughout.

A third of the features in the February/March 1996 issue were music related. New Zealand music was foregrounded in an interview with Martin Phillipps and Garageland, nicely situated against the evolution and fifteenth anniversary of the influential Flying Nun label. However, the dominant focus is on overseas performers with local appeal or current interest. There are articles on (ex-Happy Mondays) Shaun Ryder's new band Black Grape, Sonic Youth member Kim Gordon's clothes label X-Girl, available locally, and former punk apostle and cultural commentator Malcom McLaren, in New Zealand for the Wellington Festival of the Arts. There are also shorter pieces on Icelandic

singer Bjork, currently touring New Zealand, Boss Hogg member Christina Martinez, and Torres Strait Islander Christine Anu and her debut album. *Pavement* also has a record reviews section, divided into four sections: overseas albums, singles, local, and 'close to home', where a guest reviewer, usually a band member, reviews new local singles. The reviews are brief but often critically incisive.

Fanzines

Fanzines are private publications normally available only on mail order subscription, or on sale from specialist or 'alternative' bookshops or record stores. Generally produced by one person, or a group of friends, working from their homes, fanzines are usually concentrated totally on a particular artist or group, and are characterized by a fervour bordering on the religious: 'Fanzines accumulate rock facts and gossip not for a mass readership but for a small coterie of cultists, and they are belligerent about their music'. (Frith 1983:177). This stance can be a reactionary one, preserving the memory of particular artists or styles, but is more usually progressive. Despite their essentially non-commercial and often ephemeral nature, fanzines are a significant part of the rock music scene. *Social End Product*, *Approbium* and *Spec* are three of many recent examples of New Zealand fanzines.

Social End Product is a lavishly and lovingly produced nostalgia fanzine exclusively devoted to obscure 1960s, 1970s and 1980s Kiwi garage bands. Edited by Andrew Schmidt and published John Baker in Auckland, its inaugural issue appeared in 1995. Its 58 A4 pages, many of them reproduced from early 1960s newspapers, featured stories

on mainly Auckland and Christchurch-based 1960s garage bands, wrapped in a glossy colour cover. Schmidt's editorial described it as 'a music magazine that poked further into the dusty nooks and crannies of New Zealand's rich rock culture... You'll find a lot of [obsession] near the heart of Social End Product; Baker's obsession with the unbelievably vibrant, but largely undocumented Kiwi music scene of the 60s; my own long-nurtured obsession with the little travelled byways of the 70s and 80s. And more importantly, the obsession of hundreds of Kiwis who've clung doggedly to the memories, photos, scrapbooks and records that make up the substance of this magazine.'

The first issue of *Approbrium* appeared in November 1995, published out of Christchurch, and primarily the work of editor Graeme Douglas, proofreader and major reviewer and interviewer Nick Cain, and 'Aesthetic Consultant' Jon Bywater. The inaugural issue is 55 pages of A4 newsprint, well-produced, and with a wealth of interviews with and reviews of bands largely outside of the mainstream music industry. The majority of the content relates to performers working in the techno/ambient/industrial axis. The writing is highly literate and solidly based in an extensive knowledge of the scenes, artists and genres being discussed; eg Cain's review of a Fushitsusha CD: 'Guitar is everywhere here, one man's tectonic feedback bolts towering over his hapless backers, with drums struggling to maintain even the most obviously metronomic rhythm and base relegated to almost complete inaudibility. The temporal abandon of 'Pathetique' is gone, here replaced by more and shorter songs which condense the earthquake-strength force of Hainos' dinosaur's tail-swoop distortion-overload solo excursions into unit-strength noise-splurge summaries'. While the emphasis is on

New Zealand performers (e.g. Wellington's Dress, Christchurch's Fence, and RST in Auckland), there is considerable coverage of overseas artists. Discographies of the work of the various bands are included, along with mail order addresses for the often small/specialist labels involved.

Spec is produced by Radio One, an independent student campus radio station in Dunedin funded by the government-backed broadcasting organisation NZ on Air. Its huge fold-over newspaper format and eccentric layout with experimental type faces and cluttered and crowded design features makes it resemble an underground student newspaper, covering political, cultural, travel and musical subjects as well as including creative writing. Issue number 17, which appeared in 1994 to promote a special New Zealand Music week on Radio One, included an interview with Jimmy Johnson, editor of long-running US fanzine *Forced Exposure*, which has given considerable exposure to New Zealand musicians, a selection of lengthy replies to a call for contributions about New Zealand music posted to the Kiwi Music internet list formed by Katie Livingston at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an interview with Hamish Kilgour, drummer of the Clean, a profile of Te Waiata Maaori, an initiative to promote Maori music locally and abroad, reviews of local records and an interview with cult Christchurch country-punk group the Renderers. It concludes with 'A Dunedin Rave', a rambling mood-piece about the origins and life of the city. *Spec*'s connections with a national campus radio network, a regular New Zealand music news program and internet posting 'Uncharted', and the Kiwi Music internet group give it a potentially wide radius of diffusion that crosses national boundaries. There are numerous other fanzines devoted to both local and international music, while the growing number of US fanzines featuring New Zealand, particularly Dunedin-based musicians, is also notable.

National Identity in the Music Press at Home and Abroad

The *NME*, and to a lesser extent *Melody Maker* and US music industry 'bible' *Billboard* have continued to represent vital sources of authentication of the international status of New Zealand rock musicians in the 1980s and 1990s. The relative lack of success in Britain of Split Enz and the dent in national pride this represented was to a certain extent symbolised by a 1981 *Melody Maker* review which warned readers to keep the volume down when playing Split Enz' single 'One Step Ahead', 'or you may just find yourself, mere moments later, snoring on the carpet to the naff new sound of dumb New Z-z-z-z-zealand' (in Chunn 1992:202). On the other hand, the predominantly positive coverage of the Flying Nun bands in *NME* in the 1980s and 1990s provided a focal point for their increasing international profiles, while a front page report in *Billboard* of Flying Nun artist David Kilgour's 1995 album *Sugar Mouth* was widely reported in both Australia and New Zealand as a measure of the international success of this artist. Given that local recording artists are able to support themselves professionally by relying exclusively on the local market, there is also a vital economic factor in receiving positive overseas press coverage.

The national cultural importance of music press coverage in the UK and the USA finds an echo in local press coverage. In his book about the career of Split Enz, Mike Chunn relates how Tim Finn's announcement in June 1984 that he was leaving the band occasioned an editorial in the *New Zealand Herald*, the first time a local rock musician had been the subject of an editorial in the paper. The editorial demonstrated both the national cultural importance of the event and the extent of the band's achievement in national terms, comparing it with the significance of the break-up of the Beatles in Britain:

For pop music in this part of the world, Tim Finn's departure from Split Enz is equal to the upheaval the Beatles would have suffered if John Lennon had deserted them 20 years ago. The Liverpoolians were at their peak then; Split Enz have been the No 1 group in New Zealand and Australia for the past several years ... Finn, born in Te Awamutu, founded the group in the early seventies and hauled it up the dizzy heights of commercial success to the top of the charts ... Now Finn - lead singer, lyricist and lures light - is leaving the group to pursue a solo career. He will be missed as a Split End, but he will remain one of New Zealand's most popular sons (in Chunn, 1992:246).

An editorial in Wellington *Evening Post* in November 1984 during Split Enz' farewell tour of Australia & NZ also invoked the Beatles, and claimed the group had 'done something to increase the sum of human happiness for hundreds of thousands of young New Zealanders. As the group members go their separate ways great goodwill goes with them' (in Chunn 1992:252). This equation of Split Enz's achievements with a sense of national pride and goodwill illustrates the importance of the local tabloid press in both constructing and reflecting a New Zealand national popular musical identity.

This sense of national pride and national identity fostered by the tabloid press is not reflected so strongly in the local music press, where frequent criticism is made of the lack of any supportive infrastructure in the local music industry, which forced Split Enz to live in Australia. In 1985, as New Zealand rock's next great white hopes after Split Enz, Flying Nun group the Chills, were about to depart for their first tour of England, Neil Finn, late of

Split Enz and soon to form the internationally successful Crowded House, gave his reasons for continuing to stay away from his homeland in an interview in the 100th issue of *Rip It Up*. He described a New Zealand music scene stuck in a 'garage mentality', where essential industry support for struggling bands was unforthcoming, there was an urgent need for a 'centralising figure' and 'musical minorities' were unable to survive. Recording production standards were 'shoddy', management was 'terrible', and the musical environment was 'out of view of the world' (in Campbell 1985:1, 3).

Finn's decision to return to live in Auckland in 1993 and record Crowded House's new album there indicates some degree of progress had been made by the local music industry in the ensuing decade. The scale of this progress was illustrated by a March 1995 feature in the business section of the *New Zealand Herald* reporting how the founder of Flying Nun Records, Roger Shepherd, has been awarded a Tradenz (New Zealand Trade Development Board) export commendation for achieving more than \$1 million in export sales - a paltry sum compared to the export sales of Australian independent label Mushroom (who own 24% of Flying Nun), which was more than 6 times that figure. The widely reported interim demise of the Chills, casualties of the pressures of maintaining a profile in the USA, provided illustration of the continuing fragility of the local music industry and its dependence on exports.

Schmidt has claimed that the New Zealand punk movement in the late 1970s had long-term effects on the local music scene through its establishment of independently-run recording labels, music venues and bands, setting a precedent for the launch of the most internationally famous Kiwi recording label Flying Nun in 1981, 'which had its own distribution network and

continued the tradition of releasing bands considered to be outside the mainstream' (1994:110). Both the punk scene and Flying Nun's do-it-yourself punk-styled musical and production ethos were nurtured by *Rip It Up* and fanzines like *Garage*, edited by Dunedin journalist Richard Langston. Flying Nun's output, which became almost synonymous with the 'Dunedin sound', also began to be regularly reviewed in the *NME* and *Melody Maker*, while profiles of the bands began to appear in US independent music magazines like *Option*, *Alternative Press* and *Puncture*.

Since the 1980s, New Zealand rock music has emerged as an international force, with the output of labels such as Flying Nun, Xpressway and IMD gaining a small but significant following in Europe and the USA, and receiving overwhelmingly positive coverage in the international micromedia and niche music press. This international press coverage feeds back into the local music press and on occasions the tabloid press, where a sense of national musical identity and achievement is constructed. Both forms of local press coverage have played a vital role in the construction of music history in New Zealand, while even negative coverage of the 'moral panic' variety has helped to create an important social and historical context surrounding local music scenes.

But the increasing international press coverage of New Zealand music, while welcome, does not accurately reflect the diversity of the local music scene. A regrettable factor in most overseas coverage of New Zealand music is the lack of attention paid to the Maori and Polynesian musicians who have played a vital part in the Pacific music identity of the New Zealand popular music, as has been acknowledged by internationally successful groups

such as Crowded House. While local press coverage of Maori and Polynesian musicians, and the predominantly Polynesian local hip hop scene, is reasonably extensive, these have largely been overlooked in the international media attention received by Crowded House and the Flying Nun artists. In this respect the local music press, and to a lesser extent the tabloid press, plays a particularly vital role in reflecting the Maori and Pakeha (European) biculturalism of Aotearoa/New Zealand music scene to itself. It is unfortunate that press coverage outside New Zealand does not reflect this to the rest of the world.

The ideological role of the rock press in constructing a sense of community and in maintaining a critical distance from the music companies had, as Frith demonstrated, already become muted by the early 1980s. Today rock magazines act as a service industry to the record companies: 'The music press has abandoned its pretensions of leading its readership or setting agendas, and contracted around the concept of 'service': hard news, information, gossip, consumer guidance' (Reynolds 1990:27). As Reynolds argues, the music press has abandoned its post-punk sense of antagonism towards the industry, realising that they share a common interest in maintaining consumption: in sustaining a constant turnover of new trends, scenes, and performers, while also mining rock's past through the links between older consumer's nostalgia, younger listeners interest in antecedents, and the back catalogue. This change is reflected in the New Zealand music press, and in the recent developments and shift of focus of *Rip It Up* in particular. Fanzines, however, continue to reflect, report, promote and nurture a post-punk underground subculture

of Kiwi independent music which is gaining international recognition.

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REVIEWS

Brian A. Ponter, **Rural Women in New Zealand, 1989**. Palmerston North, The Federation of Rural Women and the Department of Sociology, Massey University, 1996.

C. Nicholas Taylor and Heather McCrostie Little, **Means of Survival: A Study of Off-Farm Employment in New Zealand**. Christchurch Taylor Baines and Associates, 1995.

Reviewed by
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I write this review as New Zealand sociology departments enjoy yet another press assault from Joe and Josephine Public for promoting 'political correctness', and for failing to give good value for money. Why do we not just give up? Let students study less problematic disciplines (classics, perhaps?), and let paid consultants undertake such sociological research as state agencies choose to commission. These two works show why this will not do, at least on the research side. Although presented as glossy-covered books in A5 format, neither comes from a commercial publisher. Both are research reports. Both propose to enrich our sociological understanding of rural New Zealand, paying particular attention to women's experience. They make an interesting contrast.

Taylor and Little's **Means of Survival** project was commissioned and funded by MAF Policy. 'Policy makers', we are told in the introduction, 'need

information and understanding about ... the health and vitality of rural communities ..., to know, in particular, when to prescribe government interventions, as in cases such as climatic crises, rapid social and economic change, and institutional restructuring. Rural communities need an understanding of change, so they can make a practical input to new policies'. (1) Let us disregard the breathtaking assumptions made here about class/state relations in rural New Zealand, and about the nature of that chimeral beast 'community'. Let us pass over in silence the bizarre medical metaphor. With all this restraint behind us, it is still not easy to see how this study can promote good policy that might benefit inhabitants in rural districts. Attention was limited to farm families; but only a tithe of rural dwellers live in such units. Purporting to cover all New Zealand (if one believes the report's title), investigations were undertaken only in three districts: Oxford, Ashburton and Gore. Nelson was to have been included, we learn, but 'the land uses in this area are so diverse, and vary considerably from the pastoral and cropping land uses of the other study areas'. (41) Generalisability goes straight out the window, even within the South Island. God knows how one extrapolates from the Canterbury plains and eastern Southland to Kaikohe or Tolaga Bay.

A national study of rural advantage and disadvantage shrinks to a closely-limited study of farm families on 44 holdings in favoured South Island locations. Different chapters introduce us to local labour markets, to patterns of on-farm and off-farm employment, to farm family and farm labour structures and cycles. Once again, however, new evidence is more limited than we might expect. Interspersed among material derived from secondary sources, Taylor and Little's new evidence proves to be

derived from one written questionnaire per household, and from 'one personal interview. Given the researchers' strong emphasis on farmer patriarchy, and on their desire to understand farm women's position particularly clearly, it is both odd and striking that male and female partners were not interviewed separately.

Results reported are unexceptional, largely replicating those from several prior locality-based pluractivity studies. Detailed results will interest other specialists working in this field, but few others will rush to the bookshop. The report claims to conclude with 'theoretical implications'. (225-9) These are nothing of the kind, merely an indication of how this study meshes with other researchers' conclusions. Inflated terminology reflects the study's underlying bathos, as a moving mountain yields a mouse. Earlier, we had been promised a chapter-long 'conceptual framework'. This turns out to be a limping and deeply inadequate literature review, much of it irrelevant to what follows.

Yet this research succeeds on criteria other than the academic. Waving the commissioning contract, MAF Policy is able to deflect criticism of government inaction as nasty social consequences cascade from free market-driven agricultural restructuring - a topic which receives surprisingly little discussion in this report - by pointing to this crucial research in train. Of course, it would be improper to address perceived social problems until the report's conclusions had been received and digested... Taylor Baines and Associates, by contrast, are able to keep the wolf from the door for a few more months as their staff pound the consultancy treadmill. Amazingly, they managed to persuade MAF Policy to fund a 'scoping study' in this case. Translated, this means that

they were paid to ponder what they might eventually get around to doing. Good going; boys and girls!

It is with relief that one turns to Ponter's **Rural Women in New Zealand, 1989**. This study has a remarkable history. Founded in 1986, The Federation of Rural Women soon sought public money to run a national sample survey. The old Social Sciences Research Fund Committee came to the party, requiring only that a competent academic should act as mentor. Cheleen Maher, of Massey's Social Anthropology Department, duly obliged. A self-completed structured questionnaire was distributed nationally in 1989, by volunteers. Cheleen Maher then returned to the United States, before the project was completed to the satisfaction of the Federation. The funder was saddened by this turn of events, but not greatly surprised. By comparison with comparable overseas funding bodies, SSRFC enjoyed a very low non-completion rate. The only problem area was Maori and 'community' research, where the non-completion rate rose alarmingly. It seemed that the 'Rural Women Study' was another community project which would have to be written off, hostage to that powerful neo-populist strain which we know and love in New Zealand culture.

That this was not the study's fate is due to Brian Ponter from Massey's Sociology Department. To complete somebody else's project is a daunting task. Assisted by Anne Hilson from the Federation of Rural women, he has done it superbly. Recognising what could not be fixed (notably, sampling errors derived from unfortunate instructions) he has brought the 'Rural Women Study' safely to port. With data analysis completed he wrote a full, careful and nuanced report, milking the survey of its

evidence and making sense of that evidence for lay and specialist audiences. After scene-setting chapters we are guided through New Zealand rural women's occupational identity and domestic work in 1989, through their on-farm, off-farm and voluntary work, through their perceived quality of life, their community involvement and their worries about rural service provision. Having produced this exemplary research report, Ponter then does something much more difficult, turning social research into sociology. Recognising germane differences between the studies, he concludes with illuminating comparisons between the 1989 Rural Women Survey and Titti Gill's pioneering study **The Rural Women of New Zealand** (1976), undertaken from Canterbury University's Sociology Department. We now possess two significant snapshot studies of this important topic, linked by Ponter's discussion. With this firm base, can it be long before we have a third study, to measure changes in rural women's lives over the last decade?

Most significantly, the excellence of Ponter's university-based report casts a shadow over Taylor and Little's consultants' report. Because they investigate broadly cognate issues (which, presumably, is why I was asked to review them together) a comparison between these two studies demonstrates why consultants cannot replace university-based sociologists. We'll be around for a while yet.

John Abraham, *Science, Politics and the Pharmaceutical Industry: Controversy and bias in drug regulation* New York St. Martins Press, 1995

*Reviewed by Pauline Norris
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This is an excellent book which explores the interrelationship of science and politics in the regulation of medicines. In the first section Abraham outlines the basis for a realist sociology of science, in which the actual behaviour of scientists and regulators can be measured against the standards set by science itself, for example, rules about the way clinical trials ought to be run, and standards of evidence of drug safety and efficacy. Abraham rejects the Strong Programme and the relativist approaches in the sociology of scientific knowledge. He argues that, for example:

toxicologists are universally agreed on the social conventions of arithmetic and counting, although not necessarily statistical techniques. They are also able to agree...on the identification of rats...and on distinguishing a live rat from a dead one... Claims made by toxicologists that depend on inconsistencies with the rules (of counting, rat identification and so on) governing the recording of rat mortality lack validity and credibility, given the cognitive standards of toxicological science.

He interprets such inconsistencies as bias, or the intrusion of non-technical reasons for the scientific claims in question.

Abraham then provides an illuminating history of drug relation in the UK and the US. The traditional version of this history is that major drug disasters such as Thalidomide have been the spur to government regulation of drug safety. Abraham disputes this interpretation and suggests that while drug disasters have increase the urgency of introducing new legislation, other factors were more important. Most significantly he points to the role of powerful sections of the drug industry: 'the desire of the technologically advanced firms to support State regulation seems to have been the most crucial factor. The scientific efforts of Accum in Britain and the American anti-adulteration campaigns of the 1880s and 1890s came to nothing in the absence of significant industrial concern. Moreover, the regulatory reforms eventually implemented by the State did not follow logically from the real interests of consumers... Rather, those reforms benefited primarily the dominant interests of the drugs trade, and consumers only at the margins' (p82). Studies of government involvement in regulating pharmaceuticals also tend to separate safety issues, from debates about governments' funding of access to drugs, and subsequent concern about prices and expenditure. Abraham's history suggested considerable interlinkage between the two areas. When states have a substantial role in paying for drugs, they seem to be much more concerned with the safety of the products their citizens consume.

Most of the book involves five case studies of Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs). Abraham discusses these primarily in the context of the treatment of arthritis: but in practice they are also used for a range of other musculo-skeletal conditions. The advantage of this book is that Abraham is not afraid to look at primary

scientific data and to get involved in the messy details of scientific debates. He uses, among other sources, material from congressional hearings and FDA files from the USA, and documents obtained through the Public Record Office in the UK, to construct a detailed history of decisions made to license (and subsequent decisions about withdrawing) five NSAIDs.

The book is a convincing critique of the notion that drug licensing is a strictly scientific process, and stresses the social and political nature of the drug evaluation process. Even patient information inserts are clearly shown to be the result of a political process, and of negotiation between regulatory agencies, manufacturers and consumer groups, rather than a simple representation of an eternal scientific reality.

The book is an interesting study of how uncertainty is dealt with in the process of drug regulation, or as Abraham puts it, how the benefit of the scientific doubt is distributed between companies and patients. Abraham argues that companies have consistently been given the benefit of the doubt and describes instances when the agreed standards of drug testing, and the interpretation of such tests, have been ignored, in attempts to create or maintain a positive view of particular drugs. Thus he suggests that safety problems are not so much the result of technology, but of the way this technology is regulated.

This book is a useful introduction to the politics of drug licensing, and clearly illustrates the contribution that sociologists who are scientifically literate can make to understanding the role of science in regulatory processes.

Paul Spoonley, Cluny Macpherson, David Pearson (eds),
**Nga Patai: Racism and Ethnic Relations in
Aotearoa/New Zealand.** Palmerston North: Dunmore
Press, 1996.

*Reviewed by Pahmi Winter
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Recent events in this new era of MMP politics indicate an emerging twist in the struggle of tangata whenua to alter the balance of cultural power in New Zealand institutions and resource allocation. Tino rangitiratanga politics have made it to Parliament. The entrenched resistance of the pakeha New Zealand middle class, initially undermined by the 1985 Treaty of Waitangi Act, has been further destabilized by the significant increase in political representation for iwi after the last election. While the coalition government may give way under the weight of its internal tensions and competing agendas, the maiden speeches of the new Maori MPs indicate the force and determination of the expanded maori presence in parliament. The inclusion of *Te Tiriti* in the oath of allegiance, and the spectacle of a new MP performing an in-your-face full volume haka in the debating chamber with the support of his iwi ringing out from the public gallery, has breached the Berlin Wall of parliamentary convention in New Zealand. Whether such stirring acts of iconoclasm can be effectively translated into actions which disable the material and ideological boundaries polarizing ethnic groups within New Zealand society remains to be seen. Increasingly we can see the frameworks and narratives with which the boundaries between 'them' and 'us' are drawn are being blurred by the growing number of New Zealanders for whom

identity is not experienced as a unitary phenomenon but rather as hybrid, constructed in response to their growing knowledge and understanding of personal and cultural histories. Nevertheless, the polarization and heightened ethnic tensions resulting from the greater cultural diversity of New Zealand society are clearly evident.

As New Zealand society grows more diverse, defining nationhood and citizenship rights will become more urgent in debates about biculturalism, multiculturalism and what kind of nationhood we should be moving towards. Ethnic relations will, inevitably, grow more tense and confrontational as different groups seek to exploit current uncertainties to their own advantage. But such a heated climate needs informed insight and historical understanding. The retrenched capacity of our news media denies citizens the information and analysis such an understanding would require.

Thus a book like *Nga Patai*, which examines the underpinnings and social and institutional practices shaping ethnic relations and identity politics of New Zealanders today, is to be welcomed. *Nga Patai* consolidates the site opened up by editors Paul Spoonley, Cluny Macpherson, David Pearson and Charles Sedgewick with the publication of *Tauīwi* in 1984. Since then, the ideological and material undermining of the social contract and resulting social fragmentation and poverty have pushed these issues to the centre of social and political discourse in New Zealand.

In the watershed year of 1984, the authors of *Tauīwi* made a valued contribution to New Zealand sociology by bringing together a range of commentaries that

positioned 'race relations' within the context of colonisation, capitalist expansion and racism. The title *Tauīwi*, the 'foreigners' or 'late-comers', reflects the editors' wish to foster a critical analysis of ethnic relations in New Zealand that included 'the activities of the State' and concentrated on 'the dominant pakeha group' (p.13). With *Nga Take* (1991), Spoonley, Pearson and Macpherson shifted emphasis but continued to explore the changing nature of cultural relations and public and private expressions/ideologies of racism (p.109) in a society struggling to adjust to the globalizing world disorder of the late 20th century.

The series is continued with the publication of *Nga Patai* in 1996. It is the strongest book in the series in the assurance with which it contextualizes the political struggles of minorities to make themselves visible and to gain some control over their own affairs. The variability in analytic vigour and element of repetitiveness sometimes evident in the earlier volumes has been replaced by a consistently engaging set of arguments that inform us of the facts of our past and invite fresh and compelling insights into processes and structures shaping New Zealanders' experience of ethnicity and difference, migrant flows, racism and cultural power.

Nga Patai takes the reader through a diverse range of explanations and investigations into the growing cultural pluralism of New Zealand society, its political economy and struggles to control the means of production and the production of meaning between established cultural elites and those that are emerging within the new era of MMP politics. The book is divided into three sections, whose themes of history, meaning and structure allow an extended investigation of key elements structuring the

social experience and living conditions of New Zealanders.

Part 1: Migration, Political Economy and Racialization explores immigration trends and processes of racialization of migrant labour in the context of shifting economic requirements of, and conditions within, the nation state. It sets the historical context through the lens of a political economy of labour migration framework. Part Two: The Politics of Difference explores the problem of understanding how economic and ideological forces have shaped and continue to influence the ways in which different ethnic groups make sense of themselves, and construct their identity in response to changing social forces. It is this section which extends the theoretical scope of the series for it introduces into the analysis of identity politics and ethnic relations, a perception of identity which acknowledges it as it is subjectively experienced - as multiple, fluid and contradictory. Section Three: Institutional Policies and Options looks at the quest for, and obstacles to iwi achieving tino rangitiratanga in a variety of institutional settings. In the final chapter, the view is broadened to consider the question of 'multiculturalism' from a comparative perspective, voicing the concern that whether the discourse is oriented by emancipatory or conservative interests, 'objectification remains objectification' and that by defining issues of racism and ethnicity within discourses that reify culture, the 'rather more complex and mutually constituted bases of inequality' (p.266) are obscured and excluded from analysis.

Nga Patai will be a valuable resource for students and teachers of New Zealand sociology. However, its contribution will be greater than that for in helping us think more clearly about the ways in which the legacies of colonization remain entrenched, or might be overcome, it will help us to better understand, and more

effectively debate, issues of identity politics. That in turn helps us explore more 'fruitful avenues for the pursuit of social justice' (p.266).

* * * * *

Paul James, *National Formation: Towards a Theory of Abstract Community*, London, Sage, 1996

*Reviewed by Avril Bell
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This is an ambitious and scholarly work. Paul James sets out to indicate a potential means of developing a more adequate theorisation of nations and nationalism than that provided by social theorists to date. Here he claims no more than to point the way in which such a theory may develop, as suggested by the 'Towards' of his title. Presumably, and hopefully since there is much of promise in this work, further development of his theory will form the basis of a subsequent book.

The reader can be left in no doubt that James knows his field. He cites all the key works in the area (apart from Billig's important *Banal Nationalism* (1995) which was probably not available as he was writing) and draws widely on a diversity of historical, political and cultural studies. Both the breadth and depth of his analysis are impressive and the meticulous referencing very helpful - one of his references to Tom Nairn includes 34 different page references to *The Enchanted Glass*! I do not mean to make James seem overly pedantic, since the overall impression is of precision rather than pedantry. I also greatly appreciated the clarity and directness of his writing style.

James manages to achieve this whilst constructing a detailed theoretical argument, supported by an impressive array of historical detail. One illustrative moment comes when James uses the year 1871 as a means of entry into the points he wants to make about the theoretical failure of Marx and Engels regarding nationalism and to indicate some of the value of his own approach. Having chosen 1871, he cites a range of European histories published in that year, tells us it was the year Reuters 'carved up [the world] into exclusive news territories' and telegraph cable reached Australia, discusses concepts of time and space as illustrated in Verne's *Around the World in Eighty Days* (published in 1871), discusses the work of Proust (born in 1871), uses the inauguration of the Second Reich in 1871 to discuss the nature of European politics of the time, quotes from the King of Italy in that year, discusses the Meiji Restoration and the institution of a state education system in Japan in 1871 and illustrates the changing levels of abstract thinking by discussion of the Periodic Table by Mendeleev and of George Eliot's *Middlemarch* (both published in 1871). This broad survey of historical detail makes for interesting reading and helps build a persuasive argument.

The bulk of that argument is framed around discussion and critique of key social theorists of nations and nationalism; firstly, in an attempt to explain their failure, and secondly, as a means of testing and illustrating the value of James' own theoretical direction. These two aims are intimately linked as indicated by James' citation of Richard Bernstein: 'We can judge the adequacy of a theory... by its ability to explain what is valid and invalid in rival theories' (cited p178 & 179). In *National Formation* James hopes to indicate the adequacy of his theoretical direction by just such means.

James presents his concept of the nation as an *abstract* community as an extension of Benedict Anderson's *imagined* community, which he subjects to a convincing, albeit sympathetic, critique. The notion of abstraction is central to James' argument and is used to refer to material processes (e.g. the abstraction of labour as theorised by Marx) as well as abstractions of thought, whilst he maintains that Anderson's concept of 'imagination' overemphasizes thought and consciousness at the expense of materiality. The other central concept in James' argument, drawing on Sharp (1985) and other writers in *Arena*, is the notion of *levels*. He presents a schema of 'levels of theoretical abstraction' (outlined in Ch. 2) as a means to analyse social relations. These levels are both elegantly simple and able to encompass the complexity of social relations and formations, ranging from the empirical level of individuals' biographies to all-encompassing categories such as time and space, gender, etc. Disappointingly though, James fails to incorporate gender as a significant category in the constitution of social formations in his discussion.

The sophistication of his argument lies in the way in which his schema both incorporates diverse levels of social relations, yet highlights their interdependence. This allows him to explain two of the seeming contradictions of national formations that have previously appeared intractable. Firstly, James is able to explain the 'ontological contradiction' of the nation, in other words the way in which the nation is both experienced as part of our 'lived' reality at an individual level, while being a form of abstract or imagined community between people who are, in a real sense, 'strangers'. Here James invokes the notion of the 'intersection-in-dominance' (21) of different levels of integration which allows him to accommodate both the 'face-to-face' and disembodied social relations (i.e. those

facilitated by print and electronic communications) of the nation. Secondly, the standard 'great divide' between primordial and modern social contexts is denied. Rather, James argues that the nation is *both* objectively modern and yet also 'deeply embedded' (18). Theoretically he accounts for this by conceptualising historical change as 'continuity-in-discontinuity' (75-77). His conception of levels allows him to theorise historical change as an uneven and dialectical process between the various levels of social formations and social relations: 'The levels argument is an attempt to express in a non-essentialist way the dialectic of continuity and discontinuity of prior social forms into the modern period' (114). Further, these ideas allow James to argue that *postmodern* national formations are currently emerging, alongside the continuing modern national formations, as disembodied integration becomes increasingly dominant.

James also discusses the ambiguous place of intellectuals in relation to nation-building and nationalism. Whilst they are themselves embodied individuals living in particular historical and geographical relations, the nature of intellectual practice is towards abstraction and universalisation; i.e. towards transcendence of the limitations of embodied interaction. James discusses how this ontological contradiction may play itself out in intellectual practice to support traditionalism, nationalism or cosmopolitanism (42-5). This provides the means to explain how intellectuals have been both central to the development and maintenance of nations and their greatest critics and forms the basis of much of his critique of the 'poverty of theory' regarding national formations amongst social theorists to date. He points to the limitations arising out of theorists' own political engagements, or embeddedness (Durkheim, Weber, Nairn) or their

overemphasis on just one plane of social existence as a basis for theoretical explanation (Marx & Engels, Gellner, Giddens) which inevitably leads to gaps and elisions. Throughout James aims to use his conceptions of abstraction, levels of integration etc. to highlight others' shortcomings whilst indicating the value of his own approach.

For researchers and teachers in the area of nationalism there is much of potential use in this book. Amongst its most refreshing aspects is James' resistance to the use of the typologies and ideal-type constructions so common amongst theorists of nationalism and which always disappoint in their inability to encompass the empirical diversity of national formations. As he says, and I think justifiably, his work 'calls into question all dichotomous or ideal-type theorizing' (127). Further, he indicates at least a potential means to explaining the contradictions of national formations where others have simply noted them in somewhat bemused fashion. I will look forward to the 'next instalment' providing a more developed theory.

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

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

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