

THE MANIFESTATION OF RACE  
IN EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION  
INTERACTIONS  
IN NEW ZEALAND

By

Elizabeth S. Revell

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Elizabeth S. Revell

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## ABSTRACT

THIS THESIS EXAMINES the manifestation of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand using an unconventional, experimental methodology. Experimenting with a partial collaborative autoethnographic approach that involved reflexive diaries, interviews, and focus groups as data collection methods, the author and nine other co-participants took part in a collaborative autoethnographic exercise, that required them to focus, reflect on, and discuss together their perceptions of the way race was manifested in their day-to-day experiences, over the period of a month. Co-participants were encouraged to write evocatively of their experiences. The author used her mixed-race identity as an autoethnographic analytical tool as a measure towards resolving her 'double consciousness' (Du Bois, 1903). Her own voice, thoughts, and stories of her lived experiences are woven into the study, alongside more traditional analysis. In carrying out this investigation, the author sought not only to generate knowledge in the traditional academic sense, but to facilitate a disruptive, emancipative and emotionally engaging conversation on racism in New Zealand, between herself, her co-participants, and readers.

In answering the main research question about the manifestation of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand, the author found that in public contexts in New Zealand, race as a topic is taboo and racists are social pariahs amongst Western, educated, middle-class members of society. Consequentially, race is often manifested in a variety of subtle ways in everyday communication interactions, and is difficult to identify and challenge. The subtle way in which race is manifested in everyday settings masks an undercurrent of prejudice and hostility. Whether or not these hidden tensions will emerge problematically in the future remains to be seen, as New Zealanders negotiate and manage their biculturalism and multiculturalism.

In terms of the significance of race in New Zealand, the author concluded that New Zealand's racial and ethnic identity is changing (browning), and that the longstanding New Zealand European (White) majority is decreasing in proportion and dominance. Some New Zealand Europeans are consciously and subconsciously trying to assert their authority, refusing to let the idea that a 'true' New Zealander is 'White' go because of a) a subconscious belief in the superiority of White skin and/or Western culture, and b) insecurity around what will happen to them and their lifestyle, if non-White ethnic and non-Western cultural groups continue to gain in proportion to White, Western groups. As a result, some non-White individuals are experiencing

being subtly and overtly 'othered', excluded, disrespected, and negatively stereotyped. Being subjected to everyday racism has resulted in some non-White New Zealanders having a fractured sense of identity, and others having adopted the racist worldview of Whites.

In terms of resolving the dialectic of her mixed-race identity, the closure the author had hoped for was not achieved. Instead, she became more conscious of her own racist beliefs and actions, and convinced of the importance of continuing to challenge them.



## DECLARATION

Name of candidate: Elizabeth Revell

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of Master of International Communication.

## CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION

I confirm that:

- This thesis represents my own work;
- The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the Unitec Regulations and Policies;
- Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures, and as fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

Research Ethics Committee Approval Number: 2011-1226

Candidate's signature:

Elizabeth Revell (1370042)

Date:

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

THIS THESIS PRESENTS my investigation into the manifestation of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. In this introductory chapter, I introduce myself as the main co-participant in this research, describe how I came to choose my research topic and question, state the wider significance of the study, and outline the methodological approach I employed.

But before embarking on any of that, it must be acknowledged that this is an experimental, unconventional work, as I utilised autoethnography, an alternative methodological approach. Autoethnography is an ethnographic derivative methodology that attends enthusiastically to concepts such as positionality (the particular social position and identity of the researcher) and reflexivity (considering how one's positionality may influence their perspective on the social phenomena under investigation) (Ellis 2004). Autoethnographic texts employ these concepts in unpacking the experiences of their author, as a means to uncovering new understandings of the broader social world.

Autoethnographic styles are usually positioned as either evocative (stressing the importance of telling raw, honest and engaging life stories that can count as valid research in themselves (Ellis, 2004)) or analytical (striving to add a more traditional analysis of autoethnographic experiential narratives on top of the stories themselves (Anderson, 2006)). I chose to experimentally combine these two styles. During the collaborative data collection period, I encouraged my co-participants to join me in writing evocatively and reflexively about their everyday lives. In analysing the data, as the main co-participant, I moved between evocative and analytical perspectives as necessary. Attempting to straddle these two frames of mind has affected how I have written this thesis. In reading it, the reader can distinguish my evocative voice as separate from my analytical voice by looking out for sections of text in speech bubbles, and written in italics. These are my 'narrative vignettes', written in an evocative way, and used to communicate ideas, thoughts and backdrop memories that are important to this thesis and, to me, required a more creative, less formalised and more emotive manner of depiction.

The type of autoethnography I employed, I categorised as 'partial collaborative autoethnography' (Chang, Ngunjiri & Hernandez, 2012), an emergent approach that involves balancing multiple autoethnographic voices with the single autoethnographic voice of a main co-participant in performing various tasks at various stages during the research process. Autoethnographic collaboration was used in the data collection phase of the project. Nine co-participants and myself all joined together for four weeks to identify and autoethnographically reflect on our perceptions of our experiences in everyday life that triggered thoughts around race in diary entries, then discussed our findings together in one-on-one interviews and group discussions. In my findings chapter I have tried to privilege the uncut, un-manipulated, un-explicated voices of the co-participants (as, in a way, 'co-researchers') by including large segments of diary entries and interview/discussion transcripts, deeming participant perceptions as valid findings in themselves, rather than privileging my own 'researcher' voice at all times as the only legitimate commentary on the research topic. However, my research is only partially collaborative as I was in sole control of all other aspects of the project: design, initiation and co-ordination, and writing.

Unlike traditional research that aims primarily to add to the body of accurate factual knowledge about humanity and the world we live in, an additional aim of this unorthodox thesis is to inspire the acquisition of 'emotional knowledge' (or 'empathy') (Ellis, 2004), an equally important variety of knowledge that is, I feel, often overlooked by academia. In keeping with the alleged benefits of the autoethnographic approach that this

investigation employed (discussed in more detail in the methodology chapter), it is anticipated and hoped that in reading this thesis, readers might come to understand and know more accurately what it is like to be somebody else, in this case myself and my co-participants, through the stories we tell. The history of the topic I have chosen is replete with violence and hatred. In awareness of this, my project aims to turn people towards each other by engineering a space in which they can develop empathy for the experiences and perspectives of a few others. The aim is not to produce objective truth, but to illuminate and communicate heart-felt, valid perspectives, an equally important task, and suitable for a polarising and sensitive question such as the one I have chosen.

## MY “DOUBLE CONSCIOUSNESS”: A PERSONAL NARRATIVE

In the following personal narrative vignette (Humphreys, 2005), the first of a number of autoethnographic inserts you will come across as you read this thesis, I introduce myself and detail the compilation of reflections on my own life-experience and in the lead up to this research that provided the impetus for this investigation of race in New Zealand. This section (and all subsequent autoethnographic inserts) is written in my autoethnographic ‘voice’ – less conventionally academic and more reminiscent, and is the first of many ‘narrative vignettes’ weaved into the text of this thesis, identifiable by their italic font and speech bubble borders.

### **First thing's first: Who I am**

*My name is Elizabeth Revell. I am a New Zealander, female, 24 years of age. I come from a loving family of a mum, a dad and two younger brothers. My father is a doctor and my mother is a primary school teacher. You should know that both my parents were incredibly committed to my and my brothers' upbringing. They both worked hard to give us all the opportunities they could.*

*I am 'middle-class' and went to a private girls' school. My parents seem to value education and financial security. I am a student at Unitec doing my Masters in International Communication, a native English speaker and would uncritically culturally call myself a 'Kiwi', although I've never been overly patriotic.*

### **But: The dreaded question**

*I know myself as a 'New Zealander'. But people often ask me **where I am from** as if I wasn't born and bred in this country. When this happens I find myself feeling uncomfortable, defensive and offended. If I respond that I am from New Zealand, they are not satisfied. I know what they want to know and I don't want to tell them. They want to know what makes me non-'White' (i.e. a non-New Zealander). They want to know that I am half 'Mongoloid; half 'orient'; half 'Asian'.*

*At some point in time, a quarter of my ancestors lived in Scotland, a quarter lived in England, and half lived in China. What am I? I am a third-to-fourth-generation-half-Chinese, fifth-generation-quarter-English, fifth-generation-quarter-Scottish New Zealander. My parents were born in New Zealand. Three out of four of my grandparents were born in New Zealand. The only one that wasn't is a 1.5 generation immigrant to New Zealand from China<sup>1</sup> who, to my knowledge, does not regularly keep in touch with anyone from his country of birth and has only 'gone back' once. Though I feel some affinity for England and Scotland, I feel none at all for China, yet this seems to be my second most definitive descriptor, after 'female' ("She's the Asian/part-Asian one").*

## **Fleshing out the issue**

*Along with the aforementioned recurring inquiry, recollecting a number of other more specific experiences during my formative years led me to wonder whether my unease around my racial origins being questioned warranted an investigation. In the following paragraphs I endeavor to convey some of these to you.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **School**

*To begin with, one of my first recollections of race awareness was at my all-girls primary school when I got the lead in the school production of *The Pied Piper*. Upon seeing the video recording of the performance, I was visually struck by how my visual appearance jarred strongly with my mental image of the person I was playing. I did not look the part. If the story was set in Hamelin, Lower Saxony, Germany, in the Middle Ages, how could the Pied Piper have been part-Asian? In fact, all of my childhood heroes and heroines in stories and picture books were White. In hindsight, I wonder if anyone else commented on or even was simply aware of my Asian-ness upon seeing me perform.*

*At my high school, there seemed to be a definite division between Asian students and non-Asian students. For the most part, bar a few exceptions, Asian students, who were the minority, would all hang out together, non-Asian students (mostly White with two or three Pacific Islanders thrown in) had their groups, and part-Asians or Kiwi Asians would hang out with a few Asian-friendly non-Asians. With regards to the few exceptions to the rule, those with Asian looks that were part of the non-Asian groups could either 'pass' as non-Asian, or appeared to mock/encouraged others to mock their Asian-ness for its entertainment value, serving, in my opinion, to pander to the egos of the non-Asians. I felt that many non-Asians would not even acknowledge the existence of the non-Kiwi Asians apart from times when they would display overtly patronising behavior towards them. The Asians seemed timid around the non-Asians.*

*A trend I observed and struggled with throughout my middle and high school years was the 'yellowing' of the music department at school. I was in the school orchestra during this time and I watched the group become more and more Asian in make-up. This made me resent being in the orchestra as I felt that I didn't want to associate too closely with Asians, for fear of rejection by the dominant, powerful non-Asian groups. At the same time, I was confronted by my pity for them. These feelings are disgusting and morally reprehensible to me now and I struggle to admit them, but they are the truth. Moreover, I continue to harbour and fight them.*

*During lunchtimes in my last year of school, the 'Asian' group would not sit in the common room allocated to our year group. They either sat outside, or down the back of the hall if it was wet weather. The part-Asian group sat in the loft of the common room, separated from the main area and with limited furnishings. The non-Asian groups sat in the main part of the common room. I was acutely aware of this pattern as indicative of a social hierarchy. During that same year, I watched two exchange students come and go, one from China and one from Scandinavia. Both struggled to speak English. The Scandinavian was welcomed into and celebrated by the non-Asian group with the highest social standing, whereas the Chinese student remained quiet and struggled to make friends. I felt that this was because of anti-Asian racism.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **Home**

*In my perception, racial tension was evident at home as I was growing up. A particular repeated interaction of my parents' shows, in my view, the racial/cultural dynamic in my family. Whenever my dad (Asian) did something that my mother (European) found illogical such as repeatedly put towels in with dark clothes in the washing machine, she would joke that it was because he came "from a little village in China", a joke that for some unfathomable (to me) reason he laughed at too. I don't know who came up with this diffusive explanation for dad's unhelpful actions, but it seemed odd since dad had been born and raised in New Zealand. It seemed to belittle both him and his Chinese-ness. This communicated to me was that Chinese ways were bizarre and abnormal. It makes me sad to think about it now.*

*One day I asked my mum what my worst feature was. She replied that it was my nose. My nose is one of my most Asian features (it is 'flat'). She used to express her embarrassment at the way my dad's (Asian) parents would dress when they came to my performances and prize-givings at school. To illustrate the reproduction of this Asian cringe amongst my siblings, on one occasion, I had not put much effort into my outfit. Upon seeing me, with disdain, my brother informed me that I looked Asian. These interactions reinforced for me Asian ways are wrong and European ways are right. I still feel that I should try my utmost to appear as European as possible, in order to avoid being associated with anything Asian.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Outside of my family, in my wider social circle, because most of the people who know me well do not know me as an Asian, I have often been in the awkward predicament of not knowing whether or not to say something when I feel people are being racist towards Asians. For my own social advancement and status protection, I remain silent, aligning with my New Zealand European identity and disassociating from the Asian.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*To summarise the main theme of these experiences, in the context of being half-European and half-Asian, the sense that New Zealand Europeans (who are the self-defined 'average' or 'legitimate' New Zealanders) harbour negative feelings and negative thoughts towards Asians has been a conundrum for most of my life. I am painfully aware that upon seeing me, New Zealand European strangers (the majority of New Zealanders) may automatically attribute popular negative Asian stereotypes to me, not just because I am aware of how they see me, but because the European part of me has automatically attributed them to Asians that I encounter (I have done it myself).*

## Defining my research topic

*In my initial degree, I took a number of papers that were grounded in critical theory, or at least the lecturers were. In considering what to research for my Masters thesis, critically mulling over my opinions, emotions and beliefs more generally, then specifically around the recurring personal issue of race and my mixed identity resulted in arrival at the following problematic and shameful revelation: I am racist, towards others, and towards myself. My suspicion is that in privileging my New Zealand European identity, my Asian identity must be not only suppressed but rejected and despised. I imagine that because, in my opinion, a subscription to New Zealand European mentality involves taking on an historic and foundational hostility towards 'Asiatics', one part of me is racist towards the (O)ther.*

*I decided broadly on the topic of race for my thesis. In my initial ventures into research on race, I repeatedly stumbled across mention of the writings of W.E. Du Bois. A particular idea of his resonated with me – in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), he wrestles with his 'double consciousness', or how to preserve a positive Black identity in a White dominated society. Du Bois, an African American scholar, wrote this book at a time when feelings of hatred and indifference towards Black people were overtly performed by White people in everyday American life. He uses the term 'double consciousness' to describe how he could see the world through two lenses: the lens of a Black man, and the lens of an American. He writes:*

*'It is a peculiar sensation...this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.'* (1903, p.9)

*In the same way, I feel my two-ness tugging my loyalties in different directions. Should I confront the overt and subtle jabs I witness and feel towards the Chinese and Chinese-ness? Towards Asians and Asian-ness? Towards all non-White New Zealanders? Should I confront my racist attitudes towards myself? Is it possible to be proud of being or to even just to be both a New Zealander/New Zealand European and Asian at once?*

*I had believed that race was a thing of the past, a thing that you study in history class with only slight, lingering and declining contemporary relevance. But upon realising its influence in my life, I wondered if there are others in New Zealand for whom race is problematic. Does and how does and to what degree does race affect people in New Zealand? Am I just too sensitive to it or are there others like me? This thesis on the experience of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand is the outcome of my musings and actions for the past few months on the not-so-hidden and hidden, conscious and subconscious perceived communication of attitudes and beliefs around race and races that continue to trouble us in everyday social performances.*

## WIDER SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

According to a number of social commentators, the era of the problem of race has given way to a new post-racial era, the 'poster boy' for which is none other than Barack Obama, the first non-White president of the United States (Kinder & Dale-Riddle, 2012). At odds with this claim, scholars and non-academic writers in many fields continue to write energetically on race and issues of identity, including in the field of intercultural communication, a sub-discipline of communication studies (Winant, 2006). A number of intercultural communication scholars (such as Nakayama, Halualani, Knowles, and Moon) have embarked on a critical appraisal of the subject and are beginning to consider a group of ideas that point to power imbalances inherent in intercultural communication interactions in different contexts. From this perspective, race is considered in the everyday context of interaction, with an aim to reveal how the subtle performance of race in social spaces contributes to the reproduction of race as a morally unjust and oppressive social institutional structure (Goldberg, 2009).

The lived experience of race and the retelling of stories of discrimination have become important in understanding what the overarching phenomenon of race means for individuals in their day-to-day lives. It is contended that taking the historical context into account is imperative in reading the specific meaning and performance of race in different places. Particular and sustained attention has been given to these ideas in the context of the United States. However, limited scholarly investigation has been carried out on the everyday significance of race in the New Zealand context, let alone from a

critical intercultural communication perspective. This research means to fill this gap in the literature through exploring the significance of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand.

As conveyed in my introductory autoethnographic vignette, I, the researcher, am particularly interested in this topic because of my own struggles with race over the years as a half-Chinese, half-European, New Zealander and my desire to resolve them. I combine a personal interest in the continuing effect of the phenomenon of race on my own and other people's everyday lives with a scholarly interest in the continuing effect of race on everyday communication interactions from a critical intercultural communication perspective, in the New Zealand context.

One of the anticipated outcomes of the research is that in presenting an understanding of 'how race continues to be significant and meaningful for individuals in the everyday New Zealand context, in order to outline the real racial issues that people continue to experience', those interested in working towards the elimination of the negative effects of the political construct of race can more easily target people's actual day to day problems. I suggest that this thesis would be useful to other New Zealand researchers concerned with multicultural relations and researchers of race, ethnicity, culture, diversity and nationality, particularly because of its unorthodox methodological approach, as well as any member of the public interested in race and ethnic issues in New Zealand.

## RESEARCH PURPOSE

This study set out with three purposes: (a) To provide a preliminary and exploratory analysis of the manifestation of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand through the use of in-depth qualitative research methods with a small number of participants; (b) To approach resolution of a dialectic in my own identity – how I can be both New Zealand Asian and New Zealand European simultaneously and how it affects me on a day to day basis; (c) To generate and analyse the generation of a productive and emotionally engaging conversation on race in New Zealand between myself, my co-participants, and my readers.

Talking and writing about race in New Zealand is problematic. In my experience in New Zealand, the topic of race is considered 'taboo' and is pushed under the rug due to its controversial nature. New Zealanders seem to be terrified of being labeled racists. Some of the stories reported in this thesis could result in certain individuals appearing racist and being offended. My intention is not to point the finger at individuals, but instead to initiate a

conversation about what these interactions mean and whether there is a larger problem of race in New Zealand that we as a community might all need to address. These barriers of taboo and fear must be confronted in order for information on the topic to be gathered, and for productive outcomes to result from this investigation. In saying this, I endeavored to engineer comfort and diffuse any hostilities that may arise as the co-constructed project wore on.

The research question that the study addresses is:

*How is race manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand?*

## CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

### **“Race”**

For this thesis, ‘race’ is defined as: *‘A system of human categorisation developed to help us in predicting and judging behaviors and values and ascribed on the basis of a person’s heritable and chosen appearance.’*

### **“Everyday communication interaction”**

‘Everyday communication interaction’ is defined as: *‘Reciprocal action or influence of people and things on each other through which information is imparted or exchanged in an ordinary setting.’*

The concise conceptual definitions given in this chapter are explored in much more detail in Chapter two as it was felt that complete and lengthy consideration of these complex concepts in the opening chapter for this thesis would distract the reader from other important foundational introductory information.

## METHODOLOGY: A PARTIAL COLLABORATIVE AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH

I approach the above question using the methodology of ‘partial collaborative autoethnography’ (Chang, 2008; Chang et al., 2012; Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang, 2010). Autoethnography is a branch of ethnography that maps a particular culture through self-analysis: the researcher both performs and is the object under investigation. Through analysis of the self, analysis of the context and community that the self is in is achieved (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). One of autoethnography’s main advantages is in its facilitation of access to intimate and sensitive issues, that are important for social understanding

(Ellis, 2009). Autoethnographies are usually produced by a single introspective author, however, collaborative autoethnographies by two or more authors have been appearing in research journals (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). Collaboration produces a richer perspective than that of a single author (ibid., 2010).

In employing a partial collaborative approach, a main co-participant can choose at what stages of the research she/he wishes to involve her/his co-workers, however, cooperative data collection is a key component (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). My choice is that I along with 9 other 'co-workers' (my co-participants) collect the data together through a self-reflexive and cooperative process using reflexive diaries, semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured focus groups. However, I am solely responsible for the roles of designer, facilitator and report generator of this research. In terms of data analysis, thematic and autoethnographic styles were used and provide structure for the communication of the findings in chapter five. Chapter five weaves sections of autoethnographic narratives into more traditional presentation of the findings.

## THESIS OUTLINE

There are seven chapters to this thesis. Chapter one has introduced the topic of the everyday manifestation of race and has described how I 'arrived' at the topic in an autoethnographic narrative, which also served the purpose of introducing me as the author. It has outlined the wider significance and the purposes of the research, has presented the main research question and has touched on important operational definitions. It has briefly described the methodology employed.

Chapter two presents the conceptual definitions and relevant information about the context for this study (New Zealand). Chapter three presents the theoretical framework and reviews a selection of literature on race and the everyday. Chapter four details and evaluates the particular research approach of partial collaborative autoethnography and describes and justifies how it was employed. It also presents important ethical considerations. Chapter five presents the findings of the study in seven main themes, each with a number of subthemes. Chapter six analyses and discusses each theme, concluding with an answer to the question of how race is significant in New Zealand. Chapter seven summarises the thesis and suggests directions for future research on the everyday significance of race in New Zealand, and ends with an autoethnographic confession of where I, as a mixed-race individual, am personally in my thinking at the end of this journey.

## CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTS AND CONTEXT

CHAPTER TWO PRESENTS the conceptual definitions (in more detail than in chapter one) and gives the contextual backdrop for this study. The concepts section defines and gives historical and theoretical foundation to the concepts of 'race' and 'everyday communication interaction'. The context section discusses biculturalism and multiculturalism in New Zealand, and, using recent media related events, argues for the significance of race in New Zealand, despite an avoidance of the term in academic research and policy.

### CONCEPTUAL DEFINITIONS

#### **Concept 1: 'Race'**

To define race it is first necessary to give a brief history of the concept and how it developed into racism.

#### **Origins of race**

Histories of the concept of race often begin with Blumenbach's typology (Orbe & Harris, 2008). Johann Friedrich Blumenbach developed the foundation for much of the work on race towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century (ibid., 2008). His typology began with the premise that all humans belonged to one species known as *Homo sapiens*, and showed how this could be branched off into five human *races* (ibid.): Caucasians (Europeans); Mongolians (peoples of Asia); Ethiopians (Africans), USs (native); and Malay (South Pacific peoples) (Jackson & Weidman, 2004). To him, the Caucasians were the original race, and the most beautiful (ibid., 2004), however, their degeneration over time had resulted in the other races. Along with other scholars at that time, he argued that environmental factors were the cause of racial 'degeneration' (Smedley & Smedley, 2011). Blumenbach's groups

became widely recognised by the European intellectual community (Jackson & Weidman, 2004).

Though most academic commentators remained within the monogenesis view that humans were one species, towards the end of the eighteenth century, theories of polygenesis gained popularity (Jackson & Weidman, 2004). La Payère was the first European in modern times to articulate a detailed theory of polygenesis (Bernasconi, 2001) in his book, *Praeadamitae*, published in 1655. Polygenesis was given a new lease of life in 1774 by Edward Long and others thereafter who appealed to it in support of slavery (ibid., 2001). However, because polygenesis was thought of as irreconcilable with the Biblical account of the creation of a single pair of humans as opposed to multiple pairs, it lacked the appeal of monogenesis (ibid.). According to Lang (2000), the polygenic claim was eventually defeated by two developments. One was geographical - a biblical calculation of the age of the earth as a few thousand years old was dismissed in favour of a calculation that the earth was millions of years old. The other was Darwin's theory of evolution, which traced all life back to one source and explained how current diversity could derive from it (ibid. 2000).

### **The development of racism**

It was during the nineteenth century that scientific contributions to race began to impact public policies and ideas about how different races should be treated (Smedley & Smedley, 2011). To justify their domination of Native populations, a variety of ideologies, theories and belief systems were developed by Europeans (Orbe & Harris, 2008). Tolbert (1989, in ibid., 2008) asserts that three ideologies in the history of the concept of race in particular deserve attention: the idea of a chosen people; racism; and colonialism. The first of these was a Judeo-Christian concept, which interpreted God as having chosen Europeans to reclaim the world in his name (ibid.). To justify their economic and political expansion through colonialism, Europeans relied not only on the chosen people discourse but also on the racist belief that since they were the dominant race, the exploitation of other races was no different from the exploitation of farm animals (Graves, 2004). The rule of the superior race was viewed as positive for all races (Orbe & Harris, 2008). It was this assumption that went hand in hand with the transatlantic triangular boom in slave trade between Europe, the the USs and Africa during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and apartheid in the American South, Nazi Germany and South Africa during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (Bonilla-Silva, 1997; Fredrickson, 2011; Parish, 1990).

Charles Hirschman (2004) adds Social Darwinism to Tolbert's list. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection

was absorbed into the prevailing ideas of scientific racism, most importantly by a group called the 'Social Darwinists' (Rattansi, 2007). The English sociologist and social Darwinist Herbert Spencer (1820-93) coined the term 'survival of the fittest' which was used to support the notion that technological prowess proved that the White races were the 'fittest'. Social Darwinism provided fuel for the eugenics movement, the policy of selective breeding and the fear of racial degeneration, widely popular in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (ibid., 2007).

The ideas of Eugenics were taken to the extreme in Germany between 1904 and 1918 in the race hygiene movement (Rattansi, 2007), and during the Holocaust (1939-1945), which saw the systematic murder of over six million Jews, 'Gypsies', homosexuals, Slavs, Poles, Communists and others who were seen to be polluting the pure blood of the 'elite' German race. This was the turning point in the history of racism in the twentieth century (Fredrickson, 2011). Widespread moral revulsion and shock at what had happened meant that the Holocaust did more to discredit racism as a global norm than any previous event. Following WWII, in 1950, UNESCO produced a statement that challenged the scientific grounds for race (ibid., 2011).

### **Race after racism**

A great deal of scientific and non-scientific research carried out since this time has demonstrated that pure, biological races never existed (Hirschman, 2004; Orbe & Harris, 2008). Over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, race became a socio-political construct, used over time to make sense of the global competition for limited resources (Orbe & Harris, 2008). The book *Man's most dangerous myth: the fallacy of race* by Ashley Montagu (1942) was a standard text for university students by the 1950s and '60s (Hirschman, 2004). Race, however, continues to be used as a categorisation tool and many people believe that racial differences are real (Graves, 2004). Though overt racism has waned, discrimination on the basis of race continues and race is still used in identity politics, especially in the United States (Hirschman, 2004).<sup>1</sup> Today, a dominant perspective on race is the 'social constructionist' view, that race is 'a pseudo-biological concept that has been used to justify and rationalise the unequal treatment of groups of people by others' (Machery & Faucher, 2005).

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<sup>1</sup> Identity politics occurs when self-identified groups promote their own defined self-interest, their arguments being shaped by participation in and allegiance to a particular identity group based on, for example, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and sexuality. Often minority groups are those most concerned with identity politics.

## **A post-race world?**

At the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a neoliberal perspective that race is associated with society's past, as we look towards a more optimistic future of 'diversity' and 'colourblindness' holds (Goldberg, 2006). The modern discourse of the celebration of 'diversity' is championed in the US by business leaders, political activists, marketing gurus, and Supreme Court Justices, as replacing and having replaced the fear and rejection of the 'other' (Bell & Hartmann, 2007). However, many critical scholars believe that race as a concept continues to be salient and meaningful, through subtle racisms, especially for those who are 'non-White' (see Coates, 2008; Robus & Macleod, 2006). Some say that race has been subsumed into concepts such as ethnicity and culture and nationality, even religion in the case of Islam (Challinor, 2011; Rattansi, 2007). In his book *The threat of race*, David Goldberg (2009, in Maldonado-Torres, 2010) extensively describes race's refusal to remain silent and the attempt to 'bury it alive'.

## **Definition of race for this study**

Race is a contested term and there are, according to Winant (2000) deep questions about what we actually mean by it. He describes it as "a concept that signifies and symbolises sociopolitical conflicts and interests in reference to different types of human bodies" (ibid., 2000, p.172). A number of other conceptualisations of race have contributed to my definition. In Bolaffi, Bracalenti, Braham and Gindro's (2003) definition of race, a distinction is made between the old biological notion of race, that races were separate genetic groups identifiable by phenotypical features such as skin colour and type of hair, and the new cultural definition of race, in which phenotypical features signify cultural differences. Goldberg (2004) cites Appiah's definition: that race is generalisable and heritable traits that may be psychological, cultural, or culturally inscribed on the body. Morning (2009) describes races as groupings of people believed to share common descent, based on perceived innate physical similarities. Dein (2006) posits that race is more than a category, it is a 'lived experience'. Rosner and Hong (2010) write of two opposing views of race: that it is a deep seated, inborn, real essence that has diagnostic power, and that race is not real but invented often by members of the dominant social group to justify and rationalise inequalities. Banton (2010) describes the horizontal and vertical dimensions of race, the horizontal being the separation of human populations into separate but equal groups, and the vertical being the placement of those groups into a hierarchy of social value and importance. These descriptions have assisted me in developing a definition of race.

In this research, I adhere to notion that race is a social construction. Races are not indisputably identifiable, objective, observable 'things'. Instead they have been socially constructed and reconstructed to preserve political power (drawing on Winant's (1999; 2000) 'sociopolitical conflict' and Rosner and Hong's (2010) 'rationale for inequality' definitions of race). However, people act as though races are objectively 'real' (Dein's (2006) 'lived experience' definition). Race is *'a system of human categorisation developed to help us in predicting and judging behaviors and values and ascribed on the basis of a person's heritable and chosen appearance'* (drawing from Goldberg's (2004) definition; it also has Rosner and Hong's (2010) 'diagnostic power'). The knowledge of these categories affects how we act: race has social significance only in social action.

When a belief in inherent difference (horizontal) is intertwined with ethnocentrism it can morph into racism (vertical), a belief that some races are inherently superior to others and therefore deserve not only a greater share of material wealth but also more respect. Race therefore is not only a system of categorisation but also a system of oppression as it is a concept used to justify political gain. The social reproduction of race as a (horizontal) system of categorisation is understood as racialism (making race), and the social reproduction of race as a (vertical) system of oppression is understood as racism (using race). Appiah (1990) is careful not to conflate these two definitions, seeing a hierarchical conception of race separately under 'racism' and a democratic view of races as 'racialism'. In my opinion, one cannot use the word 'race' without invoking knowledges and emotions associated with 'racism' and therefore feel skeptical towards attempts to separate the concepts. In examining race, I am simultaneously placing the concept of racism under my investigative lens.

### **Race ethnicity and culture**

Here I briefly discuss my understanding of race's relationship to two related terms: ethnicity, and culture. Some scholars are of the opinion that race, ethnicity and culture are separate concepts. Nicotera, Clinkscales, Dorsey and Niles (2009) are of the opinion that in some communication research, race has been erroneously equated with culture and ethnicity. They define culture as having arisen from shared collective experience, ethnicity as a way of tracing people's origin and identities, and race as a sociopolitical category system. Bonilla-Silva (1997) has distinguished race from ethnicity in that he contends that ethnicity is more malleable than race, has a primarily sociocultural foundation, is not externally ascribed, and is not based on a superior/subordinate relationship.

Other scholars are not so sure about the distinction between the terms. Hall (2000, in Dein, 2006) questions the distinction between race and ethnicity. According to him, physical markers have always been used to denote social and cultural differences that are implicated in ethnic discourses. Dalal (2002) observes that race is thought to be problematic and is often written in quotes ('race'), whereas ethnicity and culture are thought to be less problematic. However, he contends, caveats within definitions of the three concepts result in the concepts 'sliding into one another' (ibid., 2002: 22). Amin (2010) asserts that justifications of race are now hidden behind arguments involving cultural difference. Bell and Hartmann (2007) warn us against losing ourselves in a 'happy sociology' of diversity, culture, and identity, forgetting inequality, race and injustice. So, though race, ethnicity and culture may all be able to be defined differently, they are all tightly interlinked.

In my definition, discourses of ethnicity and culture overlap with discourses of race. Lowe (2008) advocates the use of such an inclusive theorisation in considering race and racism in a late-modern New Zealand context. In a recent article on the theorisation of race in New Zealand, he uses a conceptualisation of racism as defined by Etienne Balibar (1991), which to him suggests that contemporary racial discrimination encompasses such forms as cultural and even religious discrimination.

## **Concept 2: 'Everyday communication interaction'**

This section will define the concept of 'everyday communication interaction' that I use in my research question. I chose the concept of 'everyday communication interaction' to assist me in gathering qualitative data which I could use to answer the question of how race matters in the everyday lives of people in New Zealand. My conceptualisation of the everyday draws from an established academic discourse that considers ordinary and common sense occurrences and encounters in life to be important in understanding larger social forces. I draw inspiration from the legacy of the critical theorists of everyday life such as Erving Goffman, Henri Lefebvre and Michael Certeau who broke from a Marxist focus on work and the labourer and argued that work and leisure operate dialectically with each other. For them, it is not only in performing the economic activities necessary to realise humanity's material needs that relations of domination and subordination are produced: they are produced in non-labour activities too.

In their writings the everyday and mundane is problematised instead of simply being taken for granted. I am studying the 'everyday' to critically investigate how race as a hierarchical categorisation system works itself out and reproduces itself through people's experiences in their 'everyday' worlds

in New Zealand. Everyday experience encompasses our encounters with the ordinary things, people and events, things that happen to us on our journey through our day-to-day lives. I use Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical Theory (Goffman, 1959) in beginning with the Shakesperean notion that 'all the world's a stage', and contending that ideas about race are produced, reproduced, challenged and internalised through our interactions with each other as we perform our social roles and embody particular characters and characteristics.

Everyday communication is a complex but important type of communication that encompasses all communication events in mundane settings. I acknowledge Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz as the particular communication studies scholar who first validated a focus on everyday communication interactions as opposed to interpersonal or non-verbal or intergroup communications. Leeds-Hurwitz (1989) provided an outline of what communication in everyday life encompasses. She includes communication as pattern, as learned, as contextual, as multichannel, and as multifunctional. She encourages the study all the channels of communication simultaneously. The reason that I have chosen such a broad view of communication is because I feel that focusing on one type of communication will limit my ability to answer the question of how race is socially reproduced in everyday communication interactions. I need to consider all social action if I am to fully come to terms with the occurrence of race in the daily lives of individuals.

My definition of an everyday communication interaction is: *'reciprocal action or influence of people and things on each other through which information is imparted or exchanged in an ordinary setting'*. This draws from the *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions of everyday, communication and interaction (Everyday, 1989; Communication, 1989; Interaction, 1989). It describes interaction as 'reciprocal action or influence of persons or things on each other', communication as 'the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or some other medium', and everyday as 'happening or used every day; daily; to be met with everyday; common, ordinary'. It is broad enough to encompass much if not all of social (communicative) action as I wish my co-participants to have the freedom to pick up on race no matter what type of communicative act is under consideration.

As I see it, 'everyday communication interactions', like all experiences, are subjectively perceived. It is assumed that what is reportedly experienced by an individual in an everyday communication interaction is what *matters* to them, is based on their interpretation, and is most likely different from what another individual might report. Importantly, any account of experience is a partial and biased representation of what is occurring. For example, a

perceiver may attribute incorrect motives and aims to individual actions. The reader is encouraged to keep this in mind as they read the accounts of experience presented in the findings chapter. Autoethnography (the analysis of personal experience) is a delicate task as those around the autoethnographer may be painted in what could be seen as an incriminating light. In order to avoid this type of injury to implicated persons, it is important that the reader remember that potentially incriminating representations and judgments are often important in terms of what they can tell us about the perceiver, rather than the character being portrayed.

## CONTEXT

### **Multiculturalism and biculturalism in New Zealand**

This section on the history of multiculturalism and biculturalism in New Zealand is included in this thesis on race because of the notion that culture is implicated in a modern conceptualisation of race. Emperically, New Zealand society can be described as ‘multicultural’, despite its foundational and constitutional biculturalism (Culpitt, 1994; Lowe, 2009). Biculturalism and multiculturalism sit in an uneasy relationship in New Zealand, the reconciliation of which provides a challenge for policy makers (Barley & Spoonley, 2005; Bell, 2009; Hill, 2010). Interestingly, liberal multiculturalism, as employed in most Western European democracies, has not been adopted as it is maintained that adoption would be insensitive to indigenous (in New Zealand’s case, Māori) rights (Lowe, 2009)<sup>2</sup>. The following paragraphs briefly outline the history of racial/ethnic/cultural groups in New Zealand and the formal and informal relationships between them.

New Zealand’s relatively short history of race-relations began in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Europeans ‘discovered’ and began to

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<sup>2</sup> Liberal multiculturalism, according to Loobuyck (2005), is ‘a policy within the scope of liberal philosophy that seeks maximum accommodation of differences in religious, cultural or ethnic origin in a stable and morally defensible way, in private as well as public spheres’ (p. 110). Exchanging biculturalism for this would be insensitive to indigenous rights because under liberal multiculturalism, other communities would gain political power, and the Maori/Pakeha (European immigrant) binary outlined in the Treaty of Waitangi between the indigenous and colonising peoples would be collapsed. Maori deserve recognition as the original peoples of New Zealand that they receive under biculturalism. Article 8 of the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights (2007) states that indigenous people and individuals have the right not to be subjected to forced assimilation or destruction of their culture. Under multiculturalism they would become simply another culture and may lose their status as indigenous by default.

colonise the islands they called New Zealand, and New Zealand's native people which they labeled the 'Māori'. New Zealand was one of the last countries to be colonised and the only colony in which a treaty was established between the original inhabitants and the Crown, to peacefully transfer the former group's 'sovereignty'.<sup>3</sup> The signing of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* is now regarded as the nation's most important event (Liu, Wilson, McClure & Higgins, 1999, cited in Ward & Liu, 2012) and the principles outlined in the Treaty together with other customs, legal precedents and traditions sit in place of a formal constitution. The Treaty established the biracial or bicultural relationship between Māori and Pakeha (conceptualised of as the British settlers in some circumstances and non-Māori in others, but most commonly as New Zealand Europeans or 'White' New Zealanders) as the first and foremost intergroup relationship in the New Zealand context.

From the time of the arrival of the European settlers, Māori culture started to erode and the population began to decline, due to such factors as disease and warfare, both tribal and against the Crown. In the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, theories of social Darwinism were used to paint Māori as a 'dying race', the result of contact with a superior civilisation (Hill, 2004; Liu et al., 1999). However, from this time, Māori began to prosper demographically. From the time that this was acknowledged as a trend by the European officialdom, the aim of eradication was replaced with the aim of assimilation or 'Whitening' of Māori (Hill, 2004; Ward & Liu, 2012), and resulted in a government initiative to encourage and support Māori to leave their 'papakainga' (land used as housing by a sub-tribe or extended family group) for employment (as, for example, freezing workers, watersiders, labourers) in towns and cities. This 'Whitening' policy was promoted up until the last quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century,

Over the course of the 1900s, Māori moved in large numbers to the cities in search of work and sustenance, entering into a Pakeha world (Ward & Liu, 2012). Māori well-being withered in comparison to the well-being of the settler community (Liu, 2007). However, in the late 1960s a Māori 'cultural renaissance', (a movement for the revival of Māori culture) was given impetus by a number of leaders in the Māori community. Since then, a number of

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<sup>3</sup> Contention continues over the translation of the English document into Māori, particularly with regards to use of the word 'rangatiratanga' in place of 'sovereignty'. The term 'rangatiratanga' is thought to have been misleading for Māori chiefs at the time, as it is better translated as 'chieftainship'. 'Sovereignty' is better translated into Māori as 'mana'. A Māori expert believes that if the Māori chiefs knew they were giving away their 'mana' as opposed to their 'rangitiratanga', they would not have signed (H. Paniora, personal communication, October 4, 2012).

gains for and by Māori have been achieved such as the establishment of a Māori political party in 2004, partial redress for land confiscated during the initial settlement period, and the reinvigoration of the Māori language in schools and Māori pedagogy in the broader education system (Ward & Liu, 2012). Despite these results, Māori continue to fare comparatively worse in many statistically researched social areas such as socio-economic level, child abuse, crime, educational achievement and health (HRC Race Relations Report, 2010). Bicultural issues and Māori grievances for past European acts of injustice are still being addressed.

Up until 1986, New Zealand unofficially implemented a “White New Zealand” policy (Bartley, 2004), enforced by discriminatory immigration laws, and underpinned by what Lowe (2009) describes as increasingly unrealisable aspirations for a ‘better Britain’. However, a number of other ethnic groups made their way in small numbers to New Zealand from the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most of these groups were negatively stereotyped and socially excluded by the White, Anglo-Saxon majority. The Chinese first arrived during the 1860s gold rushes and have since encountered a great deal of institutional and social exclusion and hostility (Ip, 2003). A separate Indian population, somewhat protected from being denied citizenship rights by virtue of their British subject status, but also socially ostracised, began to arrive after the First World War (Swarbrick, 2009). Pacific Islanders arrived on New Zealand’s shores in significant numbers following WWII to solve a shortage of unskilled labour, and have suffered from being scapegoated and stigmatised (Anae, 2004). In 1986, the Labour government implemented a merit-based appraisal for potential immigrants (Ip & Pang, 2005) and as a direct result, an influx of Asian immigrants in the 1990s meant that the Asian presence and voice in New Zealand has become noteworthy, and feared. Though ‘Māori’/‘non-Māori’ are the ethnic distinctions employed in much health research, four ethnic groups are increasingly used in New Zealand in health and social research: European, Māori, Pacific Island Peoples, Asian, and sometimes social scientist and policy makers take ‘MELAA’ (Middle Eastern, African and Latin American), and ‘Other’ categories into account too (Callister, 2008). In Huijser’s (2004) opinion, New Zealand society has become multicultural in a relatively short space of time.

With this increased racial, ethnic and cultural diversity has come issues of social cohesion. New Zealand joins many other immigrant nations in dealing with issues relating to living together well in a multicultural society. Conceptualisations of how to live in multicultural community that go beyond groups simply living separately alongside each other are needed not just in New Zealand but globally (Hill, 2010). Moreover, in recent years, incidents in other multicultural countries such as the U.K. (London bombings and riots),

France (Paris riots) and Norway (the Norwegian massacre) have continued to highlight the tensions that arise where diverse communities co-exist (Singham, 2006). The accommodation of different cultural values, beliefs and behaviors have led some to question whether culturally different populations can sustainably live together in peace (ibid., 2006). These events and concerns are significant for New Zealand as our demographics continue to shift rapidly. The latest ethnic population projections by Statistics New Zealand (2010), project that the Asian population will equal the Māori population by 2026 at 16 percent. It also reports that New Zealand is expected to become more ethnically diverse in terms of the numbers of people identifying with non-European ethnicities and that the number of non-European people is set to overtake the number of Europeans by 2021. According to current Race Relations Commissioner, Joris de Bres, these numbers indicate that in the future, “no single ethnic group is likely to constitute a majority of the population” (Racial prejudice ‘still entrenched in New Zealand’, 8/3/2012).

It is reassuring that with regards to managing racial/ethnic/cultural diversity, New Zealand is regarded as having some of the best race relations in the world when compared with other immigrant nations such as Canada and Australia (Meijl & Miedema, 2004, in Hippolite & Bruce, 2010). New Zealand identity itself is based on ideals of egalitarianism and lack of racism (Liu et al., 1999). In part, this recognition and self-awareness has come about because unlike these other immigrant countries, New Zealand formally recognises its indigenous population, the Māori, as a distinct group who share the guardianship of many resources and contribute in a special way to national identity and culture (Sibley, Liu & Khan, 2008). New Zealand’s ‘Māori renaissance’ movement, which has advocated for integration of Māori culture into and alongside mainstream society and values since the 1970s is a credible achievement. However, there are still persistent and inexcusable issues that need to be addressed such as various and serious socio-economic inequalities between the main ethnic groups, majority discrimination towards minorities, and intergroup animosity (Fodzar, 2011; Kukutai, 2008; Ward & Liu, 2012).

New Zealand’s commitment to biculturalism complicates any response to the visual and statistical fact and issues of multiculturalism, for example in how to consider Māori as both an ethnic minority and an equal treaty partner. Although some say biculturalism and multiculturalism are incompatible, according to Ward and Liu (2012), the blending of the two is necessary as a means to improve ethnic relations given New Zealand’s special circumstances, especially at present as non-Māori populations gain proportional and political weight. In sum, in the face of potential increasing discord due to increasing diversity, New Zealand has an opportunity to, and

out of speculative necessity must, implement strategies to accommodate and legitimise its different ethnic groups and their historical and contemporary claims on New Zealand's identity. I suggest that such a strategy should consider the ways in which hostility between groups in New Zealand is partly to do with the lingering vestiges of 'race' and 'racism'. The next section considers the advent of self-conscious racial dissonance in New Zealand, as well as relevant recent events in which the 'race' discourse has been invoked.

### **Recent signs of ethnic 'unease' in multicultural New Zealand**

Though New Zealand is generally thought of as a country in which race is not an issue (Liu et al., 1999), this section highlights recent events in New Zealand to suggest that race is problematic in New Zealand, in order to argue for the importance of research on race in New Zealand at the current time. One of the earliest propositions for the existence of racism in New Zealand was made in the 1950s when American academic, David P. Ausubel was engaged to carry out an evaluation of New Zealand society. In his resultant book, *The fern and the tiki* he dedicated two chapters to the dismal plight of the Māori in relation to the dominant Pakeha cohort. He identified high levels of anti-Māori prejudice, lack of social acceptance and equal opportunity for Māori, and flagrant forms of discrimination in cinemas, banks, and hotels directed at Māori as either patrons or workers (Ausubel, 1965, in Kersey, 2002). Even as recently as the turn of the century, Mason Durie (2000, in *ibid.*, 2002) applauded Ausubel's exposition of Pakeha delusions about New Zealand's race relations, indicating that Ausubel's ideas are still relevant today. Alongside this, Kersey (*ibid.*) cites Dame Whina Cooper's land march, the occupation of Bastion Point, and the Springbok Tour protests as significant pre-21<sup>st</sup> century events contributing to a national awareness of the issue of interracial relations.

A number of media related events that have occurred since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be shown to indicate an undercurrent of racial/ethnic/cultural unease, discontent and polarisation in New Zealand. As the consequences of increased immigration took shape at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and into the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, leader of the New Zealand First political party, Winston Peters, began to spout anti-immigration rhetoric, bringing to light the anxieties of multi-generational (Anglo-Saxon and Māori) New Zealanders that foreigners, in particular Asians, were 'taking over their country'. The rhetoric was both applauded and denounced as racist, dividing the nation (Spoonley & Berg, 1997).

In 2004, Don Brash, then leader of the National Party, gave his Orewa Speech, appealing to voters who disagreed with policies protecting special

privileges for Māori accrued to them by race rather than needs, and advocating 'one rule for all', 'need not race' (Brash, 2004). His popularity soared in the polls despite claims he was 'playing the race card' and fueling the racist stereotype that the Europeans had given the once savage Māori the gift of civilisation. Two years later, in 2006 he called upon new settlers to embrace the 'bedrock values that New Zealanders take for granted', inferring that many had not, and suggested that if other immigrant nations had screened immigrants for such national values, they might not have the problems with multiculturalism they have now. For these statements he was accused of racism and xenophobia by members of the public (Ward & Liu, 2012). These three discourses have drawn attention to: the imaginations around and the attitudes of some New Zealanders towards the invasion of the "Other"; the importance of assimilation, security of lifestyle and New Zealand values; and the fairness and equality of policies regardless of ethnic group, at a time in which the status quo is being challenged by newcomers with alternative values and priorities.

In 2010, journalist and breakfast show host Paul Henry's question to Prime Minister John Key resulted in a large number of complaints to the Human Rights Commission (Human Rights Commission, 2010). In discussing the appointment of a new Governor General to replace the previous Governor General Anand Satyand, a New Zealander of Fijian Indian descent, Henry asked Key if he would chose someone who "looked...more like a New Zealander this time", referring to Satyand's non-White and therefore non-mainstream appearance (Tait, 2010, para. 3). When Key was evasive in answering he repeated this question. His comments drew rebukes and criticism from politicians, ethnic and community organisations, the Race Relations Commissioner, and thousands of people on websites (Tapaleao, Leggat, Eames & Woodfield, 2010, para. 3).

Additionally, in 2010, former All Black rugby player Andy Haden described a policy of "three darkies...no more" in the Crusaders' (a provincial rugby team) team selection strategy on national television, upsetting many people with his use of the word 'darkies' to describe Pacific Island players and, along with inappropriate comments on rape, almost forcing him to resign from his position as a Rugby World Cup 2011 ambassador (Tapaleao, 2010).

A large number of the 543 race related complaints to the Human Rights commission in 2010 related to these two incidences (Harris, 2012, para. 24). These reactions seem to indicate that references to skin colour and other physical traits commonly associated with 'race' as opposed to the more politically correct 'ethnicity', continue to be used by high profile individuals,

evoking controversy and anger as well as inflicting hurt in the New Zealand context.

Race and racism in New Zealand again reared its head during the 2011 election again with meritocratic 'one-law' and unhelpful stereotypical comments from right-wing leaders Don Brash and John Banks for the Act Party,<sup>4</sup> pitted against accusations of racism made by Hone Harawira of the Mana Party,<sup>5</sup> sustained alongside the reinvigoration of the Winston Peters' immigration concerns.<sup>6</sup> Also in 2011, the media reported protesting by the National Front, a White supremacist political party, in Christchurch ("Thugs' say debate stunt", 2011). Māori academic Margaret Mutu's comments caused outrage when it was reported that she suggested that White immigration to New Zealand, especially from South Africa should be restricted as New Zealand non-White minority groups already had enough White racism to deal with ('No action over', 2011). Each event provoked emotive commentary on race relations in New Zealand. These events again seem to suggest that opinions and sentiments around issues of race are diverse and conflicting.

Studies have identified several specific ways that race matters in New Zealand. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission's annual *Review of Race Relations in New Zealand* in 2011 found that entrenched racial inequalities in health, education, justice and housing, along with racial prejudice and the exclusion of minorities from full participation in all aspects of society continue to be a blot on New Zealand's otherwise positive record (Human Rights Commission, 2011). Race Relations Commissioner de Bres has drawn attention to anti Asian sentiments, citing that 75 percent of New Zealanders believe there is racism towards Asians (Sabin, 2012). Social psychologist James Liu agrees with this in his statement that though New Zealand's ability to handle its cultural plurality is greater than other multicultural societies,

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<sup>4</sup> John Banks' statement on TV3's *The Nation*: "If we continue the bankrupt response of paying young Polynesian, young Maori men in South Auckland the dole, to sit in front of TV, smoke marijuana, watch pornography and plan...more drug offending and more burglaries, then we're going to have them coming through our window, regardless of whether we live in Epsom or anywhere else in the greater Auckland, we have to deal with the root cause of law and order" ('John Banks labelled' 2011, para. 3).

<sup>5</sup> In response to his comment, Hone Harawira called John Banks a "redneck" and accused the Maori party of sacrificing their people's needs just to get into government ('John Banks labelled', 15/11/2011). He also said during his 'State of the Nation' address that Kura Kaupapa (Maori education providers) were being "treated like animals" ('Hone Harawira's state', 23/11/2011).

<sup>6</sup> Though Peters denies he is anti-immigrant, he was reported after his re-election in 2011 as saying, "There are some immigrants who come here and don't want to assimilate...I'm against the idea that people can come here and not become part of New Zealand society." (Donnell, 2011).

racism in New Zealand persists in the form of prejudices towards new Asian immigrants, and bicultural issues between Māori and Pakeha ('Race issues to heat up for election', 2011).

Events that unfolded earlier this year illustrate Liu's statements and others. At the beginning of 2012, concerns about xenophobic anti-Chinese racism in popular resistance to the Chinese 'buying up' New Zealand farms was covered by the media (see, for example, O' Sullivan, 2012). Mana Party protests over the sale of New Zealand's assets at the 2012 Waitangi Day celebrations called attention to Māori poverty in New Zealand (Hartevelt, 2012). In a media statement regarding these protests, de Bres commented on the lack of generosity in some Pakeha attitudes to Māori (ibid., 2012). Also in 2012, the Pacific Island community marched to draw attention to the challenges confronting Pacific communities including inequality, racism, and 'government policies that have ravaged Pacific people's lives and aspirations' (Reverend Uesifili Unasa, in Russell, 2012). Despite these recent activities, which suggest that race is still of some importance in New Zealand, early in 2012, the replacement of the post of New Zealand Race Relations Commissioner with a more general Human Rights Commissioner post was proposed as an amendment to the Human Rights Act (Harris, 2012). In this climate, a review of the significance of race in New Zealand in everyday life is worth pursuing.

### **Use of the term 'race' in New Zealand**

According to Lowe (2008), race is of mounting significance in New Zealand. However, Callister (2008) notes an avoidance of the term in policy and academic research in New Zealand. At these elite levels, discussion revolves around culturally constructed ethnicity as opposed to skin colour. For census purposes, the term 'race' was discarded and replaced with 'descent' in the middle of the twentieth century, followed by 'ethnic origin' in the 1970s and 'ethnic group' in the 1990s (Callister, 2011), the term that continues to be used today. Goldsmith (2003) writes of 'culturespeak' in New Zealand, contending that culture has replaced race as the preferred tool for categorising people and their actions. According to him, discussions around multiculturalism and biculturalism bypass the hard issue of the lack of definition of culture and its purpose in use by both academic and ordinary actors. He suggests that there may be political agendas, and perhaps even elements of racialisation and racism, hidden behind this celebratory, supposedly neutral term.

Callister and Didham (2009) suggest that even though the term race is not employed for academic inquiries, it is possible that clearly bounded racial groups are entrenched in the minds of many New Zealanders. They note that

race is used at times in public debates such as over race-based social policies. In determining eligibility for ethnicity-based scholarships and school quotas, definitions of ancestry rely on biological concepts. This implies a reliance on old biological conceptions of race. Finally, the four level one 'ethnic' groups that are used mainly in public policy analysis (European, Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian) can too easily be linked to continental-based 'racial' groups. Lowe (2008) suggests that a researcher would do well to problematise these labels using qualitative methods, as it would reveal how the terms function as a hierarchical organisation system in different social contexts. In addition, Callister's (2008) article entitled, *Skin colour: does it matter in New Zealand?* calls for more qualitative investigation into young New Zealanders' perceptions of ethnicity. I have taken the title of his essay as inspiration for the topic that my qualitative research addresses – Race: how does it matter in New Zealand?

## CHAPTER 3– LITERATURE REVIEW

THIS LITERATURE REVIEW describes the theoretical framework for this research and presents a number of trends identified in a review of specific studies on race and the 'everyday'. The concept of 'race' has been traditionally circumvented by mainstream communication research and publications (Allen, 2008). Theories of race and the everyday for the theoretical framework were mainly drawn from the disciplines of sociology and psychology. As was alluded to in the previous chapter, the term 'race' has been avoided in academic research in New Zealand (Callister, 2008). There are a limited number of studies on race in New Zealand, let alone race and the everyday. Trends identified in a review of studies of race and the everyday in contexts other than New Zealand are initially presented. Following this, trends identified in a review of a range of relevant studies on race, ethnicity and culture that could be said to have some relevance for the topic of race and the everyday in New Zealand are presented.

### RACE IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

#### **The critical turn in communication studies**

Much research on communication and race prior to 1980 focused on the dissimilar communication patterns of the races (Jackson II & Garner, 1998). In

her 1974 book *Interracial Communication*, Andrea Rich described language as embedded with divisive cues along racial lines (eg. *Black and White*) and that interracial and intercultural relationships should be appreciated in this context (in *ibid.*, 1998). Research into interracial communication continues to be carried out, particularly in the work of Mark Orbe and Tina Harris. However, during the 1990s, the term 'interracial communication' became largely outdated and replaced by 'intercultural communication'. A critical reading of culture was encouraged during the shift (Pajaczkowska & Young, 1992, in *ibid.*). The National Communication Association (NCA), one of the two most comprehensive scholarly interest groups in the world has a journal dedicated to 'Critical and Cultural Studies' which questions how power shapes cultural and social practices in 'everyday life'. The other interest group, the International Communication Association (ICA), has a division dedicated to 'Ethnicity and Race in Communication' which also has critical leanings.

However, as Orbe and Allen (2008) note, the encouragement to be critical was by and large not heeded by communication scholars. Allen (2006) in particular laments the lack of critical work in communication research, especially in her own field of organisation communication. She even goes so far as to suggest that mainstream communication theory is biased against race, which she describes as 'one of the most powerful ideological and institutional factors for deciding how identities are categorised and power, material and resources distributed', citing Giroux (2003, p.200 in Allen, 2007). Orbe and Allen (2008) discuss the importance of applied communication research approaches in working against race as a social and historical construction because communication is constitutive in both perpetuating racial issues and effecting social change. The communication practices of different races are well theorised but the research fails to connect these micro-processes to the sociopolitical constructions they sustain.

A number of communication scholars are calling for the critical consideration of race in communication theory. Griffin (2010) has noted the absence of and urged communication scholars to further embrace Critical Race Theory (CRT) in communication studies. She quotes Allen's (2007) assertion that because critical interpretations have generally and historically been neglected by mainstream communication theory, the field is Eurocentric. Not only is the field Eurocentric, but if Eurocentrism is entrenched in our society, as CRT asserts, and if communication is the mechanism by which society is produced and functions, then it must be entrenched in our communication. Allen (2007) is enthusiastic about social construction as a viable approach to theorising race and communication – the idea that through socialisation processes we are assigned to, and learn how to *perform*, an

artificial racial category as well as learning how to perceive members of other racial groups.

A new scholarly wing that demands attention to race in communication studies is the critical intercultural communication (CIC) branch. The notion of intercultural communication as more than just a neutral transaction between comparable national group members was influenced by three scholarly trends: 1) calls for attention to context in intercultural communication research ((Asante, 1980; Gonzalez & Peterson, 1993; Moon, 1996), in Halualani & Nakayama, 2010); 2) criticism of the 'nation = culture' construct ((Altman & Nakayama, 1992; Asante, 1980; Ono 1998), in *ibid.*, 2010); and 3) the retheorising of culture as 'sites of struggle' ((Collier et al., 2001; Cooks, 2001; Martin & Nakayama, 1999; Moon, 1996; Starosta & Chen, 2001), in *ibid.*, p. 2). I like the way in which it draws attention to the way in which race is hidden behind discourses of culture.

Intercultural Communication's main aim is the development of skills to cope with differences in communication style. Critical intercultural communication scholars consider the larger structures of power and 'how they intermingle with microacts and encounters among and within cultural actors and groups (*ibid.*, p. 3). Mendoza (2010) posits that with the combination of the gravity of the current global crises we face today, many of which are linked to diminishing resources, and the modern promise of 'economic betterment' for all, intercultural relations can only become more violent and coercive, as we battle to survive. If, as Winant (2000) argues, most of the big global issues have significant racial dimensions, our fight is against racial discrimination, blame and the exacerbating of cultural divisions. My research contributes to this fight in aiming to break down divisive racial walls by understanding the socially reproductive processes that create them.

Previous critical research into race and communication has focused on such areas as the reproduction of race in school settings (Goodman, 2008; Boylorn, 2011), the representation of groups in mediated settings (Monahan, 2005), non-verbal communication of racial attitudes (Dovidio, Helb, Richeson & Shelton, 2006), and the communication of race messages in families (Docan-Morgan, 2011) as well as the impact racial communicative discrimination has in the health sector (Kreps, 2006). The everyday reproduction of race in an organisational context has been considered by Ashcraft and Allen (2003) who describe the hierarchy produced and challenged through interpersonal interactions in an American company. Griffin (2010) reiterates the call for the field of communication to address race and racism and recommends Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a starting point. From a personal perspective, I am drawn to the tenets of CRT and its assumptions and have frequently made

use of them as my research has taken shape. They will be discussed in the presentation of my theoretical framework.

I am using a broad communication perspective in my identification of everyday communication interactions. Everyday communication interactions include any noticed human action in a social environment. The social environment includes all environments, because no environment has been untouched by human interpretation or alteration. However, communication is about noticed human action because there must be an active message receiver. Importantly, in my definition, everyday communication can be internal: the sender and receiver can be the same person.

The advantage of using a communication perspective such as this to consider the everyday significance of race is that communication actions can be singled out, described, reacted to, and reflected upon as message transfer. Each communication event can be analysed as a meaningful interchange of information in itself. Because race is something that we are aware of every so often in our daily lives, usually after a trigger event, a communication analysis can be helpful in describing who was there and what was being communicated as well as the response and context in the situation under consideration.

Moreover, race as a social construction (as it has been defined for this thesis) is achieved through human communication. In her book, *Communication and Everyday Life*, Leeds-Hurwitz (1989) writes of the everyday as a 'social order' that is produced through communication. Critical Race theorists contend that one of the major ordering principles of social life is race. If race is one of these social ordering principles that is produced through and adhered to in everyday communication then a focus on communication should lead us to an understanding of how the order is significant for ordinary people in their daily lives in terms of their use of race and the effect that others' use of race has on them.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section outlines the theoretical framing used to approach the topic of the everyday manifestation of race. First, the ideas of critical theory are reviewed, as the critical perspective is the foundation on which the ensuing theories are built. Then, theories and concepts which argue for the continuing significance of race are identified (Critical Race Theory, 'new' racism, institutional racism, cultural racism, symbolic racism, modern racism, aversive racism, colour blind racism, silent racism). Following this, recent theories and concepts from social psychology of contemporary racism (hostile, benevolent, and

ambivalent prejudice, unconscious bias, microaggressions, internalised racism) are presented. Finally, recent theories and concepts from sociology on the everyday social construction of race (social construction theory, racialisation, racial formation theory, race as performance, everyday racism) are presented.

## Critical Theory

Before launching into a discussion of the theories on race and the everyday that provide the framework for my research, a short section on critical theory describes the philosophical tradition in which the subsequent theories are grounded. Moreover, I have drawn on each of the critical attitudes outlined below to narrow down and delineate the scope of my research. Scholars who locate themselves and their studies in the critical tradition seek to define and dismantle social power structures that limit the life chances of particular groups of people. They seek human emancipation, desire liberation, and contest hegemony. Critical derives from a Greek word meaning judgment or discernment. Critical theory has always been concerned not with how things are but how they could and should be (Bronner, 2011).

Critical theory was propagated by the Frankfurt school, a group of philosophers who worked together from 1923 onwards, the principle names of which include Theodor W. Adorno, Erich Fromm, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Jürgen Habermas and Max Horkheimer. They initially focused on aiding the liberation of the proletariat through aiding practical revolutionary actions. They attacked both phenomenology and positivism as a-historical and limiting genuine subjectivity, preferring instead a transformative aim and a concern with the culture of modern life. They rejected the traditional separation between facts and values, seeing facts as 'portrayals', with particular ambitions behind them (Bronner, 2011).

One area of critical theory concerns itself with the idea that power and exploitation structures are hidden in the mundane and normal patterns of everyday life that we take for granted. A critical approach can help to reveal these structures in the hope that we can transcend them and liberate those they oppress. In his book *Reading the Everyday*, Joe Moran (2005) draws attention to the banal everyday, the mundane activities of our everyday lives, and the unacknowledged cultural politics of them. He writes that a focus on ritual and consumption in cultural studies has neglected the boring aspects of social life and predicts a reawakening of interest in activities such as waiting for a bus.

Postmodern critical theorists focus on local manifestations of systems of domination, and the 'crisis of representation', the idea that one can never fully

understand the world from another's perspective, only their own (and if this is the case, what right or hope does one have of representing them truthfully (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002)). For them, all research, no matter how objective it strives to be, is affected by the researcher's prejudices. As I am myself particularly enamoured with the critical perspective, each of the critical attitudes outlined above have been important in helping me to frame my study: I am committed to analysing race, as a system of suppression and domination, in everyday life, in a local context (Auckland, NZ), and because my chosen methodology accepts and embraces subjectivity or partiality in my research.

### **General theories of race and racism**

Despite race not having been critically researched to a great degree in New Zealand, it has been elsewhere (particularly, of course, in the United States) ever since the mid 1970s. The catalyst publication for the explosion of critical race scholarship during the 1980s was William Julius Wilson's controversial book, *The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and changing American institutions* (1980). Wilson argued that when comparing the contemporary situation of African USs to their situation of the past, the diverging experiences along class lines revealed that race was no longer the primary determinant of life chances for Blacks in the US in the way that it had historically been (Caputo & Deprez, 2012). The more pressing problem was class. He noted an increasing economic and cultural schism between more and less wealthy Blacks, due in part to affirmative action initiatives that had benefitted middle income Blacks, leading him to recommend a shift to more class-based, race-neutral programs.

Wilson's book caused a great stir amongst scholars. Many disagreed with the notion that race was declining in significance, most notably Black and minority scholars who still personally felt the effects of racism in their day-to-day lives. At present, well into the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, scholars continue to add to the wealth of critical scholarship on race.<sup>7</sup> Two influential critical theoretical perspectives on race that are currently in vogue are 'Critical Race Theory', and the theories of 'new racism'.

### **Critical Race Theory**

Critical Race Theory (CRT) arose in the mid-1970s out of Critical Legal Studies. Prior to this, the study of race was the study of racial differences. The

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<sup>7</sup> In 2011 Wilson revised his initial offering, saying that both race-based and race-neutral programs should be offered.

movement's defining scholars include Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Mari Matsuda, Richard Delgado, Patricia Williams, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Charles Lawrence and Angela Harris. Father-figure Derrick Bell's paper questioning the basic assumptions of the law's treatment of people of colour in his analysis of *Brown vs Board of Education* was foundational. He suggested that the result of the trial, which seemed a clear triumph for Civil Rights activists in the US at the time, was in actual fact a strategic move by elite Whites to court the favour of the Third World in a Cold War era rather than a desire to help Blacks (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). The uncovering of confidential government documents a number of years later confirmed his analysis. Many other scholars have since taken up his mantle, including David Goldberg, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Edward Said, Frantz Fanon and Gayatri Spivak.

Critical Race Theorists study how the conditions for racism are created (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). They believe that race is ordinary and pervasive (ibid., 2001). CRT focuses on the ways in which white skin confers unearned privileges, attempting to reveal the ways in which White systems and people are granted advantages through the subconscious belief that White skin means 'superior human' (ibid.). CRT's other key tenets include: 'interest convergence' (the reluctance of the racially powerful to rectify inequality); 'social construction' (the notion that race is a socially constructed illusionary concept); 'differential racialisation' (that race will be constructed differently depending on the current socio-political climate); 'intersectionality' (race intersects with other systems of domination such as class, gender and sexuality); and 'privileging voices of colour', (because they introduce marginalised perspectives that mainstream theorists purposely exclude) (ibid.).

Kennedy's (1989) critique of CRT questions whether scholars from minority backgrounds have any particular claim to expertise simply by virtue of who they are. He also questions the blame laid on mainstream scholars for excluding voices of colour as, he says, the writings of coloured scholars may not have been deserving of recognition by scholarly standards. This criticism holds narratives up to the traditional standards of the old paradigm, failing to grasp the new opportunity and value of stories.

Another persistent criticism is that CRT dwells on matters of importance to middle-class minorities (the likes of me) and fails to address the more pressing plight of the deeply poor. These contentions question the allocation of resources within the movement rather than the movement's value in producing useful insights into the US's racial situation (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Additionally, I argue that the plight of the deeply poor and coloured is the same as the plight of the middle-class and coloured, but that the middle-

class group has accumulated resources (material and cultural) that mitigate their disadvantage, and they can draw upon as capital. The middle classes can serve as representatives for the lower classes to the elite classes because they have an understanding of both perspectives.

An important and currently thriving branch of the critical study of race is called Whiteness Studies. Scholars in this field probe what it means to be White, how White racial identity is constructed and how systems of White privilege operate (Andersen, 2003). Three significant works in this area noted by Andersen (2003) are Peggy McIntosh's essay *White Privilege and Male Privilege* (1988), and two books: *White Women, Race Matters* by Ruth Frankenberg (1993), and *The Wages of Whiteness* by David Roediger (1991). Andersen identifies three themes in the literature on Whiteness. First, Whiteness is conceptualised as the invisible norm. Second, Whiteness is a system of privilege that is mapped onto the domination of non-Whites. Third, race and Whiteness are social constructions. She argues that Whiteness tells us little about the processes of domination that are the real problem, focusing on White identity instead.

Garner (2009) has constructed several criticisms of Whiteness studies. Two of these are addressed here. First, there are serious political implications to using the term Whiteness and unless studies are very carefully qualified, the reiteration of Whiteness as an unchallengeable identity is achieved in the study of Whiteness. Despite risking the reification of Whiteness, I argue that using the concept of 'Whiteness' in research can help to reveal important information about ordinary people and how they ordinarily co-exist, because it is a construct that people use in their ordinary, everyday lives in perceiving and acting in the world around them. Second, Whiteness studies is criticised for being relevant only to the US context with little relevance in other contexts. This thesis begs to differ. Applying the ideas of Whiteness studies to the context of New Zealand has produced some interesting and valuable findings.

### **The New Racism**

Another thread of contemporary critical race scholarship that is used in framing my findings on how race is manifested everyday in New Zealand is the idea of 'new' racism: the idea that contemporary racism is manifested in subtle, new, and insidious ways compared to the overt, familiar manifestations of old (Rattansi, 2007). Racist attitudes are still prevalent, but the way in which they are communicated and reproduced has transformed. Martin Barker argued for the existence of this 'new racism' in the late 1970s and 1980s, during which time biological ideas of race were discredited in favour of the notion of race as a delusionary social construction, and a

cultural definitions of difference were naturalised (Barker, 1981). Several of these racisms (institutional, cultural, symbolic, modern, aversive, colour blind and silent) will be explored in the following paragraphs.

The idea of 'institutional racism' (also called 'systemic racism') was introduced by Stokely Carmichael and Charles Hamilton in 1967. Scholars who helped to define the term include Louis Knowles, Joe Feagin, Clairece Feagin, Kwame Ture, Nijole Benokraitis and Kenneth Prewitt. It argues that all modern institutions are built on racist foundations due to past and present social relations. Since modern society is established through modern institutions, racism permeates society (Feagin, 2004). In his book *The Threat of Race* (2009) David Goldberg has expanded on this notion and claimed that modernity itself is an inherently racist ideology and that all modern institutions function on racist assumptions, which preserve White advantage and power.

Institutions, as traditionally defined by sociologists, are 'regular patterns of behavior that are regulated by norms and sanctions into which individuals are socialized' (Institution(s), 2006). Racism perpetuated through institutions is extremely difficult to eliminate since society relies on its institutions to function with a degree of amity. Trepagnier (2010) argues that institutional racism is as destructive as previous forms of racism.

'Institutional racism' can also be understood as 'White privilege', a concept from Whiteness Studies. Peggy McIntosh describes 'White privilege' as "an invisible package of unearned assets which I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks." (1988, p.1-2). In essence, White privilege means that those who are 'White' as opposed to 'Coloured' are granted unfair advantages, due to modern social institutions having been created during an era in which many believed that the lighter one's skin, the more superior (purer, lighter, more righteous, cleaner) a human being one was.

Institutional racism scholars can be accused of neglecting the links between human action and structural formation and maintenance (agency vs. structure) (Berard, 2008). Too great a focus on systematic exclusion can obscure the idea that people are the creators of institutions, and are therefore ultimately responsible for racism in institutions (Baez, 2000; Berard, 2008). Those who use the term institutional racism are said to rely on unstated presumptions about the social psychological basis of racism, while treating genuine and important social-psychological questions as naïve or insensitive to new forms of racism. Berard (2008) suggests that social scientists and policy analysts should be asking about how disparate institutional outcomes are

produced by the aggregate effect of the attitudes, beliefs, priorities, and considerations of the people who designed and sustain them. In summary, the understanding of contemporary racism at the 'macro-level', involving social institutions and social systems, has been largely divorced from its psychological foundation, the understanding of race at the 'micro-level' of individuals, beliefs, intentions, actions, and social interaction.

Knowles (2009) suggests that the micro/macro tension is particularly useful in analysing race because race operates at different social levels (global, institutional, group, interpersonal, individual). She argues that the gap between theories of racism and inequality and how they are practically upheld can be bridged through a focus on the mundane social texture of life in racialised societies. Schippers (2008) writes that we cannot assume that structures (macro forces) define our (micro) meanings. We need to recognise how the everyday (micro) is performed in the context of structures (macro). Batur-Vanderlippe (1999) issues a charge for the linking of global and everyday racism.

In Carmichael and Hamilton's (1967) view, supporting racist institutions is racist, albeit covertly so, and in my opinion, for the most part, unconsciously and unintentionally so. I presuppose that many small, covert, unconscious and unintentional everyday human actions contribute to the more powerful moderator of institutional racism, justifying my focus on the micro-social world to elucidate how the macro-social world is reproduced. To me, micro-actions *came first* (before macro-structures, in humanity's history) and must come first in the transformation of institutions (Ikuenobe, 2011), which confirms their importance. Additionally, to me, the study of micro-actions seems more inclusive and less elitist, as not everyone is aware of or interested in macro-structures.

The second type of new racism discussed is 'cultural racism' (also called 'neo-racism'). The concept was first introduced in 1952 by Frantz Fanon, and has been developed by scholars such as Stuart Hall, Paul Gilroy, Cornel West, Michael Omi, Howard Winant and Etienne Balibar. The key argument is that that racist ideas verified by now disproven biological science have simply had the concept of culture superimposed onto them. Lentin (2005) shows how 'culture' came to replace 'race' in the aftermath of the Holocaust – as a positive celebration of difference rather than a superiority of some groups over others, and had the effect of depoliticising the anti-racism of racism's actual targets. According to scholars who study cultural racism, old theories of genetic hierarchy have been transformed in to theories of cultural hierarchy.

Instead of biological differences affecting our ability to live together, cultural differences make it impossible. This type of racism is what Etienne

Balibar calls 'racism without race' (1991, p.23). Cultural racists 'give priority to the values of the majority group' (Henkel, Dovidio & Gaertner, 2006, p.101). Cultural racism occurs where the dominant group define the standards in a society to which all other minority groups must adhere, often requiring them to give up their own cultural heritages ('Racism', 2004). Collins and Solomos (2010) remark on a flexibility in the language of cultural racism – that race can be referred to as culture, a more neutral term, and that a combination of dispassionate-sounding discourses such as the 'celebration of difference', 'migrant impurity and threat', and 'defending the nation' are often invoked, to sustain the racist status quo. Like institutional racism, cultural racism is also practiced at a macro-level and is challenging to detect.

The following paragraphs outline types of new racism that are identified in the attitudes of specifically White individuals and groups. They are 'symbolic racism', 'modern racism', 'aversive racism', 'colour blind racism' and 'silent racism'. Although they are separate concepts they are closely interrelated.

The idea of 'symbolic racism' was developed by Donald Kinder, Joseph Hough, David Sears and John McConahay in the 1970s. This type of racism blames racial and ethnic inequality on cultural inferiority – that some ethnic groups are worse off than others is because they possess inferior cultures. For symbolic racists, affirmative action programmes give away resources undeservedly, as it is cultural laziness that keeps Black people from economic and other advancement. The idea of symbolic racism was critiqued for being akin to political conservatism (Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986), but Tarman and Sears (2005) responded that measures had been taken to account for political stance. Whether or not symbolic racism researchers are simply registering conservatism in their research, it has been documented that individual political perspectives have historically had ties with racial ideologies (Harris-Lacewell, 2003, in Romm, 2011).

McConahay (1986) took symbolic racism and developed it into 'modern racism'. The concept of modern racism asserts that because overt racism is no longer fashionable, racism is expressed through attitudes that have not yet been socially defined as right or wrong. An example of this in the US context would be the belief that the anger of Black people towards White people is incomprehensible, now that racism has been eradicated. Another example would be agreeing that Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.

For modern racism theorists, an interesting group of individuals are the ambivalent people who alter their attitudes in different contexts depending on whether or not there are clear signals as to what constitutes the appropriate stance. In the absence of these signals, the ambivalent person will let their modern racist attitudes 'out of the bag'. McConahay suggests that

more and more political liberals appear to be adopting modern racist attitudes alongside conservatives, the more traditional proponents (1986, in Romm, 2011).

Aversive racism, coined by Kovel (1970) and developed by Samuel L. Gaertner and John. F. Dovidio in the late 1980s, is an ideology that uses a form of liberal discourse to claim a non-prejudiced position, but retain hidden (often even hidden-from-self) negative evaluations of certain groups of people (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993, p.133). These negative feelings (discomfort, uneasiness, disgust and fear) surface only in situations when a non-racist reputation can be simultaneously upheld (Trepagnier, 2010). The manifestation of this form of racism began with the 'separate but equal' doctrine of the Jim Crow era (Kovel, 1995, in Romm, 2011). In their own eyes, aversive racists are not prejudiced and do not discriminate, but their subscription to an egalitarian value system and concurrence toward negative evaluations of non-White individuals and groups, contribute to the development of stereotypes and prejudice in subtle ways (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2005). Aversive racism has been identified in the attitudes of, and linked to, the more politically liberal minded (Dovidio & Gaertner, 1986).

Like modern ambivalent racists, aversive racists show their prejudices in situations where norms are ambiguous. Additionally, they are quick to identify non-racial elements that can provide explanations and justifications for their behaviour. They also frequently assert their inability to see colour (Gaertner, Dovidio, Anastasio, Bachman & Rust, 1993). Aversive racist's negative feelings may be accounted for by normal psychological processes, such as the categorisation of people into who belongs and does not belong to one's 'group': emotional investment is higher for those in a person's group, and lower for those outside it. (Gartner & Dovidio, 2005).

Another similar concept that crosses over with the above concepts is that of 'colour blind racism'. According to Bonilla-Silva and Embrick (2006), the central ideologies of colour-blind racists are: 'abstract liberalism' (using liberal arguments such as the free market ideology to reason against solutions to racial inequality), 'cultural racism' (blaming the victim for their cultural deficiencies such as laziness), 'minimization of racism' (attributing discrimination to anything *but* racism), and 'naturalization' (the natural and justified separation of races living in an area). Additionally, Dyer (1997) observed that some purportedly colour-blind White individuals become surprisingly angry when attention is drawn to their Whiteness. The colour-blind attitude is that race does not matter and all people have equal access to success, which invalidates minorities' accusations of racism (Frankenberg, 1993).

Barbara Trepagnier has explored both symbolic and aversive racism in her 2010 book on 'how well-meaning White people perpetuate the racial divide' and has introduced the term 'silent racism' to label the type of racism she has found in her qualitative research with White Americans. Silent racism in her definition refers to 'the unspoken negative thoughts, emotion, and assumptions about Black Americans that dwell in the minds of White Americans, including well-meaning Whites who care about racial equality' (Trepagnier, 2010, p.15). It consists not of individual attitudes, but the shared thoughts and feelings of the dominant group about subordinate groups. Trepagnier argues that race awareness is sorely missing amongst White Americans and draws attention to the way in which passivity around racist acts performed by others encourages this silent racism, which is instrumental in producing institutional racism. She maintains that all White individuals harbour some racist thoughts and feelings. Additionally, she argues that the racist/not-racist dichotomy in the US prevents these common and widely prevalent racisms from being explored.

## **Theories and concepts from sociology (on the everyday social construction of race)**

### **Social Construction Theory**

The idea that race is a social construction is the idea that humans have crafted, contested and reproduced the illusion of one's race being an immutable 'essence', but that there is actually no scientific truth to it. The social construction of race is one way in which race is manifested in everyday life. This is the view of the majority of current race scholars. Despite being an untruth, contemporary scholars acknowledge that race is meaningful in that it has real consequences for people's lives and well-being (Mariel Lemonik Arthur, 2007). Even if race has no biological reality and has simply been created by humans to justify the unequal allocation of resources, ordinary people believe in it as a fundamental social structuring principle. Importantly for social constructionists, if race is a social construction, it can be deconstructed and/or reconstructed in order to dismantle racial inequality and discrimination.

The importance of social constructionist theories for my research is in their focus on the construction or production of ideas of race. The word 'manifestation' has an element of creation or construction to it. One way in which individuals manifest race in their everyday encounters may be through creating and reproducing it. The idea that race is created by humans can frame my perspective on race's manifestation in everyday life: I can look for

encounters in which ideas about race are being constructed and reproduced through interactional communication devices. Moreover, in applying constructionist theories to everyday life, I can identify the ways in which everyday manifestations of race work to reproduce racial attitudes and perpetuate racial inequality.

### **Racialisation**

One concept to have been developed by social constructionist race theorists is that of 'racialisation'. The contemporary body of thought around racialisation can be traced to Franz Fanon's book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, in which he details his ideas around the legacy of colonisation on the psyche of a nation and its effects on decolonisation efforts (Murji & Solomos, 2005). There is admittedly some confusion over what is meant by the term, and it has been used inconsistently (Banton, 2005). For Gilmartin (2006), racialisation refers to the process by which a group or individual becomes racially defined. For Murji and Solomos (2005, p.3), racialisation occurs when social issues or problems are imbued with race, for example, when, in the late 1970s in Britain, the issue of 'mugging' was associated with young Black men. This is an important concept for the everyday manifestation of race: race is manifested in the performance of racialisation. The most important aspect of the concept is that racialisation leads to positions of dominance and subordination for ethnic groups in society, and can positively or negatively affect the economic, educational, and health outcomes (amongst other outcomes) of racialised individuals and groups. Racialisation as a concept can assist in explaining how societies become socially stratified. Importantly, this stratification is thought to be socially produced and reproduced without people's awareness (Yee, 2008).

However, for some scholars, the concept is and has become problematic. For Goldberg (2002), racialisation has become a cliché – regularly accused but rarely investigated. A further critique is that it pays too much attention to the subjugation of groups based on externally ascribed characteristics instead of allowing for a more complex construction process of competing conceptualisations, such as that which racial formation theory (discussed next) allows for. Although it has sometimes been conflated with racial formation, racialisation can be described as the 'original racial sin that the actions of racial formation attempt to either redeem (challenge) or compound (reproduce)' (St Louis, 2005, parentheses and contents added). What this means is that racialisation is the very first incidence of the process of racial formation, in which a brand new racial understanding, category or association is made, and from thereon in, the general process of racial

formation (the transformation or reproduction of the initial principle) takes over.

### **Racial Formation Theory**

Racial Formation Theory is one of the most popular social constructionist approaches to the study of race. It was first detailed at length in 1986 by Michael Omi and Howard Winant in their book, *Racial Formation in the United States*. Racial formation theory proposes that the concept of race is 'formed' in everyday life. Omi and Winant believe that the spectacle of race is central to the everyday world: 'a phenomenon whose meaning is contested throughout social life' (1994, p.138). According to them, each social agent learns a 'racial common sense' or set of racial expectations for the specific context in which they reside. Bonilla-Silva calls it a 'racial grammar' (2012). Everyday use of this 'racial common sense' results in 'racial projects': macro-ventures in which social resources are unevenly allocated and reallocated between different racial-ethnic groups based on interpretations of racial signifiers (Omi & Winant, 1994: 56). When racial expectations are violated (which is what happens when two racial projects conflict), the micro-process of racial formation is disrupted (Winant 2000). In sum, micro and macro processes interact to legitimise and manage the racial order.

Copeland (2002) writes that the idea of racial formation helps us to understand how the most mundane (everyday) as well as the most important tasks can be grasped as racial projects – shopping, banking, walking through a park, registering for school, amongst other things. Race is a set of beliefs that we draw on automatically and instantly when interacting with people. The ability to read race, in Copeland's (2002) mind, is crucial in social environments, and the inability to accurately identify a person's race can result in a sort of internal crisis. In other words, although we might believe and say that racial stereotypes are bad and unhelpful, we make use of them constantly and fluently in our everyday lives. For Copeland, (ibid.) racism is not a problem that can be located outside of us, in institutions, it starts within each one of us, is learned, and is manifested in our behaviour and interactions in our everyday lives.

A criticism of racial formation theory is that too much emphasis is placed on race as the sole determinant of social outcomes. In other words, racial formation theory reduces all social relationships to race. Winant (2001) has assured such critics that he is not a race determinist and is aware that race does coexist with other dimensions of social organisation, as am I. In another recent critique, institutional racism scholars Feagin and Elias (2012) lament racial formation's inability to uncover the deep foundations and complex workings of racism in diverse contexts, because of its focus on meanings

rather than structures. They also draw attention to the lack of critical and explicit discussion of Whites as the dominant racial group in USA. They acknowledge, however, that some of the concepts it provides move us beyond outdated mainstream ethnicity/assimilation theories. Despite these criticisms, racial formation theory remains influential in studies of race (ibid., 2012).

### **Race as performance**

A new theoretical perspective on the construction of race that is relevant for a study on the everyday manifestation of race draws from performance studies and from the concept of racial formation to conceptualise race as a fluid construct that is made and remade in daily interaction and performance. Race is 'done'. The focus of social constructionist race research should be on the 'doing' of race. The idea of race as performance links to Erving Goffman's (1959) concept of dramaturgy in which he expands on Shakespeare's famous line, 'All the world's a stage,' to take account of the ways in which we role-play in our everyday lives. Considering race as a performance means taking into account aspects such as bodies and staging to fully appreciate the meaning and outcome of the racial performance. Using theatrical concepts such as director, play-script, and audience as tools of analysis can be used to depict interaction in novel ways.

The 'doing' of race or difference was first articulated by West and Fenstermaker (1995). They took the feminist idea of 'doing gender' and applied it to all types of difference, including race, arguing that doing difference in face-to-face interaction is the main way in which inequalities are produced in everyday life. Ehlers (2008) describes racial identity as a 'retroactive phantasy' that only exists if the subject enacts it. Race is a 'practice' that must be retold in order to be sustained (ibid., 2008). Da Silva (2011) contends that we cannot separate the 'what' of race cannot be separate from the 'how' of race. Denzin (2001) writes that race is a 'speech act' that is made 'real' in practice.

Focusing more on the 'production' or 'making' of race through the complexity of everyday lives rather than through analysing discourse and mediated representation is what is needed according to Knowles (2009, p.28). She argues that race is part of social relationships and process and the organisation of societies. According to her we need to consider doing and action rather than talking, discourse, and symbolism (2009). In this way, she argues, we can restore the link between the empirical and the theoretical. Through micro-forces, macro-forces are created. In this conceptualisation of social organisation, people are the central actors (Alexander, 2004).

According to MacKenzie (2001, in Elam Jr. & Elam, 2010), performance can be transformative. A focus on the performance of race positively focuses on

the way in which racial prescriptions can be anti-hegemonically contested (Elhers, 2006). In a similar vein, Anoop Nayak (2006) affirms the usefulness of the collection of thought that he identifies as post-race theory in tackling the creation of the artifice of race. The common threads are as follows: 1) Race is not real but is a concept that humans have invented; 2) Post-race theory detaches performance from the object and contends that race is not something we are but something we do, or perform; and 3) The 'doing' of race is found in social interactions. Nayak states that the only way to eradicate race is by engaging with social interactions in day-to-day life – and that ethnography as a methodology is well suited to this task.

It is important, as scholars including Lewis have noted, to acknowledge the context of the research (Knowles, 2009; Lewis, 2003). Stuart Hall (1980) argues for the existence of a plurality of racisms in the Western world. Researchers have shown that research on different cultural contexts can make important contributions to understanding the socially and historically situated nature of racism and 'race' (Bhavnani & Davis, 2000). Da Silva (2011) suggests that we need to consider the context and conditions of the production of the tools that sustain inequality. Shome (2010) calls for more research to be done on contexts other than the United States, to work against the reification of US centric critical tools and racial logics. It is for this reason that I have specified the context for my research as New Zealand. As a country, New Zealand has its own particular backdrop of race relations that impacts how New Zealanders conceive of and utilise the ideology of race today. However, as Shome (2010) emphasises, we must not forget that the national context is affected by transnational forces.

### **Everyday Racism**

Another branch of research relevant to my study on how race is manifested in everyday life, is the study of 'everyday racism'. The study of everyday racism, as defined by Philomena Essed, is the study of 'routine actions that often are not recognised by the actor as racist but that uphold the racial status quo' (Essed, 1991). According to Essed, this includes verbal, nonverbal and paraverbal<sup>8</sup> acts with intended *or unintended* negative consequences for marginalised racial or ethnic groups. It is not about extreme incidents of racism. Like the 'new' racisms outlined previously, everyday racism is difficult to classify with certainty, resulting in acts of everyday racism becoming normal, common-place, taken-for-granted, familiar ways of

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<sup>8</sup> Paraverbal phenomena include prosody, intonation, voice, colour of voice, tempo, rhythm, accent, intensity, tone pitch, and sound volume (Vellnagel, 2010)

sustaining racial injustice (Essed, 2002). These acts are compounding: one act triggers emotional memories of previous, similar acts. Three strands of everyday racism intertwine: marginalisation (ignoring), problematisation (defining non-White, non-Western characteristics as atypical), and the repression of resistance (denying racism, accusations of oversensitivity, rudeness, patronising, humiliation, intimidation and ridicule). Many studies in many countries and contexts have applied the concept of everyday racism (see Essed, 2002 for a list). An advantage of this viewpoint, in fact the advantage of all social constructionist viewpoints, is that they see racism not as individual or institutional problem exclusively. Racism is not an individual psychological problem, nor is it solely located in systems and away from individual agents – it is socially manifested: we sustain it together.

Essed (2002) links the study of everyday racism to the rise of studies of micro-social phenomena that began in the 1960s and '70s. Sociologists became interested in the importance of understanding experience in everyday life in order to sociologically understand human difference. In being interested in the everyday, however, one can fall into the trap of getting too caught up in experience and forgetting to link it to macrostructures of organisation and power. In terms of the way in which to approach the study of everyday racism, Essed (*ibid.*) suggests that personal accounts or stories of the lived experience are the most successful in communicating what everyday racism is about. Careful listening to the narratives of those who encounter racism in their daily lives is essential in informing our knowledge about racism, which can be useful to counter its manifestations in everyday life.

### **Theories and concepts from social psychology (on contemporary racism)**

Institutional and social construction is important, but what role does the individual play in the manifestation of the ideology of race in everyday life? This section presents several theories from social psychology in order to provide an answer to this question.

Psychological theories of prejudice have been applied to contemporary research on racism. Three types of prejudice that have been applied to the study of individual racism are 'hostile prejudice' (the outward expression of hatred for another group, similar to old-fashioned types of racism), 'benevolent prejudice' (positive attitudes and compassion towards disadvantaged groups while keeping them in inferior positions in society), and 'ambivalent prejudice' (involving cognitive dissonance – holding conflicting – positive and negative – attitudes towards a group) (Whitley & Kite, 2009).

Another socio-psychological concept is termed 'unconscious bias'. Unconscious racists are implicitly prejudiced towards Whites and against other groups (Duster, 2008). Some scholars have issues with the idea that racism can be unconscious. Banks (2009) communicates his concern that the label 'unconscious' removes responsibility for racism from the individual. Moreover, the study of unconscious bias takes attention away from creating affirmative action policies to alleviate substantive inequalities, an issue similar to the CRT's problem of the focus of research drifting from the major issue of the desperately needy to the minor issues of race's impact on the middle-classes. I would argue that as the dominant class, the middle class is the most influential and involved in sustaining structures of inequality that suppress minorities. Alleviation policies bandage the problem but do not alter people's attitudes. It would seem that in many cases, policies to rectify structural inequality can foster feelings of hostility towards minorities. Because of this, it could be suggested that as structural inequality is decreased through anti-discrimination and resource-redistribution policies, the everyday human factor in reproducing inequality increases.

Social psychologist Derald Wing Sue, is renowned for his work on racial 'microaggressions' (Sue, 2010, Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal & Torino, 2007; Sue, Lin, Torino, Capodilupo & Rivera, 2009), the 'brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults towards people of colour,' of which the perpetrators are usually unaware (Sue et al., 2007, p. 271). An example of a microaggression might be the comparatively unfriendly treatment an individual receives at the supermarket check-out because of the colour of their skin, or a teacher acting on the assumption that a non-White individual cannot speak English. Sue himself gives the examples of a White woman clutching her purse as she passes a Black man on the sidewalk. The concept of the 'racial microaggression' was first introduced by psychiatrist Chester Pierce in 1970 (ibid., 2007). In Sue's estimation, racial microaggressions are concrete examples for the aversive racism construct of Dovidio and Gaertner discussed previously, in that it records actual instances of Whites unknowingly acting out their racist attitudes in ambiguous situations. Some of these situations are not ambiguous, especially to non-Whites, but it is argued that because Whites lack the knowledge of what it is like to be non-White, their insensitivity in this domain can result in them making and performing hurtful comments and actions.

In his book *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (2010), Sue distinguishes between three types of microaggressions: 'microassaults', 'microinsults', and 'microinvalidations'. Microassaults are

'conscious and intentional discriminatory actions' such as 'using racial epithets, displaying White supremacist symbols, or preventing one's son or daughter from dating outside of their race'. Microinsults are 'verbal, nonverbal and environmental communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person's racial heritage or identity' such as a stranger being surprised that a Pacific Islander is achieving A grade marks in an engineering degree at university. Microinvalidations are 'communications that subtly exclude, negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of colour', such as when a non-White draws attention to a racist act and a White dismisses it as over-sensitivity. These concepts were useful frames for my data – I was able to see whether microaggressions are one of the ways in which race is manifested in people's everyday lives in New Zealand.

Another socio-psychological concept that is a useful frame for investigating how race is manifested by individuals in everyday life is 'internalised racism'. The concept of 'Internalised racism' emphasises the psychic costs ('self-doubt, disgust, disrespect for one's race and/or oneself') of adopting and internalising negative White racist beliefs about one's racial or ethnic group (Pyke, 2010). W.E.B. Du Bois' (1903) 'double consciousness', the idea that Black individuals in the US simultaneously possess a positive self-awareness as well as an awareness of the contempt with which White people regard them, is one of the most famous precursory recognitions of this psychological category of racism.

Those who have internalised racism towards their own racial group may exhibit such practices as 'defensive othering' (Schwalbe, Godwin, Holden, Schrock, Thompson & Wolkomir, 2000), or using derogatory terms of identification for their own racial group to distance themselves from negative stereotypes in an attempt to become accepted as part of the dominant group. Although this practice may help an individual to succeed in resisting the external imposition of a negative identity, it contributes to the reproduction of racial ideologies.

According to Pyke, internalised racism has been largely under-theorised in sociology. Pyke refers to Stuart Hall who saw internalised racism one of the most prevalent and less studied features of racism (Hall, 1986, p.26, in Pyke, 2010). Pyke also notes how scholars such as hooks ((1995; 2003), in *ibid*, 2010) and Russell, Wilson and Hall (1993, in *ibid.*) refer to the topic as sociology literature's 'dirty little secret'. Reluctance to study internalised racism is, according to Mohanty 2002 (in *ibid.*), a result of the primacy accorded to the study of resistance in the wake of the liberation and emancipation narratives of the 1970s, which evolved into everyday forms of resistance in the 1980s. Pyke argues that a focus on resistance alone forecloses the study of complicity

and accommodation, as well as the maintenance and reproduction of domination (citing Adam, 1978; Chappell, 2000; and Schwalbe et al., 2000), and exaggerates the ability of individuals to overcome complex structural oppression by themselves.

## A REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH...

### **...on race and the everyday**

The literature on race and the everyday in contexts other than New Zealand is vast. Because of this, the first half of this review of relevant research can only present a limited overview of previous research relevant to my study. Generally speaking, the research topics and approaches of the research reviewed here are more specific and less exploratory and experimental than mine. A number of trends were found in the research that I reviewed. Researchers focused on following topics in their investigations of race and the everyday: experiences with discrimination; resisting everyday racism; the effects of race on emotional well-being; living in multicultural societies; political correctness and its effect on how we talk about race; everyday racialisation; the use of stereotypes; the reproduction of race in everyday interactions; anticipation of external label ascription; informal segregation, and White experiences of privilege. Researchers usually chose a particular labelled racial/ethnic/cultural group to study, as well as a specific context or contexts. In the following paragraphs I present summaries of some of the research I reviewed as examples of these trends.

A large number of studies on race and the everyday collected evidence of and analysed **experiences of racism and discrimination**. Merino and Mellor (2009) investigated the oral discourse of the Mapuche people and found that racism was experienced in four ways: verbally (through labels), behaviourally (through avoidance), institutionally (through denial of opportunities), and macro-socially (through ethnocentrism in economic, educational and historical systems). Brooks (2008) researched everyday discrimination experienced by second generation individuals of colour in Canada through a questionnaire and focus group sessions. Participants felt that identity ascription by mainstream society reminded them of their inescapable difference. They acknowledged that for them, racism was less but more subtle than for their parents.

Davis and Nencel (2011) wrote autoethnographically of their experiences as US-born long-term and fully 'integrated' residents of the Netherlands. They reported some of the subtle, well-intentioned acts of exclusion and othering

that are part of everyday life in a particular multicultural society. The official discourse of integration that if an immigrant learns the language, adapts to local customs, and finds work, they become a fully-fledged member of Dutch society, is challenged by the discourse of “Dutch-ness” as a White/ethnic national identity which construes an ‘us’ against the backdrop of all ‘others’. Mapedzahama, Rudge, West and Peron (2011) unpacked the question ‘Where are you from?’ which was often asked of them as Black nurses in the Australian nursing industry. They argued that it was exclusionary, other constructing, and furthered their own personal ambivalence to Australia as their place of residence. Noble and Poynting (2010) looked at Arab Muslim Australian experiences of racist vilification in their use of public spaces. They argued, similarly to Mapedzahama et al. (2011) that this type of discrimination reduces place-making and investment opportunities for Arab Muslim immigrants to contribute and feel part of ‘Australian-ness’.

Evans and Feagin (2012) interviewed African American pilots, finding that race is still very much a factor in the airline industry. They reported discrimination in the employment screening and training processes, as well as instances of everyday overt racism, such as individuals refusing to board a plane they are piloting. One pilot felt excluded from a so-called ‘old-boys’ club’ and mentioned that sometimes, White co-pilots would not speak to him during a flight. Other pilots’ decisions were questioned by their flight crew because, it was felt, they were not accustomed with being told what to do by Black men. Pilots described having to keep their emotions in check to avoid being labelled and dismissed as the ‘angry Black man’. Evans and Feagin described the pilots being forced to analyse everyday social interactions like social scientists in order to make sense of them. Jimenez (2008) found that Mexican American immigrant replenishment sharpened the category of Mexican American and heightened the discrimination experience of later-generation Mexican Americans.

Yosso, Smith, Ceja & Solórzano (2009) categorised three types of racial microaggressions in the experience of Latina/o students: interpersonal microaggressions; racial jokes; and institutional microaggressions. An example of an interpersonal microaggression given by one participant was subtly being excluded from a study group (“we’re too full sorry”) because of the perception that they were not intelligent enough. Another participant described how the offence and hurt racial jokes caused her was not understood by the jokers who would dismiss the act by saying “it’s just a joke”. Universities are described as White spaces and Latina/o students reported feeling disregarded and insignificant, particularly because of mainstream-culture-dominated faculties that cannot identify with them culturally.

In his study of the Pakistani population of East Pollokshields in Scotland, Hopkins (2004) found that young people had experienced racist remarks, bullying and fighting at school. Some suggested that employers in Scotland would refuse someone a job on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, others suggested that White people would move out of an area when South Asians moved in. White estate agents were reported to have steered Asian clients to cheaper properties, often in Asian-dominated areas.

Resisting everyday racism and racial discrimination was another theme that a number of studies considered. Lund (2006) tells the story of his resistance to a negatively essentialising and dehumanising (towards Canadian aboriginals) email from a colleague about the theme for an end of year get-together. He sent a reply email in which he explained how the theme might reproduce racist and derogatory assumptions about First Nations people. He felt that though they did end up choosing a different theme, they did not really understand what was wrong with the previous one. Constraints and facilitators in challenging racism in everyday conversations were found by Mitchell, Every and Ranzijn (2011), through interviewing twelve non-Indigenous Australian students who had completed an Indigenous studies course. Constraints included fear of provoking aggression, social pressures to fit in, whether they could alter attitudes, and the type of racism. Facilitators felt confident to challenge racism when they felt certain of and informed around the act. Anti-racism required being prepared for discomfort.

Race and its effect on emotional well-being in everyday context was another theme that was identified in the literature. Perez (2008) performed a qualitative investigation that found stress was heightened in culturally complex individuals. Deitch, Barsky, Butz, Chan, Brief and Bradley (2003) used secondary data analysis techniques to study everyday discrimination in the workplace, discovering that it is negatively associated with well-being. Sanchez and Garcia (2009) found that biracial people experience greater well-being in the presence of similar biracial others, if they believe that race has biological meaning.

Related to this trend, a number of studies focused on the experience of living in a multicultural society. Hallgren (2005) noted that racism in schools had become an issue in Sweden since it had become more multicultural. She qualitatively found that young men and women in Sweden from minority ethnic backgrounds felt that they had to work much harder than others to become full members of Swedish society and had to be watchful at all times. They felt let down by adults and had to learn different strategies to survive.

Veninga (2009) explores the way in which students negotiate multiracial environments at their desegregated schools in Washington by analysing how students strategically embody their racial identities to fit in to or achieve

belonging in specific social contexts. She considers the performative and embodied dimensions of racial identity negotiation and construction to be pivotal importance for critical geographic analyses of race.

A number of studies investigated political correctness and its effects on how we talk about race. Several studies are summarised here to illustrate this trend and present the findings of research on the everyday manifestation of race in speech. Eliasoph (1999) used a conversation he had at a bar, and a conversation he had in a meeting of a Parent League school organisation, to illustrate how race was talked about in public conversations which were not necessarily dedicated to discussing race. He found that people were less concerned about hiding their racist beliefs than they were about adhering to understandings of *when* and *where* to *express* or *not express* those beliefs. He also found that the culture of front and backstage etiquette around talking about race in civil life, was just as reproductive as the structural forces that he felt sociologists usually study. Finally, rather than categorising discourses used by certain types of people, he noted the value in figuring out what other topics were expressed in the same way as race.

Whitehead and Lerner (2009) used an ethnomethodological conversation analytic approach to analyse interactions in a diversity workshop, finding that even when attempting to resist racial common sense, participants used it to guide their actions and interpret the actions of others, reproducing race as relevant for understanding social action. Condor (2006) used two group interviews to illustrate the collaborative nature of subtle, publically expressed prejudice. Expressions are used for particular purposes in particular social contexts such as to amuse, to bully, to display solidarity and to shock. Barnes, Palmary and Durrheim (2001) discovered that the rhetorical maneuvers of humour, personal experience, and self-censorship were drawn on in everyday conversations about race in South Africa in order for the speaker to frame their speech as non-racist.

Covarrubias (2008) examined the way in which university students in an American university are socially excluded by silence-mediated racialised communication in everyday classroom activities. She found that silence can be discriminatory. A quantitative analysis performed by Apfelbaum, Pauker, Ambady, Sommers and Norton (2008) showed interestingly that by the time children are ten to eleven years old they begin to avoid acknowledging race which hinders their ability to categorise in an exercise in which race is a relevant category.

Condor, Figgou, Abell, Gibson and Stevenson (2006) discovered that there may be considerations other than self-preservation and self-monitoring in individuals avoiding race in conversation: that the individual may be defending others from charges of prejudice; that social actors may take joint

responsibility for the monitoring of racist talk; and that the recognition of an utterance as prejudiced or racist is a collaborative accomplishment. They conclude by stating that the responsibility for racist talk lies not only with the speaker but the co-present listeners too.

Racialisation was another topic considered by authors analysing race in everyday contexts. The racialisation of ethnic groups, cultural practices, and space was considered, as well as how individuals learn local racialisation customs in a new environment.

Honma (2011) looked at the performance of tattooed bodies in the US to encourage the critical consideration of normativised notions of body-modification practices in cultural and national units, and the implications this has for belonging. All cultures and national groups alter their bodies in some way or another. Some alterations are more accepted than others. Honma used the idea of racialisation to frame the way in which the cultural practice of 'tattooing' is racialised. Zembylas (2010) looked ethnographically into how schools as emotional spaces are racialised and ethnicised – how individuals are included/excluded and how resentment breeds.

Palmer and Jang (2005) studied how Korean-born Korean American high-school students learned how to racialise according to American racial common sense in interactions and conversations. They considered how the students located their voices in the everyday racial structure of life. Yarbrough (2010) conducted in-depth interviews with migrants who had moved from Central American into North America with the aim of tracing the process of their racialisation into adopting the Hispanic identity label.

The use of racial stereotypes in everyday contexts was considered by McGee and Martin (2011) who interviewed Black mathematics and engineering college students in the US, finding a constant awareness of assault due to use of the stereotype that Black individuals are not intelligent, and evidence of stereotype management as a tactical response.

A few studies investigated the reproduction of race in everyday interactions. Schwalbe, Godwin, Holden, Schrock, Thompson and Wolkomir (2000) brought together the interactive process through which inequalities were created through analysing the literature on the reproduction of inequality, finding the processes of 'othering' (when a dominant group defines into existence an inferior group (Fine 1994, in Schwalbe et al. 2000)), 'subordinate adaption' (minority coping strategies which have dual reproductive and challenging functions), 'boundary maintenance' (maintaining mainly institutional symbolic, interactional or spatial boundaries between dominant and subordinate groups), and 'emotion management' (feelings such as resentment, complacency, fear and sympathy must be managed to sustain inequality).

Lewis (2003) drew on ethnographic data collected over several months in three schools in California and found that the processes of 'boundary formation', 'external racial ascription', 'inclusion and exclusion', 'awareness of the content of categories', and 'contexts' were important factors in race-making.

An interesting study by Tavory (2010) looked at not only the emergence of or the given-ness of but also the anticipation of external label ascription. He used ethnographic fieldwork and interviews to outline the process by which Orthodox Jews in Los Angeles assign boundary-identification to 'anonymous others' in everyday life. The *yarmulke* or traditional head wear of religious Jews was observed as giving impetus to categorisation interactions in the street. Tavory suggests that sites of expectation as well as site of performance are important in boundary-forming interactions. Race is not only created in interactional performance, but it is also located in individual consciousness. In the same way that people learn to perform identities, they learn to expect external ascription of certain categories. Tavory asks how awareness of these ascriptions affect our navigation of everyday life.

Another trend that researchers identified and investigated was informal segregation in public spaces. Koen and Durrheim (2010) analysed photographs to quantitatively assess racial segregation as a term progressed in 67 university classes, finding that racial segregation increased over the period. Keizan (2009) naturalistically observed patterns of social integration and segregation primarily on the basis of race among a group of post-apartheid adolescents during free-time at a desegregated co-educational private high-school. Upon seeing social segregation, he conducted focus groups with students to figure out why. Students' answers were full of contradictions. Reasons included racialisation of interests, naturalisation of segregation, homophily, socialisation, and avoidance of conflict or threat.

Through observation and focus groups with students in tutorial groups over the timeframe of a year, Alexander and Tredoux (2010) found that unofficial racial rules govern relationships. Dixon, Tredoux and Clark (2005) concluded that everyday boundary processes may 'maintain the salience of race categories, embody racial attitudes, and regulate the possibility of intimate contact'.

An intriguing selection of literature looked at the experiences of White people with privilege in their day-to-day lives. Sobre-Denton's (2012) collaborative autoethnography looked at White privilege and systematic discrimination in workplace bullying, paying special attention to considering what the best course of anti-racist action would be in case of a similar situation in the future. In Pennington's (2012) study, White teachers used autoethnography to critically investigate their White racial identity during a

year at university. Cooks (2003) worked with participants in an interracial communication course to identify their shifting articulations of their White identities in relation to Whiteness as a pedagogical concept.

Byrne's (2006) book *White Lives: the interplay of race, class and gender in everyday life* drew on interviews with twenty-five south London mothers over a period of nine months to identify how the three categorisation systems mentioned above construct the lives of White women living in the UK. Her findings included a lack of understanding of White privilege, and that overall, for the White mothers, multiculturalism has its limits.

All of the studies explicitly picked a labelled group to investigate the experience of race in everyday life. Descriptions such as 'second generation', 'immigrant', 'mixed-race', 'adoptees', 'young people', 'African Americans', and 'minorities', were used to delimit the type of people/experiences the study was attempting to access.

Research often identified a particular context to focus on. Articles often made references to the country in which they were conducting their research, in recognition of the fact that national histories and geographies now have a role in the types of experiences individuals have with race. A trend of picking a particular setting was identified. Settings included construction sites (Dunn, Forrest, Pe-Pua, Hynes & Maeder-Han, 2011), workplaces (Brewster & Rusche, 2012; Light, Roscigno and Kaley 2011; Smedley, 2012), educational and healthcare institutions (Bryan, 2012; Smedley, 2012) neighbourhoods and cities (Cheng, 2009), and shops (Lee, 2000; Schereer, 2009). Methods that were used to study the experience of race in everyday life mainly consisted of participant observation, interviews, focus groups, and autoethnographic narratives.

### **...on race and the everyday in New Zealand**

Now that the general literature on race and the everyday has been reviewed, what does the literature say about race and the everyday in New Zealand? Since New Zealand scholarship avoids the term race (Callister, 2008), the terms culture and ethnicity were included in the search for relevant studies. A number of the trends are similar to those in the review of literature outside the New Zealand context. Topics include: discrimination and assimilation experiences, the use of stereotypes, White privilege, new racisms, the reproduction of racial/ethnic inequality, racialisation in everyday life, challenging racism, what it means to be White in New Zealand, the changing nature of New Zealand's national identity, everyday marginalisation of the Māori language, and ethnic segregation. Like researchers in other contexts, researchers in New Zealand often selected a distinct ethnic group for

investigation. There are some identifiable omissions in this literature, which are reviewed following the present discussion of trends.

Māori and Asian international students in particular dominate the literature on the discrimination and assimilation experiences of migrant and minority ethnic groups. The experience of discrimination by minority individuals has been investigated by a number of authors (see for example: Chile, 2002; Hippolite & Bruce, 2010; Jasperse, 2009; McCreanor, 2006; McNicholas, Humphries & Gallhofer, 2004; Mok, 2005; New Zealand Human Rights Commission, 2010; Ngatai, 2010; Southwick, 2001; Stuart, Ward & Adam, 2010; Ward, 2009). A large number of studies look at migrant experiences (see for example: Butcher, Spoonley & Trlin, 2006; Collie, Kindon, Liu & Podsiadlowski, 2010; Guerin, Guerin, Diiriye & Abdi, 2004; Johnston & Longhurst, 2012; Harris, Tobias, Jeffreys, Waldegrave, Karlsen & Nazroo, 2006; Henderson, 2004; Ward, 2009; Ward & Liu, 2012). The experiences of international students have been studied by Liu (1999), Hannis (2008), and Ho, Li, Cooper and Holmes (2007). In all of these studies, the presence of ethnic/racial/cultural discrimination in New Zealand has been validated through the experiences of participants.

In terms of the effect political correctness has had on how we talk about race in New Zealand, the hidden presence of race and racism in speech acts has been studied in New Zealand through discourse analysis of formal documents and official speech transcripts and the observation of the ways in which people talk about race in non-formal environments (Augustinos, 2007; Cotter, 2007; Gibson, 2006; Guerin, 2003; 2005; Holmes & Hay, 1997; Kirkwood, Liu & Weatherall, 2005; Kobayashi, 2009; Liu & Mills, 2006; Lyons, Madden, Chamberlain & Carr, 2011; Nairn & McCreanor, 1991; Weatherall & Potter, 1992). In research on racist discourse in New Zealand, analysis focuses on everyday talk and conversation, newspaper accounts, parliamentary debates, talkback radio transcripts and political speeches. Nairn and McCreanor (1991) disclose the role of racist discourses in the Pakeha ideology of biculturalism in New Zealand. Discourses they identified included blaming Māori for their 'badness', special treatment is unfair, biological authenticity is questionable, and egalitarianism should inform policy.

Wetherell and Potter (1992) describe the race talk of Pakeha New Zealanders through a discourse analysis. They found discourses conveying Māori culture as heritage and therapeutic, resources should be used efficiently, people should be treated equally, the clock cannot be turned back, injustices should be righted, minority opinion should not carry more weight than majority opinion, we have to live in the present, and the importance of being practical. Kirkwood, Liu and Weatherall (2005) analysed public submissions to the Foreshore and Seabed Bill which passed into law in 2004,

finding discourses that colonial history is irrelevant, and the government works for the benefit of all, when it could have been interpreted as protecting Pakeha entitlement. Liu and Mills (2006) found a modern racist discourse of 'plausible deniability' in defence of statements about minorities from accusations of racism, two long-running race-related news stories. Potentially racist-sounding statements were justified based on other, supposedly non-biased principles.

The use of ethnic stereotypes has been investigated by several authors. In discovering that high school students use accent and appearance information in their appraisal of Māori, Holmes (2001) suggested that longstanding negative attitudes towards Māori still exist. Michelle (2012) analysed stereotypical representations in prime-time advertising. The New Zealand media's representation of minorities is another way in which race-ethnicity have been marked as significant in New Zealand, research around which comprises another large area of research (see for example Chambers, 2009; Collins, 2006; Hannis, 2008; Huijser, 2004; Liu, 2009; Michelle, 2012; Phelan, 2009; Rankine, Barnes, Borell, McCreanor, Nairn & Gregory, 2011; Spoonley & Butcher, 2009; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004). Michelle (2012) found that highly stereotypical depictions of women and men within ethnic categories were used in prime-time television advertisements screened in 2006. Māori and Pasifika women and Asians were largely absent from these advertisements.

Nia Addy, cited in chapter one of this thesis, has presented research in support of the idea that cultural racism, in the form of White privilege, is manifested in New Zealand society. She cites Consedine and Consedine who argue that White privilege has existed in New Zealand ever since the White settlers first brought and implemented structures and ideologies that benefited Pakeha and marginalised Māori. The idea that 'European' is better than 'Māori' is still deeply subconsciously embedded in Pakeha attitudes today (Consedine & Consedine, 2005, in Addy, 2008). Ancis and Szymanski (2001) feel that there is a need for Pakeha New Zealanders to develop a consciousness of their Whiteness and the ways in which they benefit from it, as well as their role in reproducing racism. Addy's (2008) research has led her to suggest that Pakeha counsellors in New Zealand need to 'explore the position from which they are looking.

The concepts of symbolic, modern, and aversive (new) racisms have been mentioned in the literature on New Zealand European attitudes to resource-based redress for past injustices and there is some discrepancy between authors as to whether New Zealand European support for statements such as 'although Māori have had it rough in past years, they should still be treated the same as everyone else' can be seen as evidence of modern racism in New

Zealand (Liu, 2005). Studies such as Wetherell and Potter's analysis of White discursive sense-making of bicultural race relations history (1992) discuss these forms of racism in the New Zealand context. However, Sibley and Liu (2004) quantitatively argued that egalitarian attitudes did not unearth hidden racism, but reflected genuine concern for the long-term effects of such unequal race-based policies – that they could result in new injustice. More research in this area is needed to confirm these findings.

In terms of the reproduction of ethnic/racial inequality, Alison Jones (1986) has considered the reproduction of relations of dominance and subordination in an Auckland all-girls highschool by Pakeha and Polynesian students.

The impact of racialisation on everyday life has been analysed to a limited extent. Hippolite and Grainger have written a number of pieces on the way race negatively affects Māori and Pacific Island sportsmen and women. Kim (2004) found that Asian female accountants in New Zealand suffer from being racialised by others within their profession and are consequently placed at the bottom of the White, male power structure. Elizabeth and Lerner (2009) found that 'social development' policy in New Zealand was racialised and more likely to benefit Pakeha than Māori or Pacific women and children.

Researchers in New Zealand have, like their international counterparts, considered challenges to racial and ethnic discrimination (Tilbury, 2000; Webber, 2011). Webber's study examines the importance of racial-ethnic identity among young adolescents who attend large, multi-ethnic, urban high schools in New Zealand. Findings indicated that enacting multiple social identities protected the adolescents from the negative pressures of stereotype threat, but their racial-ethnic identity influenced the ways they enacted their academic and other social identities in the school context; they were constantly, and consciously, contesting contradictory racial-ethnic stereotypes in each context.

Others have explored what it means to be White in New Zealand. In terms of lingering colonial vestiges, Pakeha hegemony has been identified (Borell, Gergory, McCreanor & Jensen, 2009; Dürr, 2007; Gilbertson, 2008; Huijser, 2004; Kobayashi, 2009; Lyons et al., 2011; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). Bell (2006; 2009) found that White settler national identity claims in New Zealand can always be unsettled on the basis of shallow ancestral roots in comparison to Māori New Zealanders in the talk of ordinary White New Zealanders. Huijser (2004) argued that New Zealand cinema is dominated by Pakeha perspectives. Gilbertson (2008) discovered that non-White immigrants may be accepted as full members of New Zealand society but they may not possess the racial and cultural traits for such acceptance to be automatic and fully-fledged. According to Gilbertson, uncertainty remains over the influence of ethnic minorities in moulding the nation's imagination.

An idea that is particularly salient for New Zealand scholars at present is the changing nature of New Zealand's national identity. Whether New Zealand is still a 'White' country has been debated by such authors as Bonilla-Silva (2000), Liu (2005) Hokowhitu and Scherer (2008), Kukutai and Callister (2009), Kukutai and Didham (2009), Gilbertson (2008), and Bell (2009). Bernau (2005) analysed the experiences of Chinese and Indian born New Zealanders to figure out what it means to be a non-Māori non-Pakeha New Zealander. Johnson (2005) used the example of a Chinese Lion Dance Group at a secondary school in Auckland to suggest that cultural performance is important in creating national identity.

The marginalisation of Māori language is another way in which race is significant in everyday life in New Zealand. Doerr has written two fascinating articles on this phenomenon. One of them critically considers two sets of parent reactions to use of te reo Māori at a secondary school prizegiving, for what the reactions can reveal about the power of dominant ignorance to legitimately repress and further marginalise Māori language. Repression was achieved through the expression of anger at not understanding. However Doerr also found a humble 'acknowledgement-of-ignorance' discourse in some parent responses, which he deemed to be an act of embracing the 'other' and foregoing entitlement to understand (Doerr, 2009a). The other article considers how Māori students challenged acts of marginalisation towards te reo Māori by laughing at a mainstream teacher's mispronunciation of te reo words (Doerr, 2009b).

Ethnic structural inequalities have been identified in the areas of health (Crengle, Robinson, Ameratunga, Clark & Raphael, 2012; Harris et al., 2006; Harris, Cormack, Tobias, Yeh, Talamaivao, Minster & Timutimu, 2012; Manson, 2012), education (Anae, 2010; Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh & Teddy, 2009), justice (Human Rights Commission, 2011), employment (Bedford, 2010; Coates & Carr, 2005; Podsiadlowski & Ward, 2010; Ward & Masgoret, 2007) and housing (Human Rights Commission, 2011). With regards to initiatives to mitigate these inequalities, Sibley and Liu (2004) found that Pakeha New Zealanders had negative attitudes to resource-based ethnic redistribution measures, as they believed that individuals should be rewarded with resources based on how hard they worked (a perspective of symbolic racists).

Geographers have shown some interest in informal ethnic segregation and differing localised experiences in everyday spaces such as neighbourhoods. Johnston, Poulsen and Forrest (2008) found ethnic enclaves of Pacific Islanders and 'ethnoburbs' (which he described as multiracial multiethnic and multicultural communities in which one minority group has a significant concentration but does not necessarily constitute a majority of the total population) of Asians. Grbic, Ishizawa and Crothers (2010) found that Pacific

Islanders are the most residentially segregated, and that Asian segregation is increasing. Another way in which place is significant is in the racial climate in certain areas. Atkins (2003) described Auckland as 'awash with prejudice' in contrast to an Auckland university professor's reassurance that prejudice was not a problem in Auckland, citing his experiences of prejudice whilst living on the North Shore. McCreanor, Penney, Jensen, Witten, Kearns & Barnes' (2006) study of experiences in a suburb on the North Shore revealed different accounts of lived experience for different ethnic groups, suggesting that the racial climate in this area produces different qualities of life for each group. Brebner (2008) portrays some of the factors influencing intercultural interactions in a New Zealand university by using perspectives gathered from Pakeha students and Asian international students. Lack of motivation was found to be a key reason as to why the two groups interact so infrequently.

Like international scholars, New Zealand researchers often single out a particular group for investigation, such as Somali migrants, refugees, Arabs, South Africans, British, Australians, Koreans, Asians, Chinese, Indian and Black African.

When compared with the overview of studies on contexts other than New Zealand presented in the previous section, the New Zealand literature on race and the everyday reviewed here contains a number of gaps that my research begins to fill. Researchers *have not*: often used participant observation as a data collection technique; facilitated critical reflection of Whites on their privilege; analysed mixed-race perspectives; recorded everyday emotional experience and race; examined the everyday negotiation of multiculturalism; and focused enough attention on how racial structures are reproduced via means that are not necessarily overly discriminatory.

My research begins to fill these gaps in the following ways. The ethnographic approach taken makes use of participant observation techniques. It aims to assist the critical reflection of individuals on their own 'racial grammar' (including the facilitation of critical reflection of White individuals on their privilege). It portrays a mixed-race perspective (as a by-product of the main research objective). It encourages exploration of emotion in co-participants' reflection narratives (everyday emotional experience and race is recorded). It examines the everyday negotiation of living amongst multiculturalism. It investigates the reproduction of race via means other than simply overt discrimination.

Most studies on race and the everyday in international and the national context under investigation have attempted to theorise acts of racism. However, instead of considering 'everyday racism', I am considering 'everyday manifestations of race' in order to find out how race affects

people's lives. My rationale for this is two-fold. First, to my knowledge, lay definitions of racism mainly focus on overt discrimination. If, as my theoretical framework presupposes, race is reproduced subtly, considering race as opposed to racism will produce more and more diverse data - using the notion of racism would predispose participants to picking up on overt racism. In considering race as opposed to racism, it leaves open the possibility of participants noticing non-explicitly racist acts that help to reproduce race. Second, it leaves open the possibility of participants picking up on their own role in the reproduction of race in their everyday communication encounters, and reflexively finding that there may something sinister in their own seemingly innocent actions. It was thought that asking participants to look for racism may put them on the defensive from the beginning – denying their involvement in any such evil practice and trying to frame racists as the exception.

Another way in which my study is original is that instead of singling out a particular racialised group for analysis (for example Whites, Blacks, Somalians, Korean second-generation migrants) as has frequently been done in previous research into race, I did not choose my co-participants on the basis of a prior racial ascription. The reason for this is again, two-fold. In order to move forward progressively (one of my aims was to contribute progressively to the problem of race in New Zealand) more cross-group understanding needed to be facilitated. By not specifying the ethnicity or race that I wanted my co-participants to be, I ended up with co-participants from a number of different ethnic and racial perspectives who were interested in race, which enabled the possibility of increased understanding of others through focus group interaction. The other reason was that I did not want my co-participants to enter the project from a particular defined position, under the expectation that they were to 'speak for their people', *per se*. I wanted their identity to be more flexible than that and for them to consider their unique position not as a member of a group but individually, influenced by other identities than just race. Furthermore, the position they would speak from would be more flexible with less certainty and stance, meaning that it was contestable – I wanted my co-participants to transcend their identities and arrive at new understandings together rather than feel as though they were pitted against one another, fighting for their perspective to be heard and acknowledged.

## CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH DESIGN

THIS CHAPTER PRESENTS and evaluates 'partial collaborative autoethnography', the selected methodological approach, and provides a description and justification of the chosen research methods (reflexive diaries, semi-structured interviews, semi-structured focus groups). Data collection/analysis procedures and ethical considerations are also outlined and discussed.

### SITUATING AUTOETHNOGRAPHY ONTOLOGICALLY AND EPISTEMOLOGICALLY

The ontological and epistemological principles of the chosen autoethnographic methodology place it in the post-positivist tradition. Post-positivist paradigms were developed in rejection of the positivist research angle, which is committed to: studying the world objectively; a strict set of rules for collecting data through direct observation; seeing objectively collected data as truthful and unframed by the researcher; identifying scientific cause-and-effect laws in data; and claiming that the scientific method itself is objective (Guthrie, 2010).

In contrast, post-positivist vantage points embrace knowledge as subjective and value-laden (Guthrie, 2010). Post-positivist researchers see data as being produced through interaction between the researcher and the world. They resist predefining categories and manipulating the research setting, instead opting for naturalistic observation. Those who advocate post-positivism feel

that scientific laws are a simplistic form of knowledge. Moreover they view scientific methods as subjective, social constructs.

A brief discussion of three post-positivist paradigms (interpretivism, critical realism, and critical theory) assists in demonstrating that a post-positivist position is appropriate for the research topic and aim: to determine how race matters in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. Moreover, these paradigms appeal to me, the researcher, in terms of how I see and learn about the world and can help the reader familiarise themselves with the ontological and epistemological location from which I am writing.

The first paradigm, interpretivism, contends that scientific research methods are incompatible with social research as the subject matter of social science, the social phenomenon, is by nature subjectively interpreted. In social research, objective findings cannot be obtained (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing, 2004). Instead, multiple contextual, mental, social and experiential realities exist (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Race, as defined for this research project, is a subjective construct. Moreover, as I am considering everyday communication interactions as social phenomena interpreted or defined in the reports of participants, objective, scientific methods are incompatible with my subject matter.

Critical realism, the second paradigm, presupposes that there *is* an objective reality, but that knowledge claims about this reality will always be provisional and fallible (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). This is an appropriate attitude for me to assume, as the subject matter of my research – perceptions of interactions in everyday life – can only be reported based on partial, positional and temporal appreciation of what is going on in any particular situation. Each individual has a different subjective experience and is sensitive to different issues. It follows that any experiential account will be incomplete and interpreted rather than disinterested. Moreover, it is contended that the collection of impartial observational data is significantly inhibited when the research focus is a political construct such as race. However, this does not mean that striving for objectivity is not a worthy goal (ibid., 2004). This research does not claim to arrive at an objective truth, but attempts to include a variety of subjective realities that in symphony amount to a more collective and representative truth than would otherwise be reached.

The third paradigm, critical theory, finds a constant interpretive interaction between theory and facts. Researchers must attend to how their claims reflect their social context (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). Claims about the manifestation of race in everyday life are no doubt highly influenced by individuals' social contexts, as the notion of race itself contextualises and positions social actors. An individual's experiences of race are largely dependent on their racial

identity. I strived throughout the research process to reflect on how my reality is different from the reality of others and what contextual factors have contributed to my unique perspective. Moreover, I encouraged my co-participants to do the same by asking them to consider how their social positioning affects their interpretation of events.

## METHODOLOGY

### **A qualitative approach**

Research grounded in post-positivism uses qualitative methodological approaches. A qualitative perspective views the world as a plurality of rival social constructions, representations and performances (Smith, 2001). The qualitative researcher aims 'to understand lived experience and to reflect on and interpret the understandings and shared meanings of people's everyday social worlds and realities' (Dwyer & Limb, 2001). A qualitative methodology provides a framework within which people can discover 'the ways in which they have organised their world, their thoughts about what is happening, their experiences, and their basic perceptions' (Palon, 1990, p. 24, in Pawluch, Shaffir & Miall, 2005). They require the researcher to observe, hear, inquire, note and analyse everyday life (Prus, 1996), and are traditionally used in exploratory studies, and/or in research on perceptions, personal meanings, and social interaction, rather than in testing hypotheses. Blumer (1970, p. 32-33, in Pawluch et al., 2005) describes the aim of qualitative methodologies as 'to move towards a clearer understanding of how one's problem is to be posed, to learn what are the appropriate data, to develop ideas of what are significant lines of relation, and to evolve one's conceptual tools in light of what one is learning about the area of life'.

With regards to using qualitative research approaches to study race, Durrheim and Dixon (2004) advocate the use of qualitative methods to measure racial attitudes. Moreover, Schwalbe et al. (2000) note that quantitative research has measured social inequalities according to race, and qualitative research is now required to uncover the ways in which inequality is maintained, how the subordinated perceive their subordination, and their resistant or complicit response. As I am aiming to capture how race as a hierarchical system of categorisation is manifested in everyday life, a qualitative approach is appropriate.

## **Ethnography**

Ethnography is a qualitative approach in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a 'culture-sharing group' (Harris, 1968, in Creswell, 2012). As an approach, it developed in Western anthropological circles as a way of gathering information on the cultures of geographically remote and localised groups. Ethnography's distinguishing features revolve around the notion of people as meaning-makers: around an emphasis on understanding how people interpret their worlds and the need to understand the particular cultural worlds in which people live and which they both construct and utilise. Ethnography is by nature a constant process of decision-making: openness to smaller or very major changes in research design is crucial, and data-gathering and data-analysis are interrelated and ongoing throughout most ethnographic research (Goldbart & Hustler, 2004, p. 17).

Ethnography is an appropriate methodological choice if the aims of the research are to describe how a cultural group works, and to explore beliefs, language, behaviours, and issues such as power, resistance, and dominance. Ethnography requires a degree of 'openness to change'. It begins with broad observation and a broad research question, and proceeds to pinpoint the most important findings around the question. The foundations and basis of the research may change as the research progresses. Data collection, analysis, and reading of literature are performed in a cyclical rather than linear fashion. Ethnography usually contains a degree of participant observation.

This suits the exploratory nature of my research. My research relies on observations of everyday communication interactions between people in New Zealand in order to identify what sort of contextual and cultural significance the concept continues to have. Ethnography contends that people actively collaborate in the construction and maintenance of cultural meanings that inform their actions. My research studies the ways in which race is a constructed and maintained cultural concept, produced during socially collaborative interactions in New Zealand.

### **The 'new' ethnography**

Recent critiques of traditional ethnography have forced ethnographers to ask themselves a host of questions from postcolonial and poststructuralist perspectives which highlight the 'partiality and historicity of knowledge and experience' (Horner, 2002, p.562). Contentions revolve around the idea that since claims to objectivity in research have been discredited (by post-positivist perspectives), the disinterested representation of culture (traditional ethnography's main goal) is an impossible task. As Denzin (2006) writes,

ethnography is not an innocent practice. Asymmetrical power relations between agents involved in producing the ethnographic account must be accounted for.

In response to this challenge, scholars have developed critical (or 'new') ethnography. The 'new' or 'critical' ethnography can be distinguished from traditional ethnography in several ways. Aims and outcomes have shifted from the pursuit of knowledge to the political development and empowerment of the less powerful, serving the needs and interests of the participant (Brown, 2004). The ethnographer resists domestication, disrupts the status quo, and moves with emancipation in mind from 'what is' to 'what could be' (Madison, 2005, p. 5, citing Carspecken, 1996; Denzin, 2001; Noblit, et al. 2004; and Thomas, 1993). Critical ethnography insists on use of collaboration, multivocality, and reflexivity as tools to combat the false objectivity of the traditional 'lone ethnographer' (Rosaldo, 1989, in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 15), and to destabilise the production of truthful information by a single, intellectual perspective (Horner, 2002). Ethnographic inquiry becomes an 'interpretive' act, the ethnographer becoming the lens through which we see the field site. Ethnographers are no longer the objective determiners of knowledge, they are instead in a dialectic space that brings theories of positionality (and discrimination/oppression) to light (Brown, 2004).

A critical ethnographic approach is reflexive. To be reflexive, a researcher must consider how his/her social position and background could influence the research at all stages: in data collection; in data analysis; and in data presentation. A reflexive attitude assists in achieving the transformational goal of my research, which is to get people (including myself) to understand what their biases are and to empathetically understand the emotional perspectives of others. Moreover, critical ethnography is overtly political. Critics of scientific traditions have argued for the abandonment of rationality, objectivity, and truth, to move social science beyond a focus on method, and toward a focus on what moral effect research might have (Bochner, 2001). Critical ethnographers seek emancipation and disrupt the status quo. A critical approach encourages dialogue on controversial issues.

### **Theory in Ethnography**

Though one may not be able to produce generalisable theory through ethnography, theory is used in several ways. These are identified by Madison (2005) as follows: to discover and hypothesise as to what is behind deceitfully simple appearances; to lead us in making statements of meaning; to identify what is important in collecting data; to unravel false tapestries woven by powerful institutions; to inspire us in bringing forth justice; and to describe

what is intuitively sensed. Moreover, critical ethnography is the 'doing' of critical theory, according to Kincheloe and McLaren (2000). In ethnography, theory informs practice, but is not our ultimate aim.

Hillyard (2010) challenges scholars to relax the definition of theory, accepting that explanation supported by evidence can be counted as working theoretical claims. In doing this, the field of ethnographic research on race becomes a 'rich universe of theoretical insights concerning the role of race in different contexts', he explains (*ibid.*, 2010). In Hammersley's understanding, the proper role of ethnography is not to develop theory, but is to 'provide information that is both true and relevant to some legitimate public concern' and that truth (defined as the provision of adequate evidence) and relevance are the criteria by which it should be judged (1992, pg. 68). I have already argued for the relevance of my research in light of a public concern – the continuing significance of race in New Zealand. The reader can judge whether the explanation and evidence provided in subsequent chapters is sufficient for my findings to amount to truths/working theoretical claims about the continuing significance of race in New Zealand.

Brown's (2004) vision for critical ethnography is a collection of small difference-making projects that resultantly combine into a more significant overall change. I aim to make a small gain in racial discussion, awareness and, ultimately dismantling the harmful significance of race through impacting not only my co-participants and myself, but also my readers. Finally, Hammersley contends that the role of contemporary critical ethnography is to provide information that is both true and relevant to a legitimate public concern. Consistent with the aims of a critical ethnographer, I am aiming to provide information on such a legitimate public concern – the continuing significance of race as a socially detrimental and insidious social organising structure.

## Autoethnography

*I remember at school when I was first taught to not use 'I' in an essay, rather to write from an objective standpoint as it would make my argument sound more convincing. I have never been a very good liar. It felt to me like hiding. How could I, with so little experience be able to speak authoritatively on anything? From then on, I have struggled with this academic convention. Finally, I have discovered an approach that allows me to use the personal pronoun as well as letting me be creative in how I write up my research. In choosing autoethnography, in which the self and its subjective position is made visible I accept that my findings will be a cultural and subjective product, able to be investigated in their own right.*

Not only has the post-positivist movement challenged traditional science's objective research claims, it has also encouraged alternative ways of 'knowing'. Behar (1996, p. 174 cited in Smith, 2005) has described such emerging genres, as efforts 'to map an intermediate space we can't quite define yet, a borderland between passion and intellect, analysis and subjectivity, ethnography and autobiography, art and life'. One such genre, 'autoethnography' (first titled as such by Hayano, 1979), is 'an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyze...personal experience...in order to understand cultural experience' (Ellis, 2004; and Holman Jones, 2005, in Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2010, para.1). In simple terms, it is a critical form of ethnography that acknowledges and analyses the perspective of the researcher, to varying degrees. The researcher is both subject and object (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). As Berry and Warren (2009) explain, all research is filtered through the lens of a subject constituted through culture. No research is apolitical or truthful; it is all biased and partial (Alexander, 2011). When we forget this, we can fall into simple essentialist claims that ignore the situational complexity that autoethnography can communicate.

An autoethnographic approach blends the new and contested with the traditional. Autoethnography is 'antithetical to the tenets of empirical science'. Feminists have written about its transformational effects on the conditions of knowledge production (Clough, 2000, p. 172-173, 174). However, autoethnographic accounts blend social science practices with artistic sensibility in the form of stories that explore bodily, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual experience (Ellis, 2004). Unlike other self-narrative writings such as autobiography, autoethnography systematically approaches

the study of 'the self' (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). Autoethnographies 'turn the eye of the sociological imagination back on the ethnographer' (Clough, 2000, p. 179). Like ethnography it pursues a critical analysis and interpretation of culture (Chang, 2008) or 'the ways in which people in particular work settings account for, take action and otherwise manage their day-to-day situation (Van Maanen, 1979, p. 540). Good autoethnography is 'a provocative weave of story and theory' (Spry, 2001, p.713, in Humphreys, 2005). The value of an autoethnographic work is dependant on the skills of the autoethnographer in observation and sensibilities of empathy, reflexivity and critique (Reed-Danahay, 2009; Taber, 2012). Often, the purpose of such work is to generate potential for author and audience healing (Berry, 2007; Ellis, 2004), and to reproduce power relations (Warren, 2001). In sharing stories of traumatic experience, autoethnographers aim to transcend their personal struggle and describe the experiences of the marginalised, in order to add less privileged voices to research bodies and to reach out to other similarly marginalised persons.

Autoethnography has many close methodological relations including narratives of the self (Richardson, 1994), self-stories (Denzin, 1989), first-person accounts (Ellis, 1998), personal ethnography (Crawford, 1996), reflexive ethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 1996), ethnographic memoir (Tedlock, 1991) and autobiographical autoethnography (Reed-Danahay, 1997) (all cited in Humphreys, 2005). There are also many types of autoethnography. In Reed-Danahay's categorisation, he names three varieties: 'native anthropology' or studies produced by insiders of communities previously studied by outsiders; 'ethnic autobiography', written by members of ethnic minority groups; and 'autobiographical ethnography', in which researchers insert personal experience narratives into ethnographic reports (1997, cited in Chang, 2008). My research can be placed in the third category. I explain what this means for me in more detail later on in this chapter when I discuss narrative vignettes.

The benefits of autoethnography are compelling. Autoethnography allows the deep exploration of experience and emotions, beyond what the research interview, a popular method in in-depth exploration, can uncover (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). The ability of this approach to enable access to sensitive issues (such as race) makes it a powerful tool for individual and social understanding (Ellis 2009, in *ibid.*, 2010). Moreover, empathy and openness can be generated through the sharing of one's story of struggle, pain and loss (*ibid.*). Chang (2008) notes autoethnography's usefulness in building cross-cultural relationships and increasing understanding between self and others across socio-cultural differences, through an openness of spirit grounded on emotional and cultural resonance. Pathak (2010) writes of how

autoethnography combined with post-colonial theory can assist the disruption of the colonial enterprise, in a discussion of her research on how race played a part in her academic career. Stories that are on the margins can be told, and deep inter-human understanding can be generated. These stories, knowledges and experiences can be relayed more fully than if relayed through traditional forms of scientific writing (Denzin, 1997, in Geist-Martin, Gates, Weiring, Kirby, Houston, Lilly & Moreno, 2010).

Several interesting ideas from Miller's (2008) autoethnographic article on realising his 'embedded Whiteness' serve to show how an autoethnographic reflexive approach can enable the researcher to learn about not only him/herself but the society he/she lives in, and can have an emotional impact on the reader. Miller describes himself as a Black academic raised by a White family. As I read his article, I felt that my emerging perspective on the continuing significance of race partially resonated with his perspective. I felt empathy towards him upon reading his story, as a fellow non-White person who has also found themselves acting and thinking like a White person. Of his own personal biases he writes, 'Rather than being masters of our intentions, I guess we are more often in service to our embedded views' (2008, p. 367). He goes on to admit that he is unwillingly complicit in the project of racism and that from here the best course of action to take is to ask himself in what ways he is racist. Of society he writes:

*"I don't believe most people feel the hatred or malice that is often associated with extreme forms of racism. On the other hand, I do believe that most of us think that since we don't have hostile feelings towards racial others, we are not racist. In my experience, racism is not always about hatred or the desire to dominate, marginalize, brutalize or eliminate other people. Sometimes it is about how we view other people's capabilities. This form of racism seems benevolent and manifests itself in paternalistic behavior, a sort of nobles oblige. This is the form of racism that I see dominating academe and society in general" (2008, p. 366).*

Through analysis of his own experience, Miller came to the conclusion that racism continues to persist in the form of paternalistic attitudes that some members of society have towards others. I can agree with his analysis in part as I have definitely come across and held racially paternalistic attitudes in my experience, and in the experiences of my co-participants, giving validity to this finding.

One of the criticisms leveled at autoethnography is that it is narcissistic. Autoethnographers have countered this claim. Stevens (cited in Brown, 2004) points out that all writing is narcissistic. Mykhalovskiy (1996, p.133, cited in Sparkes, 2000) argues that this 'narcissism criticism' rests upon a false division between self and community, a division that obscures the way in

which community is implicated in self and self in community. Sparkes contends that any narcissism is outweighed by the potential for 'acts of witnessing, empathy, and connection that extend beyond the self of the author' (ibid. 2000, p.222). Moreover, these types of critics are only reinforcing the regulations of the traditional approaches that autoethnography sets out to challenge.

Another contention some have is that there is a lack of analysis in autoethnographic research – that analysis can be outweighed by stories that are not evaluated for their significance. In response to this, Anderson (2006) has developed 'analytic autoethnography' which he distinguishes from the 'evocative autoethnography' of Carolyn Ellis (see Ellis, 1997). Anderson's argument is that we must not let the autobiographical element overshadow the involvement of other characters, recognising that 'others' are more interesting than sociologists who are in danger of becoming narcissistic. He wants to guard against self-transformation becoming the main goal of autoethnography (conversely, there are those who argue the value of autoethnography for such transformation in increasingly diverse environments (Glowacki-Dudka et al., 2005, in Boyd, 2008)). Anderson's analytic autoethnography sees the self as an entry point only, facilitating an exploration of experience that results in a socio-cultural analysis. Taber (2012) agrees, writing that stories should only be intricately woven in to the final product. According to him, claiming stories as research is simply lazy social science.

Evocative autoethnography, on the other hand, claims to leave meaning-making up to the reader and argues that stories can stand on their own without overt socio-cultural critique. Ellis and Bochner (2006) despair that analytic autoethnography signals a retreat towards traditional ethnography with its unfeeling observer in search for 'truth'. Their autoethnography is a 'journey rather than a destination', privileging instinctual and empathetic understanding rather than logical knowledge.

I have attempted to combine these approaches in my research design. This has particular bearing on how I have written my results chapter. My results chapter is a combination of: formal presentation and explanation of segments of data under thematic headings; my own evocative analytic vignettes written in speech bubbles; and 'letting my co-participants speak for themselves' through the inclusion of complete evocative accounts of experienced interactional incidents, sometimes without commentary. Those who participated in the collaborative data collection phase of this research were encouraged to perform evocative autoethnography, or a deep reflexive exploration of their experiences and emotions in their diaries. In short, both evocative and analytical autoethnographic styles have been incorporated into

this progressive, innovative research design. This combined approach is not a case of indecision, but it is the product of pursuing two goals: the creation of traditional knowledge; and the creation of empathetic knowledge, as was described at the very start of this thesis.

A final criticism from Delamont (2007) deals with the idea that autoethnography focuses on the wrong side of the power divide. Instead of emancipating the powerless, autoethnographers publish the stories and experiences of the powerful, as they write about their privileged selves. My response to this is that autoethnography can reveal new forms of subordination, develop new ideas of power, and possibly enable traditional ideas of privilege to be challenged. Additionally, storytelling is a universally employed form of social commentary and analysis. In privileging stories as a medium through which to present academic research findings, the academy can level disparities between the powerful (educated) and the powerless (uneducated). In authorising stories as valid and valuable in scholarly inquiry, research can be shared with and performed by a wider audience, reassigning the power to create and the power of possessing legitimate knowledge. Moreover, if the autoethnographic movement to introduce storytelling into research continues to be rejected by academics, meaning that storytelling remains a non-credible, lesser form of social scrutiny, the subordinate and less valued position of the non-academic is reinforced, and their voices are silenced.

As Chang (2008) contends, in any given autoethnographic study it is important to clearly define what autoethnography means for you in order to avoid conceptual fuzziness, especially as it is a new and un-established approach, and the inappropriate use of the label 'autoethnography'. I outline my employment of some of autoethnography's key concepts and tools (positionality, reflexivity, narrative vignettes) in the following paragraphs.

### **Positionality**

Autoethnographers attend to their positionality. Madison (2005) tells us that positionality is 'vital because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects'. We become transparent and vulnerable to judgment and evaluation, taking ethical responsibility for our subjectivity. Although they both have to do with individual viewpoint, positionality and subjectivity differ conceptually in that positionality incorporates the potential for dialogue whereas subjectivity does not. We may hold a particular political positional view, but our confession of it can be held to account by the reader, thereby avoiding the production of a stagnant, mono-informed subjective picture. The use of positionality narratives at the start of the reflexive diaries gives each of

the participants a chance to lay down their assumptions and reflect how these assumptions affect their perceptions of race in everyday communication interactions. Furthermore, the reader of this thesis can use these positionality narratives (included at the beginning of chapter five) to interpret and account for specific data examples presented in the results. Awareness of where one sits in relation to participants positionality-wise can inspire critical reflection on a reader's own world (Sparkes, 2001, p. 221 in Humphreys, 2005).

### **Reflexivity**

Autoethnographers are reflexive. In being reflexive, the researcher turns the critical eye back upon her/himself. Researchers should ask, "how does who I am, who I have been, who I think I am, and how I feel affects data collection and analysis" (Pillow, 2003, p. 176). A reflexive approach conceives of researchers as human beings with bodies, minds and spirits who often care deeply about their chosen research topic, as opposed to 'disembodied, decontextualized positionless minds' (Taber, 2012, drawing on hooks, 1994). A choice all ethnographers have to make is what form of reflexivity to subscribe to, or the extent to which to include references to the self. (Brown, 2004). Carbaugh, Molina-Markham, Nucifory & van Over (2011) suggest that even in recording a piece of data the autoethnographer must be critically reflexive, as how one chooses to tell a story can reveal a lot about one's hidden assumptions. I agree with Carbaugh et al., and have tried to constantly be reflexive throughout the research process: in reflecting on what my chosen methodology tells me about who I am; reflecting on what the data that I have produced says about my biases; and reflecting on how I my analysis of the data is affected my prejudices. I do not attempt to be a 'lone ethnographer', recording factual data to contribute to positivist knowledge. Though I may have slipped into this role accidentally from time to time, I have strived to step out of it. I encouraged my co-participants to do so as well.

### **Narrative vignettes**

The form of autoethnographic research reporting that I have chosen is the inclusion of 'narrative vignettes' in my written account, found in the speech bubbles that appear sporadically throughout the text. Narrative vignettes 'bring life to research [and] research to life' (Ellis, 1998). They are described by Erikson (1986, p.149, in Humphreys, 2005) as 'vivid portrayal[s] of the conduct of an everyday life'. Although some might say that the confessions of the researcher might reduce the reader's trust in the information generated, Lawrence-Lightfoot and Hoffman (1997, in *ibid.*, 2005) argue that narrative vignettes can enhance the reader's trust. The researcher's emotions can be an

important source of data when researching sensitive topics that involve core facets of the researcher's identity (Gemignani, 2011). The outcome of including such narratives is, according to Caplan (cited in Plummer, 2001), the overcoming of differences and the reinforcement of human unity as well as, according to Gemignani (2011) an increased awareness of and empathy for others. Narrative vignettes can enrich a research report by providing insight into the ethnographer's limited, political and subjective perspective on the phenomenon or culture under investigation (Humphreys, 2005).

As can be expected in autoethnography, these narratives are written in a more relaxed style. As Gergen and Gergen (2002) state, 'in using oneself as an ethnographic exemplar, the researcher is freed from the traditional conventions of writing. One's unique voicing – complete with colloquialisms, reverberations from multiple relationships, and emotional expressiveness – is honored' (ibid., 2002, 14).

### **Validity in autoethnography**

Traditional qualitative judging criteria may not be appropriate for autoethnography (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1999, in Holt, 2003). Etherington (2004) suggests a set of alternative criteria based on Richardson's (2000) suggestions that I have attempted to satisfy. They are listed below:

1. Does the work make a substantive contribution to my understanding of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded social science perspective and demonstrate how it is used to inform the text?
2. Does the work have aesthetic merit? Does the writer use analysis to open up the text and invite interpretive responses? Is it artistically shaped, satisfying, complex and interesting?
3. Is the work reflexive enough to make the author sufficiently visible for me to make judgments about that point of view?
4. Does it affect me and move me to respond?
5. Does it seem to be a truthful account of what is real?

As autoethnography is an emerging research approach, established criteria for evaluating autoethnography are still underdeveloped. However, the reader may like to refer to the above questions in evaluating the merit of my work, whilst keeping their immaturity in mind.

### **Partial collaborative autoethnography**

The call for collaboration in ethnography grew out of the crisis of representation movement, which states that the representation of any other

person than one's self is fraught with difficulty. Madison (2005) describes representation as a 'complicated and contentious undertaking', despite an ethnographer's good intentions. Are we only qualified to write about ourselves? Linda Alcoff argues that to do so majorly dismantles the possibility of political activism (in Barnard, 2006), a perspective with which I agree. However, to achieve the critical assignment of leveling power imbalances in the research process, the powerful (the ethnographer) must transfer their power to represent reality to the less powerful (who are usually the subject of inquiry). One of the ways in which this can be done is through collaboration.

Of late, more ethnographies co-conducted by two or more researchers have been appearing in academic journals. Collaborative autoethnographers adopt various models of collaboration (Ngunjiri et al., 2010). When using a more collaborative ethnographic approach such as this, participants can be co-researchers to a high or low degree. They can collaborate fully or partially, sequentially or concurrently (ibid., 2010). I have used concurrent partial collaboration, which means that my co-participants collaborated in helping collect ethnographic data at the same time as I did. I, however, as the main co-participant, decided on the structure of the project, carried out the collection and analysis and of the data and wrote up the findings myself.

According to Geist-Martin et al. (2010), who used collaborative autoethnography to research the phenomenon of mothering, the benefit of a collaborative approach is in the unearthing of new depths of experience through the process of sharing stories. These 'moments' of sharing were the most meaningful for the researchers. The authors describe them as times 'when we were all deeply feeling, understanding, and connecting with each other's experience'. In my research, I found that sharing in the group discussion sessions helped participants with different perspectives to identify with and against one another in similarity and difference of experience, and moreover come to empathise with, and understand each other's viewpoints at a deeper level.

### **Co-participant selection**

I used convenience sampling to assemble 9 co-participants. In convenience sampling, participants are gathered on the basis of their availability and willingness to respond (Gravetter & Forzano, 2011, p. 151). One of the reasons that I chose convenience sampling was to address the issue of trust. My research question dealt with a sensitive issue. A researcher with enough time for a longer data collection period might have been able to build up trust between herself and her co-participants over a number of months, prior to,

during, and post data collection. This sort of relationship building from scratch was not within the timeframe of my study, so I chose co-participants with whom I already had an acceptable level of trust.

If race is defined as a powerful, organising, macro-principle within society (Omi & Winant, 1994), then everyone, not just the racially subordinated, is implicated in facilitating this discourse at the micro-level in some way. I could therefore select my sample from anyone who had experienced life in New Zealand to participate in my research. I did not try to amass a representative sample using any informal or formal system of racial, ethnic or cultural categorisation as some researchers might have. Initially, I did not want to presume any concepts apart from race because I wanted co-participants to be able to use the terms they felt were associated. Instead, the only requirements of co-participants were that they were interested in the research topic and had time to participate in all three phases of data collection. First, I directly asked volunteers from my class of Master of International Communication post-graduate students. One classmate responded positively. I then directly approached members of my wider social network who can be classified as members of the general public in the Auckland region. I received more than enough positive responses to fill my 8 remaining spaces and took the first 8 respondents. Each respondent was given an information sheet and a consent form. Details of these are given in Appendices A (on page 258) and B (on page 261).

Because my research question called for in-depth methods for the exploration of hidden and taboo experience, I could only process data collected from a small number of participants. However, the point of my research was not to be explanatory or to produce tools for prediction. Rather, it aimed to ignite and contribute to a deep investigation of a phenomenon in a specific location in the hope that others might reproduce this type of investigation in other locations, building a database on which to perform a meta-analysis. Hillyard (2010, p. 35) affirms the validity of this aim when he concludes that 'the knowledge that is accumulated by the field of ethnographies on race as a whole enables theoretical comparisons to be made, and scope conditions to be identified'. In saying this, he means that ethnographies are meant to be compared and contrasted, a part of the search for generalisability, rather than being the 'whole' truth in their own right.

It is significant that all of the participants were living in Auckland at the time that the data collection took place. Auckland is a particularly multicultural and therefore multiracial city, in comparison to the rest of New Zealand. Although all participants were aware that I was carrying out my investigation on the context of New Zealand, because data collection took

place in Auckland, the findings of this research will be particularly representative of the everyday manifestation of race in the Auckland region.

## DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The following section outlines and justifies my choice of research methods that I combined to produce my set of collaborative autoethnographic data, depicting the partial collaborative autoethnographic process I created and employed to investigate the everyday significance of race. Guerin and Guerin (2007) call for more participatory and intensive research into racism and discrimination, because of its modern depth and subtleness. Because of the supposed ‘embedded-ness’ of race and racism in everyday life, I used three qualitative methods: reflexive solicited diaries, semi-structured interviews, and semi-structured focus groups in the form of a briefing and a debriefing session. Qualitative methods are particularly effective as tools in uncovering how people ‘define, experience, and interpret intercultural contact’, according to Halualani (2008), who notes in-depth interviews, focus groups, and diary case studies as methods that may help provide crucial information on why or why not individuals engage in intercultural contact and what perceptions of these moments they take away. A triangulation<sup>9</sup> of qualitative methods (such as the combination of the three I used) works to add breadth and complexity to the research, as well as offering the potential for further co-participant involvement in and power over the research process (Bijoux & Myers, 2006).

### Solicited reflexive diaries

Solicited diaries as a research method are ‘account[s] produced specifically at the researcher’s request by an informant or informants’ (Bell, 1998, cited by Meth, 2004). They are most commonly used in health research. In my research I used what I call solicited *reflexive* diaries, in which participants (including myself) reflected on their interactional racial experiences and how their positioning might affect their particular perceptions of those experiences.

There are many benefits of using diaries in research:

- They can refigure the balance of power in the relationship between the researcher and the researched;

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<sup>9</sup> Triangulation is the technique whereby researchers make use of multiple sources of information and/or multiple methods to widen their understanding of the research question (Clifford & Valentine, 2003, cited in Meth, 2004). It works best if each method offers something specific to the process of understanding.

- They can improve the researcher's access to the home environment;
- They maximise understanding of complex and personal matters
- They offer the opportunity for recording events and emotions in their social, spontaneous context (Plummer, 2001, p. 48; Bolger, Davis & Rafaeli, 2003, p. 580);
- They reduce the impact of vague memory (Elliot, 1997 cited in Bijoux & Myers, 2006);
- Diarists can write at their own pace and develop new insights (Bijoux & Myers, 2006);
- Ethical conditions are met, as participants are in full knowledge that their diaries will be used for research purposes (Bijoux & Myers, 2006);
- They can provide pathways to the non-cognitive and sub-conscious, often hidden by the taken-for-granted frame of reference of daily life (Bijoux & Myers, 2006; Bolger et al., 2003; Alaszweski, 2006);
- And they can provide greater insight into perceptions and how they may seem rational to the diarist, despite their irrationality to the reader.

The drawbacks include:

- Only being able to gather the experience of literate individuals;
- Confusion that may arise in participants' understanding of the task;
- The relatively large amount of effort required of participants;
- That participants can be selective about what they write (however, mixed methods help to address this issue (Meth, 2004)).

Both my co-participants and I kept hand-written or typed (as to the participant's preference) reflexive observation diaries for four weeks, being sensitive to, recording and reflecting on our conscious experiences of the manifestation of race in our own microspheres. As narrative methods gain popularity, so does the diary as a valuable qualitative research tool (Smith-Sullivan, 2008). The use of diaries in research allows access to ongoing everyday behaviour in a relatively unobtrusive manner, permitting the immediacy of experience to be captured, and providing records of phenomena over time (Symon, 2004). Diaries can be used to grant access to those parts of social life that are taken for granted, and not easily accessed through other methods like interviews (Alaszewski, 2006). Diaries are often used in ethnographic research because they provide vivid illustrations of the flow of everyday life experiences and work well as thickly descriptive chronicles rich with insights into social interactions. They allow for the

recording of intimate or private behaviours. They have been used to record mundane activities and experiences otherwise inaccessible to researchers (Vannini, 2008).

To guide co-participants' diary entries, I gave them several open-ended questions and instructions:

1. What has happened today/in the last few days that made you think about race? Describe the situation.
2. How did it made you feel and why?
3. What did it make you think about and why? What do you think about it now?
4. Was there anything else you found interesting?

I also asked co-participants to explore and admit their positionality in an autoethnographic narrative at the beginning of the diary. As has been discussed in the methodology section, positionality is an important aspect of critical ethnography. As my co-participants and I were each performing our own mini-ethnography through our diaries, it was important that we all described and took into account our positionalities. Guiding questions were as follows:

1. Describe yourself. Ask, who and what am I? And how do I know?
2. In what ways does who and what I am influence how I experience the world and how I interpret and evaluate others and their experiences?
3. What do I think about race? What experiences have impacted my thinking?

The actual instruction sheet given out to co-participants can be found in Appendix D (on page 265).

One of the reasons for using diaries was in an attempt to mitigate against any potential 'interviewer effects' bias. The term 'interviewer effects' describes the bias that occurs in the data due to a specific interviewer characteristic such as race or gender (Dijkstra, 1983). A key source of bias in interview methods is that the many facets of the identity of the interviewer may influence the responses of the interviewee (Williams, 1968). The interviewee will endeavour to give the 'socially desirable' response to questions asked, a response that depends on who the interviewee perceives that the interviewer is (Finkel, Guterbock & Borg, 1991). The use of diaries let participants think over and record their views without me being physically present, thereby avoiding the distortion I might affect in a face-to-face interaction. Participants might give a more considered description of their opinions, whereas they would be more inclined to cater and rush their

responses in an interview. However, it is acknowledged that my role in the diary process would have been that of the 'imagined audience', not physically but cognitively present as participants were writing, therefore diary writing would not have been an exercise of complete disclosure (apart from in my case). My imagined presence as the main co-participant would still have had some bearing on what my co-participants chose to disclose and how they chose to disclose it.

A scanned extract from one of the reflexive diaries can be found in Appendix E (on page 266).

### **Semi-structured interviews**

After the diaries had been completed, I used semi-structured interviews in order to provide further insight into, and to make sure I understood what had been written in the diaries. Semi-structured interviews are based on the use of an interview guide: a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order; but retain the freedom to follow new leads (Bernard, 2011). Qualitative interview methods are ideally suited to examining topics in which different levels of meaning need to be explored (King, 2004). Because of the degree of structure in this interview format, the resulting text is a collaboration of investigator and informant (Ayres, 2008), furthering the collaborative aim of the research methodology in use. The interviews occurred at the end of the four weeks when my co-participants handed in their diaries. I wrote a sheet of questions to guide the discussion...:

1. Tell me about your diary. Explain how you approached it.
2. How did you find the process overall?
3. Did anything in particular stick out for you? Why?
4. What have you learned about race in NZ?
5. What do you think you've learned about yourself? About others?

...but I was open to flexibility, and to letting co-participants raise issues and ideas they felt were important, in order to lessen my control and create a more collaborative environment. These interviews were transcribed by me and sent to co-participants in case they wanted to retract any sensitive information they had given me.

The purpose of the interviews was to get the 'on the spot' opinions and views of co-participants in the hope that this approach would prevent them from having time to over-think and censor their responses as the diaries did. However, as I have previously acknowledged, face-to-face interaction has a

different sort of censoring effect on what is communicated due to the presence of the interviewer. The main reason for holding the interviews was to gather further information on co-participants' viewpoints so that I could understand their diaries better. I wished to get their opinions on, and orientation to the topic and project in general, as well as an idea of their past experiences with race. Interviewing participants is effective for finding out an individual's perspectives, feelings, opinions, values, attitudes and beliefs about their personal experiences and social world, as well as facts about their lives (Saldana, 2011).

Fontana and Frey (2005) write about a type of interviewing they call empathetic interviewing. For ethnographers, empathy towards the observed is a key tool, especially valuable in fieldwork (Berger, 2001). In an empathetic interview, the researcher tries to establish rapport with the participant, or in my case, I aimed to establish rapport with my co-participants, using a conversational style of interviewing in which co-participants were encouraged to challenge me and ask me questions. I also volunteered stories and feelings of my own. The other reason that I allowed myself to speak more equally during the interviews was that I was the only participant that could not be interviewed – I could not interview myself. As such, my ideas needed to be heard in small quantities throughout the interviews in order to achieve a collaborative balance of voices.

### **Semi-structured focus groups (briefing and debriefing sessions)**

The way in which I used focus groups was in the form of a briefing session to introduce the diary phase, and a debriefing session (more like a general discussion) after the interview phase. Morgan (1997, p.6, in Short, 2006, p. 106) describes focus groups as 'a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher'. Focus groups have become popular since their reintroduction to social science research in the mid-1980s as they are easily modified to suit a wide variety of purposes. In the briefing session, I: explained my project to my co-participants; informed them of my methodological strategy and personal interest in the topic; and explained the research design, research question and some operational definitions, along with what their part in the project was to be: keeping a diary for a month, attending a one-one one interview, and a final focus group/debriefing session. We introduced ourselves and offered some initial ideas about 'race'. Co-participants were encouraged to ask questions before and after I explained the project. I exchanged contact details with each of them so that they could contact me if they had any questions following the meeting, and so that I could contact them (non-intrusively) to see how they

were going. Two participants were not able to come to this session. I made alternative times to meet with them one-on-one in the two days immediately after the main session and explained the project using the same outline.

To minimise the time commitment required of co-participants, I asked them to come to only one “debriefing” session after the diaries and interviews were completed, to openly and informally discuss race in New Zealand together and how they found the process overall. However, I would have liked to have held several more. Although the discussion was open and informal, I had a list of questions ready to prompt further discussion. Although only a few were actually used as we ran out of time (the result of my overestimation and over-enthusiasm as an inexperienced facilitator), I will include them here:

1. Is race an outdated concept? Why or why not?
2. When you think of race issues in New Zealand, what comes to mind?
3. In what ways did you find that people communicated their racial attitudes in everyday life? Share a few of your noted performances.
4. Did you find it hard to pick up on things that made you think about race without initiating conversation on the topic?
5. What/who (past incidences, people) has influenced your attitudes to race?
6. Were you surprised or intrigued at anything you encountered during the diary phase?
7. What do you think of the idea of White privilege? Does it exist? How does it make you feel?
8. What do you think of the idea of ‘crying race’?
9. How does talking about the subject of race make you feel and why?
10. What do you make of the paradox between the good and bad outcomes of racial stereotyping?
11. In what ways is racism a problem? How can we solve it? Is there anything we can personally do?
12. Has anything about this observation and discussion process made you think differently about race? Have you learned about anything or thought about anything that you hadn’t previously encountered?
13. Is there anything else that you have been thinking about that you would like to add?
14. What are your overall impressions of this discussion?

Further detail as to how I, as the main co-participant, ran the debriefing sessions can be found in Appendix F (the sheet I followed as the main co-participant during the debriefing sessions, on page 268) and Appendix G (the

sheet handed out to co-participants during the debriefing sessions, on page 271).

Because of their limited availability, I had to provide co-participants with two time-slot options. The first debriefing session involved five participants, and the second, four. Morgan, Fellows & Guevara (2008) contend that group composition is one of the most important aspects of research design for focus groups. The researcher must take into account both their own needs and those of the participants. At minimum, the participants need to feel comfortable talking to each other about the research topic. During the interview process, I had noted that some co-participants had particularly strong viewpoints on certain matters and predicted that they would clash with other co-participants who were equally passionate about the opposing points of view. These co-participants were placed in separate debriefing groups. I also tried to place my co-participants in groups with other co-participants who would be sympathetic or at least tolerant of their viewpoints, so that no participant would feel discouraged or invalidated. Moreover, Essed (1990) has suggested that doing research among one's 'ingroup' has the advantage of making it easier to discuss negative views of an 'outgroup', a factor I deemed as important to my research on race.

These debriefing sessions were transcribed by me and sent to co-participants for validation. After this session, I asked to stay in contact with co-participants as I analyzed the data, in order to be able to ask them if I felt confused or unsure about the meaning of something they had written or said.

The purpose of the debriefing sessions was socio-transformational. I tried to facilitate an environment in which the perspectives and experiences of others could be heard and empathised with. They were the most collaborative part of the research process as we were all able to compare observations we had made, experiences we had had, and trends we had noticed. I also thought it would be encouraging for us all to share our experiences; a positive way to round up the data collection phase. The debriefing sessions provided me with additional information on co-participants to bear in mind when analysing the diaries and interview transcripts. They offered me the opportunity to witness the performances and disclosures of co-participants under the gaze of an audience other than myself.

Further procedural explanations of the above three methods can be found in Appendix C (on page 262).

## METHODS OF ANALYSIS

### **Thematic analysis**

Thematic analysis is a method of analysis is widely and often inappropriately used but usually poorly conceptualised (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In thematic analyses, 'themes' or 'categories' are sought through immersion in the data, in order to create a cohesive and easily communicated framework through which to report research findings. Often, interpretation of these themes is performed in order to illuminate and situate the findings with reference to the topic at hand. The process of thematic analysis is recursive, rather than linear, in that analysis occurs cyclically throughout the research process as opposed to a single analysis that follows data collection. Because of this, it can be confusing and chaotic, demanding much time and energy (Ezzy, 2002).

Thematic analysis offers a more accessible form of analysis than other more complex and prescribed methods such as discourse analysis and grounded theory. However, according to Braun and Clarke (2006), too many researchers using thematic analysis fail to make explicit the meaning of thematic analysis to them. Several questions need to be answered in order to enable a full understanding and critique of the assumptions behind this method, and to assist future researchers making further inquiry into similar topics. In answering these questions I explain the assumptions I use in my employment of thematic analysis.

The first on Braun and Clarke's (2006) list is: 'What counts as a theme?' A theme can be based on how many times it is mentioned in the data, or it can be driven by a particular analytic question. Mine are the latter. Prevalence of a theme was not as high on my priority list as it is for some thematic analysers. Instead, answers the question of the significance of race in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand, were. However, I did identify and use repetition in the data to guide me toward the most important answers to the question.

Another question to tackle was whether or not I am trying to provide a rich description of the entire data set or whether I choose to focus on a few aspects in more depth. My thematic analysis attempts to represent the entire data set, a method that is particularly useful when not much is known on a topic. Braun and Clarke (2006) encourage clarity on whether inductive or theoretical analysis is carried out. Inductive means viewing the data through non-theoretical eyes, whereas theoretical-based analysis involves applying theory to the data. I would like to think that my analysis was inductive, but I could not detach myself from the theories I had studied prior to embarking on analysis. Am I looking for semantic (not going beyond what a co-participant

has written) or latent (identifying underlying ideologies that inform the semantic content of the data) themes? Though many researchers go either one way or the other, and though latent research tends to go hand in hand with constructionist contextually situated research (which I discuss below), both will be used in my data reporting.

Do I adhere to an essentialist/realist or constructionist analysis? Whilst essentialists focus on the individual motivations and reasonings for accounts, constructionists focus on the context that made the accounts possible. Again, I combine essentialism with constructionism in my analysis. Individual reasons are contextual reasons much of the time, as the individual and the situation are mutually constituted of one another. Moreover, race is both real (in its effects) and constructionist (a social construct). Identity is only constituted through the social, and vice versa.

The process of thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2006) has six phases. The first involves the jotting down of ideas and potential coding schemes, and commences at the same time as data collection. As has previously been stated, thematic analysis is recursive. Phase two involves demarcating codes. Codes are features of the data that are of interest to the researcher, the most basic assessment of the meaning of a segment of data with relation to the phenomenon under investigation (Boyatzis, 1998, in Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following this, the codes must be sorted into main themes. This process consists of much review. Some initial themes may end up as sub-themes, and some may become main themes. Phase 4 refines the themes even further. They may be split, discarded or collapsed into each other. The data is reread according to this thematic pattern and any codes or data that might have been missed are added into the scheme. In phase five, the names and definitions of themes are revised, and the data that is associated with particular themes is interpreted according to what is interesting about them and why it is so. Themes are considered for their links to each other. Finally, phase six is the production of the research report or written thesis. Data must not just be described but must be justified in terms of what it means in relation to the research question. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 24) offer the following questions to guide this part of the analysis:

- What does this theme mean?
- What are the assumptions underpinning it?
- What are the implications of this theme?
- What conditions are likely to have given rise to it?
- Why do people talk about this thing in this particular way as opposed to other ways?
- What is the overall story the different themes reveal about the topic?

As I produced the subsequent research findings chapter, I found these questions useful in taking my thematic analysis to the next (interpretive) level.

### **Analysis and discussion in autoethnography**

Some autoethnographers consider the performance of a rigorous social scientific interpretive discussion of findings to be important whereas others consider it of less importance. For evocative autoethnographers, capturing and communicating 'what is going on' is the extent of analysis. For Anderson (2006), the idea that the reporting of experience in writing is analytic in itself makes the definition of analysis too broad, in that even grocery lists could be analytic. In Anderson's analytic autoethnography, analysis is defined more narrowly as using empirical evidence to formulate and refine theoretical understandings of social processes. Karp (1996, p.14) sees research as valueless if it is simply descriptive. Theoretical illumination of the topic under investigation is necessary.

However, in relaxing the definition of what constitutes theory and allowing explanation and evidence to constitute working theoretical claims, ethnographic research becomes a 'rich universe of theoretical insights' (Jeffers, Rashawn & Hallett, 2010). Insights accumulated across a number of different contexts enable theoretical comparisons and the complication of simple dichotomies, ever-present in research on race (ibid., 2010). Furthermore, in telling stories that are light on traditional theoretical analysis, autoethnographers aim to produce accessible texts and reach wider audiences, a strategy that makes learning possible for more people (Ellis et al., 2010). Moreover, the type of 'communication-of-knowledge' that autoethnography has in mind is the communication of empathetic knowledge, as opposed to abstract theories and head knowledge. Stories are more effective in achieving this aim than theoretical analysis.

In weighing up these approaches to analysis and discussion, I decided that because my research topic is exploratory I would use explanation and evidence to constitute working theoretical claims, interspersed with evocative autoethnographic rejoinder vignettes. In the findings chapter, conventional analysis is interchanged with personal musings, in order to satisfy the traditionalists, but keep open the possibility of learning and empathetic response for non-academics. In the discussion and analysis chapter, I lightly discuss findings and data that have particular bearing on the theories and concepts and studies presented in the literature review.

## ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Autoethnography is often criticised for being unethical. All researchers, but autoethnographers in particular, inevitably implicate others who have not necessarily consented to their involvement in the research process. As autoethnographers observe and write about culture, they write about those around them. Self-revelations always involve revelations about others (Freadman, 2004, p.128). Some of those being written about may be identifiable to readers as it can be difficult to mask the identity of a character and not change the meaning and purpose of the story (Ellis, 2010). Moreover, those that the autoethnographer writes about are often those he/she wishes to continue on in relationship with (Tillmann-Heally, 2003; Tillmann, 2009).

Tillman-Heally (2003) advocates an 'ethics of friendship, a stance of hope, caring, justice, even love...a level of investment in participants' lives that puts fieldwork relationships on par with the project'. As Ellis (2007) writes, there is no one set of rules to follow. She tells her students to 'strive to leave everyone better off at the end of the research than they were at the beginning' (2007, p. 25). For her, researchers 'constantly have to consider which questions to ask, which secrets to keep, and which truths are worth telling' (p. 26).

In order to address this issue, where I have written about identifiable others in this thesis, I have checked with the implicated individual to make sure that what I have specifically written about them is acceptable to them. I have tried to put myself in their shoes and consider how I, myself, would like to be represented. I have given my co-participants pseudonyms to protect their identities, as names are not crucial to the meaning and purpose of their stories. Co-participants were able to read the thesis prior to its finalisation. In my mind, the main concern implicated individuals might have in their representation would be that they were being portrayed as racist. Because one of the findings of my research is that many people in New Zealand are unconsciously racist, I hoped that my co-participants would be able to feel secure in this fact and permit me to reproduce what they otherwise may not have consented to the reproduction of. In achieving an ethical outcome, it is also the reader's job to recognise that my representations of my co-participants are my personal perceptions and can be taken to reveal more about me than they do about them. If the reader is to judge, I ask them to judge not the character in a story, but rather focus on what the depiction can expose about the re-presenter of the story, me.

In order to address further ethical issues, I describe here how I attended to satisfying Unitec Research Ethical Committee's eight ethical principles: informed and voluntary consent; respect for rights and confidentiality and preservation of anonymity; minimisation of harm; cultural and social

sensitivity; limitation of deception; respect for intellectual and cultural property ownership; and research design adequacy.

To make sure that my co-participants' consent was informed and voluntary, I made sure that I described my project in full to my co-participants, in both basic and scholarly language in writing, and gave them a consent form with my supervisor's details, should they have wanted to ask questions. I reassured them that they were free to pull out of the research at any time. At the briefing session I again informed them of my research topic and asked them if they were still willing to participate.

I will destroy data and consent forms 5 years after my thesis has been accepted. I will keep hard copies of consent forms and data in a locked safe, and electronic copies will be stored on a computer protected by a user password. Only my supervisors and I will have access to this information. I did not publically discuss any information the co-participants have given me until the final project was accepted, both by my co-participants and by the committee, in a timely way.

In order to minimise harm to my co-participants, a trained counsellor at UNITEC was made available in case any of my co-participants wanted counselling over personal issues raised during the research process. Co-participants did not require this service.

I made sure that I treated my co-participants with respect and informed them that if I had been insensitive to their values in any way, they must not hesitate to tell me. I was enthusiastic to work together with them to resolve issues, and reminded them that they could pull out of the research if they wished. I made it clear that if I asked anything of co-participants that upset them or made them feel uncomfortable on account of their cultural affiliations, they could choose either not to answer, or to instead collaborate with me on devising a more appropriate question. A Māori counsellor at the Maia Māori Development Centre at Unitec was made available free of charge should a co-participant have wished to seek Māori counselling on account of cultural issues raised by the research. I opened up a dialogue with an advisor on Māori issues at Unitec (Kaumatua Hare) as a safeguard advisory partner should any issues specifically relating to Māori have come up. I sent him a copy of my thesis to review before it was submitted for marking to ensure that it was not damaging to Māori culture.

In order to limit deception, once they agreed to participate, I gave out my contact details to my co-participants and encouraged them to contact myself or my supervisors at any time if they had questions. I checked my description of my research with my supervisors to make sure that they agreed that it is a fair summary of my intentions and assumptions before handing it out to co-participants. I consulted both my supervisors and my co-participants

throughout the research to make sure that nothing about the project as it unfolds was in conflict with what they were led to believe it was.

To ensure that my research design was adequate, I backed up my methodology by referring to papers and texts that had used similar methods and a similar approach to my own, and had it checked by my supervisors, the department's post-graduate committee, and UREC, to make sure that it would help me provide adequate answers to the question I set out to answer.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

THE FINDINGS THAT I PRESENT, explore, and autoethnographically reflect on in this chapter are divided into seven major themes as to how race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. The first theme is titled 'Everyday living in a multicultural society'. Subthemes are: 'NZ European dominance is eroding'; 'New Zealanders are managing this change well...?'; and 'New Zealanders are not managing this change well'. The second theme is called 'References to 'racisms' past' and includes the subthemes of: 'Ethnic inequality and redistribution'; 'Crying race'; 'Old racist attitudes'; and 'The declining significance of race?'. Thirdly, the theme 'Social status' is discussed with the subthemes of 'White superiority', 'Negotiating the social ladder', and 'Legitimacy'. The fourth theme is 'Conversational tact – Everyday speech conventions' and its subthemes are 'Racialised neutral terms', 'Racial stereotyping', and 'Censoring'. The fifth theme deals with 'Emotional reactions to races', which include anger, disgust, instant connection, comfort/discomfort, fear, and romantic attraction/indifference/repulsion. Sixth, the theme of 'Reacting to everyday racism' includes the presentation of 'Emotional reactions to everyday racism' and 'Dealing with everyday racism'. Seventh and finally, the everyday problem that 'Race matters to me because I look different' will be presented along with four subthemes: "Race impacts how I am perceived and treated";

“Most of the time I feel just like anyone else”; ‘The dreaded question: “Where are you from?”; and ‘Levels of sensitivity’.

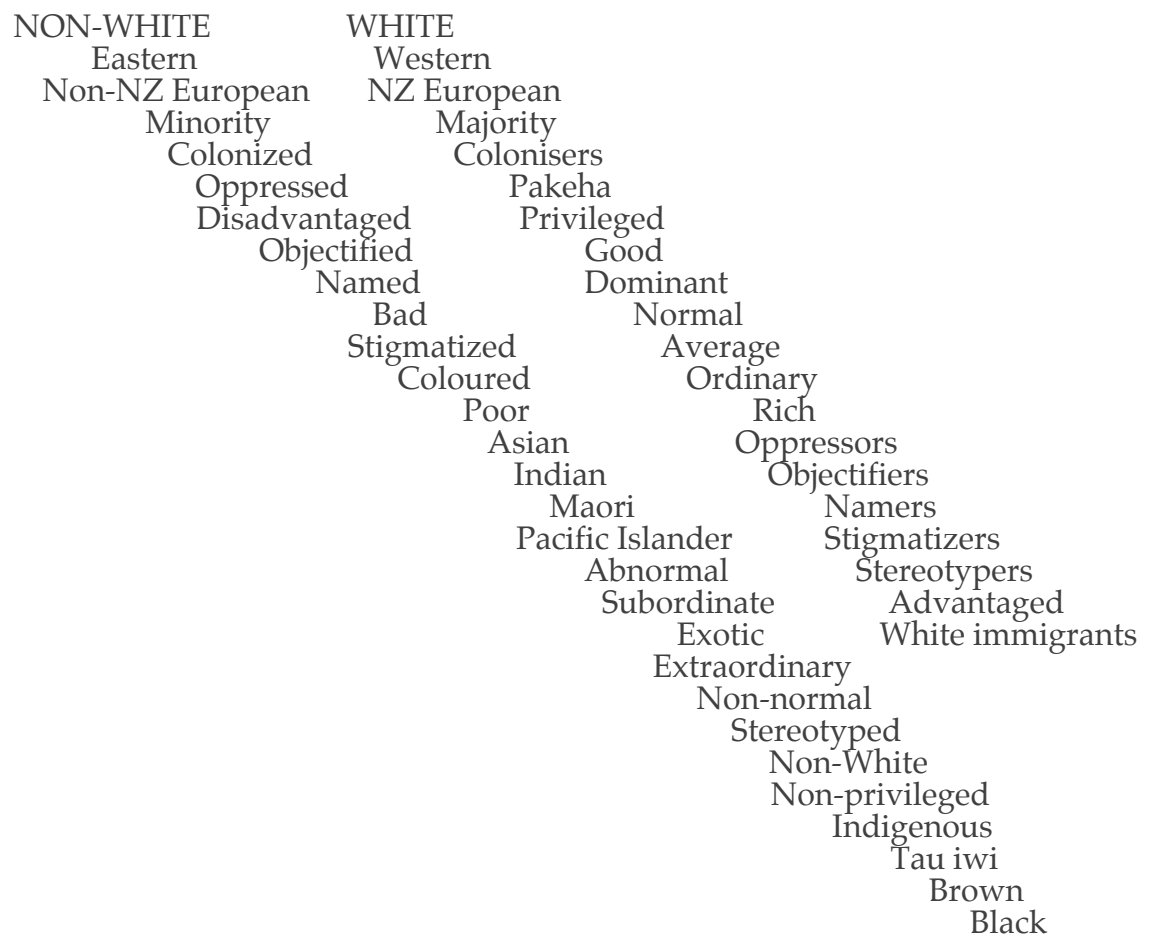
Before delving into the findings, it is important to clarify that a very loose and conceptually overlapping definition of race was used by participants in the data itself, which I allowed in the analysis, and in this chapter. Race for participants was often spoken about through discourses of culture and ethnicity, as well as, at times, nationality and religion. Cultural/ethnic labels such as Fijian Indian, Asian and Somali, as well as national labels such as British and New Zealander, as well as religious (Muslim), racial (White/Black/Brown) labels were used, suggesting that the problem of race is related to problems of culture, ethnicity, religion, and nationality.

The unconventional nature of this findings chapter sees relatively large excerpts or ‘narrative vignettes’ from the data often providing the examples for the themes identified. In using large segments, I increase the weight of my co-participants’ voices in the final thesis, thereby enhancing the collaborative element of my research design. Additionally, it is contended that the manifestation of race is best conveyed in a participant’s own words. As was discussed in chapter four, some autoethnographers argue that narrative *is* analysis and theorising - stories themselves are theories and may not require further analysis, especially from an outsider as there is a risk of misinterpretation. The vignettes in this chapter are interesting analyses of social life in themselves. However, some secondary analysis is necessary in order for me to avoid being accused of producing lazy social science. Secondary academic analysis is saved for the discussion and analysis chapter, but a first level of autoethnographic commentary is offered in this chapter in the speech bubbles.

It has been difficult for me to write this chapter as I have struggled to keep my emotions and moral judgments at bay when analysing and making inferences as to what the data and my co-participants’ words meant at the time, and mean in a broader sense. In one sense, this is why I chose an autoethnographic approach, as I foresaw the difficulty I would have in keeping a respectable objective distance from the research matter at hand. I have, however, tried to retain some semblance of ‘dispassionate-ness’ to remain within the scope of traditional research aims. But I have also included evocative autoethnographic reflections when I felt them necessary. As I have struggled to extract my own partiality from my supposedly impartial interpretations, I apologise in advance for anything I might infer that illustrates my limited, sometimes potentially shockingly prejudiced perspective. I can in no way argue that this chapter has been conceived of and written by a disinterested, robotic data processing machine. I admitted that I was a racially prejudiced individual at the very beginning of this thesis. I still

am, and hope that my inability to prevent my own bigotry from showing through in this chapter can serve as an example of how blinding our prejudices can be. It would be interesting to see what a different researcher would surmise if they analysed the same data set, especially if they had completely different political sympathies and lived experiences to me.

As I was analysing my findings, the dichotomy of White/non-White became strongly apparent in the data and in my interpretation of the data. As I have used this and other similar binaries (majority/minority, dominant/sub-dominant, oppressor/oppressed), reductionist as they are, it is necessary to provide clarification of what I mean by them here, both in the context of New Zealand and more generally. My 'clarification' (as opposed to 'definition') does not refer to a specific scholarly definition or interpretation – it is drawn from my own experience with the terms. I felt that the best way to present it was in a sort of 'word association brainstorm' diagram.



From hereon in, not all of these associated words apply whenever the words 'White'/'non-White' appear in the text, but this diagram gives the reader an idea of the concepts that I feel surround and are a backdrop for 'Whiteness' and 'non-Whiteness' in New Zealand. These two categories, I might add, are socially constructed. Some authors choose to consistently place

quotation marks around constructed categories such as these as they employ them in-text, but I choose not to, as I feel the constructs themselves are too meaningful to people's everyday lived experience to continuously imbue them with a sense of fictitiousness. My propensity to interpret the data through a White/non-White perspective, is, I expect, due to the fact that White/non-White is what I am, and therefore I see the world through a White/non-White lens. I contend that my analysis provides an interesting depiction of the perspective of a biracial, biethnic, culturally 'Kiwi' individual.

Due to my playing multiple roles in this research project, (co-participant, evocative autoethnographer, and analytic autoethnographer), writing this chapter in particular proved to be a challenge. My initial draft read schizophrenically. In offering this refined version, it is necessary for me to explain to the reader how my three roles or voices can be distinguished. My co-participant voice can be found in amongst the voices of the other participants in the direct extracts of text I have included as examples of each theme. As I introduce each of the co-participants by their pseudonym before they speak, I introduce myself as a participant by my real name: 'Liz'. My evocative autoethnographic voice (uses 'I') can be found in the speech bubbles that appear from time to time, in which I reflect on my personal reaction to whatever piece of evidence or theme or subtheme I am talking about. My analytic autoethnographic voice (also uses 'I') is found in the structure, presentation, and explanation the data - it is 'everything else'.

Before presenting the themes, the chapter will present the initial positionality narratives that each participant (including myself) was asked to write at the start of the diary phase so that the reader may construct a mental description of each participant that can be referred back to when reading evidence attributed to them. Each co-participant is allocated a pseudonym by the researcher to protect his/her identity.

## PARTICIPANT POSITIONALITIES

The aim in asking participants to write positionality narratives was to encourage personal reflection on how who they believe they are and the experiences they have had affect how they perceive the world. It was hoped that through this reflexive exercise, participants would become more conscious of themselves and their particular viewpoint as a single biased perspective amongst a multitude of other, equally valid and biased perspectives. As was included in the methodology chapter, Madison (2005)

indicates that positionality is crucial in ethnography because it compels us to consider our own biases.

As was described in the research methods chapter, the following questions were given to participants to guide them in writing their narrative:

1. Describe yourself. Who and what are you? How do you know?
2. In what ways does who and what you are influence how you experience the world and how you interpret and evaluate others and their experiences?
3. What do you think about race? What experiences have impacted your thinking?

I have chosen to add these in full here to let the participants (characters) present themselves to you, rather than me filtering what I think are the important points at the risk of misrepresenting them. As with the decision to include large segments of the data, in presenting the positionalities in full, the voices of the co-participants are given greater weight in the final thesis, enhancing the collaborative element of my research and working against the 'lone ethnographer' (Rosaldo, 1989) ethnographic model.

When reading these positionalities, the reader is invited to try to notice, question, and deny themselves the ease of using the stereotypical assumptions attached to the labels that the participants give themselves. I ask for this because in my experience, these labels are not always the labels we would choose for ourselves if we could define our own labels. These labels are imbued with neutral, positive and negative connotations that may but may also not apply to the individual who has been asked by me to use them. Moreover, they do not define us completely. We are complex. And we are first and foremost human beings, just like the reader.

Also, remember that these positionalities were written with ('academic') me in mind, as the audience. So in some ways they are indicative of how the participants view and anticipate me and my reactions, as well as their understanding of academic research cultures.

**Liz<sup>10</sup>:**

*I am Elizabeth Revell. Recently, I was Elizabeth King. I am a New Zealander of part Chinese and part European ethnic (?) origin. I am a female. I am 23 years of age. I come from a loving family. My parents are still together although I'd say they have a mildly dysfunctional relationship. I am a doctor's daughter and a middle-upper class member from a private school. My parents value education and moving up in society and pretty (?) things. I guess I am concerned about status. I am also compassionate and sensitive and hate to see people unhappy. I am a student at Unitec doing my Masters, unsure of what I want to do/be when I grow up. I like to be comprehensive and do things thoroughly/perfectly. I am a native English speaker and am Kiwi<sup>11</sup> in culture I guess although I've never been overly patriotic. I know these things because I have been told them, especially by my mother and by those around me. Somehow I have come to securely identify with them. Now I cling to them when asked to describe myself in public. I have been told that everyone is unique and I feel unique and want to enhance my uniqueness. I am also currently scared of stepping outside the mainstream. My identity has been passed down to me by generations of cultures. I have been told that I am special and loved, and to aim high. These sorts of messages have come at me over and over again so now to think them is second nature. However, there is an element of resistance to some things that people tell me I am. I call myself a New Zealander, not a Eurasian. I don't think I should be put in a separate basket just because of the features I carry and have inherited. I don't necessarily fit in as a girl or as a fashion snob. I know what it is like/empathise with the underdog as well as being better off than most people. Inequality troubles me and I am seeking to resolve it. I hate to see how my Mum is racist towards my dad and his family. I get upset when things are unfair. I often make false judgments about people on account of my prejudices. Even though they may be well meaning. Is a well-meaning judgment better than none at all? I feel sad when an identifiable group of people are targeted as a problem by powerful people. I want to figure society out. I see things differently to others and will pick up on different things when walking down the road. However, I enjoy the ecstasy of noticing something in a group –*

<sup>10</sup> A slightly altered version of the initial few sentences of this narrative appeared in the introductory chapter of this thesis, to give the reader an idea of my identity as the main co-participant. The positionality narrative I present here is exactly as I wrote it in my diary, in my role as co-participant. I felt that as I too was a participant, it was important to present the full version in the findings chapter in the same way that I present the narratives of all of the other co-participants. Additionally, it helps the reader to envisage me in this role, as separate from my other role as main co-participant.

<sup>11</sup> 'Kiwi' is affectionate, informal term that means 'New Zealander' or 'New Zealand'. A Kiwi = A New Zealander. Kiwi culture = New Zealand culture.

*sharing the experience with someone else and knowing that I belong. For example, I see a car and think great, a comfortable and rightful way of getting somewhere, whereas [my husband] looks at a car and thinks ugh, a way to spend more money. I look at a newspaper and think of it as a grown up sophisticated activity whereas [my husband] looks at it and thinks boring, I'd rather read a brochure/junk mail to scout out a good deal.*

*I think race is a very negative word, referring to distinct groupable characteristics that we can hijack to express our fear of dying in a world with limited resources. Often the group in power can use/abuse or create these characteristics (skin colour, cranium size) to justify political policy. They pass on these ideas through media and subtle attitudes. Xenophobia comes from the sense of threat one group poses to another's stability and equilibrium. We somehow get aesthetically trained to despise the aesthetics/culture of others. We are attuned to areas in which they are wrong and we are right and that they should become like us. We fear what could happen if they got some power. It's all about selfishness. Racism as fear and disgust is mostly directed towards Asian and Middle Eastern immigrants in New Zealand as recently a few measures have been taken to restore relations between Māori and Pakeha and Pacific Islanders seem to have jumped on that band wagon. However, we only (we being the Pakeha NZers) only appreciate them when they make us laugh. They remain the comic underdogs and when I see a PI person with all the trappings of a rich White person I am surprised. They are mostly poor and share what they have with others rather than keeping it to themselves as we do. But that is a generalisation. As the next generation we must notice where we generalise because it's not helpful for social cohesion. Neither must we dictate the society in which they live. We must respect different cultures for the wisdom they contain and foster loving relationships with people who are different from us.*

*I remember being asked where I am from countless times and gradually resenting it more and more as I defined my own identity that others seemed not to accept. At my school there were distinctions socially between the Asians (who were perhaps accepted to up the school's average grades and to teach us a work ethic) and the others who wouldn't mix with the Asians. The others seemed to have a confidence that even amounted to bullying in some cases when they'd make fun of an Asian student or laugh at their shyness. Some others wouldn't even acknowledge their existence if they didn't have to. But I sense that in a time of crisis where the other had to lean upon the Asian, the Asian would be willing to support the Other (perhaps for social advancement? I reckon more likely empathy and knowing what it is like to be in need) only to have the Other discard them when everything was alright again. At home I sensed a hatred for my dad's family and their culture by mum who made it pretty clear that Dad didn't know things because he came from a*

*“little village in China”. Which was a joke for her, but it belittled my Dad, a condition he continues to suffer from. I have seen first hand how subtle discrimination can destroy a person’s confidence in who they are. I too have subtle attitudes towards Asians and their culture, only realised upon experiencing [some of my acquaintances’] overt disdain for Asians and their ways, hidden behind or justified by their understanding of being a good Christian citizen. They are not willing to be and let be, they have to change Asians instead of a reciprocal change. I feel as though race may be one of the reasons that my family in law had issues accepting me although I have not heard their side of the story. I do feel very conscious of my Asian-ness, especially when they make jokes about Asians either realising uncomfortably or being oblivious to the fact that it affects me. Like the time [a friend of mine] was saying that it’s the Chinese’ fault that house prices are sky rocketing. Or when she teased me about English being my second language. Or in town when she was about to make a comment about me being Asian when [her friend] stopped her. Are these implicit attitudes an issue for social cohesion? I think so.*

### **Ameera<sup>12</sup>:**

*I’m a New Zealander, a Muslim and an Indian. It is this set of cultural and religious affiliations that have impacted on my experiences of ‘race’.*

*Race is a socially constructed concept developed through colonial processes. It physically marks people. Racism as it is commonly practiced sets up a “normalised” Whiteness against racialised others that do not look, sound or behave like this constructed norm.*

*I am acutely aware of my marked difference, how it impacts it impacts on how I relate to other and how they relate to me.*

*I have rarely suffered overt racism where people have deliberately treated me differently because of my heritage or the way I look. However I believe that racism exists in a more structured way. This structural racism can be difficult to detect which in turn makes it difficult to break down.*

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<sup>12</sup> Ameera could not hand in her diary unfortunately as her bag which contained the diary at the time was stolen. However at my request she wrote this positionality narrative after the data collection period was complete.

*The key to structural racism is the normalisation of Pakeha culture and the labeling of other ways of being and expression as abnormal.*

*I've always experienced race as a form of difference. While difference can be something to be celebrated in many cases it's been something that has meant I've suffered exclusion and misunderstanding.*

*The most interesting impact of how race works in our society is that we have preconceived ideas of who people are and their identities based on what they look like. These assumptions are so often wrong.*

*Moving away from these assumptions will help to break down racialisation of society that still pervades today. I know that they would help me navigate the world in a safer and more inclusive manner.*

### **Yasmin:**

*I'm a 22 year old Kiwi girl and have lived in NZ for all my life. My nationality is New Zealander and in terms of race I guess I would call myself a Caucasian – although this sounds quite scientific and strange to me.*

*If someone asked what ethnicity I am, I would say Pakeha. I am proud of the hodgepodge of nationalities that make up my ancestry – Spanish, Dutch, Scottish, Irish and English. My maternal Grandad likes to exaggerate his Irish blood and I suspect he has passed this on to me.*

*My last name is Irish and our family motto is "slash and burn to victory!" I did some research on my family once and discovered (to my delight) that I come from the [name] clan. This clan had a reputation for producing fierce war lords, so I like to tell people that I'm a bit of a warrior!*

*I come from a family that values education and learning. My parents met while both studying [science] at [university] and have passed their love of science onto my...brothers. However I am more of a creative, artsy person and [not long ago] I completed [an arts degree].*

*I also come from a Christian background and my faith is an important part of my identity. I attend an Anglican Church and enjoy the traditions and rituals there, particularly worship and communion. My faith has given me a values system which influences how I view the world and the way I live. Values such as generosity, honesty, compassion and humility are important to me.*

*I think of 'race' as a scientific term used to categorise the human race – homosapiens. It isn't a word that is used much these days – probably because it*

*isn't very PC and has negative connotations. It is associated with words such as racism which make people feel uncomfortable.*

*I think the concept of race – classing people according to their gene pools/geographic areas – has lost relevance. The world has become so multicultural that 'culture' seems more relevant. I feel that people get terms like ethnicity, race, nationality and culture all mixed up. 'Culture' is the safe, PC word to use when in doubt.*

*The way I interpret and evaluate others and their experiences is coloured by many things – my gender, my middleclass Christian family, my age, my education, growing up in a Kiwi culture in the 90s and 2000s etc. I use stereotypes to help me understand the world around me – these stereotypes include generalisations about racial groups. I'm interested to learn more about race and how different people view the subject.*

### **Rachel:**

*I am an outgoing 27 year old female who enjoys being around people as well as being reflective and having time to myself to think, pray and ponder the world around me. I assume a lot about situations and people – sometimes rightly and sometimes wrongly. I think that race is something that has become so part of our society that it is not talked about as much as it should be. In the past racism has been a hot topic – with cultured people being outcast. Now I have seen and experienced things that I feel are being racist towards Europeans. For example – a friend of mine worked in a company where, over the years, she became one of the few NZ Europeans on the team in her company, the rest were of Asian origin. She was not invited out to lunch or social events because she was not part of the 'Asian Club' as they called it. Made her feel outcast. I believe this racism towards New Zealand Europeans something that is new with the arrival of more and more people of different cultural backgrounds to NZ. Racism towards all different cultures is definitely still around as well.*

### **Timothy:**

*I am a half German, half Celtic, and am a baptised Roman Catholic. And I am a*

29 ½ year old male. I know this because it is what all the paperwork says that I am.

However, who I am is more than this. I am competent to a high level in English, German, and Japanese and have also studied other languages and cultures extensively. I assume that this has given me an insight into other cultures but this may just be pure arrogance; I guess I'll find out over the next few weeks.

As for "race", I was brought up to view this as something of a taboo to talk about. Although I do believe that "race" is something which can't be changed; it is something that physically defines you. I also believe that "race" while being a contributing factor, does not alone make a person who they are. I think that culture and other influences affect this more.

### **Heather:**

I'll start with the obvious I'm a 24 year old White female, I'm a New Zealand permanent, I was born in [name of town], England in 1987 and my family emigrated in NZ the following year. I've grown up in NZ and in Auckland and for the most part in [a central Auckland suburb].

I was homeschooled till high school and attended my local, [high-school], where I was, for the most part the token White girl in the group.

I have since been at university and now live in [another central Auckland suburb] and the majority of my group now is White.

I'm also a Christian and grew up in a Christian family. I'm a daughter, a sister to [some] older brothers and sister in law and auntie to their wives and children, I'm also a younger sister to a disabled individual and I am currently single. I also have two sets of cousins. As far as personality goes I am outgoing and social an extrovert, but I can be rather introverted and can happily spend several days alone. I'm thoughtful and spend a lot of time thinking about the world and people. I am also an artist, I paint, sing, dance, act, and direct.

For the most part I am British, however it is unclear in our genealogy how much Irish, Scottish and Welsh there is in the mix. However for the most part I would consider myself a New Zealander, even though I am yet to hold citizenship.

I grew up in NZ and have spend little time in the UK so NZ is where I call home.

How does who and what I am influence my experience of the world? This is one

*of those questions which can never be answered completely satisfactorily as it is impossible to be objective as I can't step outside of myself and my experience to answer.*

*But I suppose I view the world through two lenses, the lens of who I am and where I stand in society.*

*In New Zealand we are fortunate to be exposed to many ways of life and cultures and although as a child the majority of my friends were White New Zealanders during high school I had a lot of Indian and Pacific Island friends and so from an early age part of who I am and how I view the world has incorporated different ways of thinking and viewing the world.*

*As a White girl I am considered by some to have a better placing in society and am likely to be in a higher socioeconomic status. And I was my father had a good paying job and my mother taught us school from home so I had a somewhat naïve view of the world and expected that everyone else had a life similar to mine. However this was not so and through teenage years I became aware that all was not peachy. People came from poor and broken homes and people's experiences were also different because of their ethnicity and culture.*

*This opened my eyes and made me start to think about and consider what it must be like to be someone else.*

*The second lens I view the world from is through my understandings and experience of being a Christian.*

*As I have grown up and grown in my understanding and knowledge of God that has affected greatly how I view the world, the differences between people and nations.*

*I cannot help but to consult or interpret things through what might be God's view and experience of other cultures and ethnicities and it has been my belief that it is who I am in Christ which truly defines who I am, rather than the fact that I am a White English NZer, however I also believe that there is a place in God for ethnicity and race to remain who they are as well as who they are in Christ, one does not need to become all a similar culture or race to be Christian, God made us all different and ethnic to enhance the world not to separate it, or that is what I believe however I can only speculate what it is like to reconcile Christianity with being from a strong cultural or racial background.*

*I try my best to get a handle on how a person from a different culture or race or ethnicity thinks about their experiences however this is always then filtered through my own way of thinking and understanding the world and sometimes I just can't understand someone else's reason even when it's explained to me.*

*Like why in this day and age do my female Indian friends have to be at home at certain times or that their parents want to know where they are at all times and*

*have them live at home till they are married.*

*At one level I understand it, the father is responsible for a daughter's care until she is married, and they are often more conservative. However I would find it restricting but I suppose that is because I was taught as a Westerner that it is all about independence, and westerners do have a history of feminism and independence for women, and so I do not understand how my friends do not get irritated or unhappy about the way their parents treat them, not that it is treating them badly it is just different.*

*And it really is hard to truly understand or interpret another one's experiences you can either on an emotional level due to similar experiences or intellectually due to your knowledge of what their life might be like.*

*My understanding or how I frame race is that it differs from pure ethnicity as it also relates to cultural aspects, so for example it's different being a Fijian Indian from being a Hindu from India and it's different to be a Pacific Islander who grew up on your island or in NZ.*

*So I would describe my race as being English born New Zealander, because my ethnicity is English but my culture and race is growing up in New Zealand.*

*Therefore race is a very complicated subject as it's not just what you are but who and why those around you who share your experiences.*

*It is also a topic that in NZ is something which needs more discussion and exploration because what does it mean to be a NZ born Chinese or a second generation NZ from the Pacific Islands or even a mixed ethnicity. Does NZ have it's own unique races or is it one big mix of ethnicities which make up NZ as a race in itself.*

*When I studied my undergraduate degree in [name of discipline] we looked at issues of race, identity, and ethnicity so that got me thinking about where do I really fit in, what does it mean to be a White NZ immigrant, am I just under the European bracket or the Westerner bracket or do I have my own culture and race and is it similar to others.*

*Also I'm interested in what it means to be disabled, does being disabled give you another culture or aspect to your race, and what does it mean to be a disabled Chinese or Māori is it different or similar.*

*I guess the more crossing of cultures and ethnicities there is the more race becomes a complex and perplexing thing to think about, and often people only discuss race in a negative way in terms of racism, but what about the positives of race, how identity and understanding are formed.*

**Lana:**

*I'm ¼ Samoan and the rest...just Pakeha/Palagi. As a 'half-caste', it's sometimes hard to feel like I totally fit in with other Samoans. I feel completely comfortable around my White friends, but whenever I hang out with a group of Islanders, I usually feel like I'm not 'Brown' enough. That's not to say that I don't feel like I have a connection with my Samoan side – I feel very passionate about issues within Pacific society in NZ, especially to do with inequality and racism. I think that because I am half-caste, I can see the ways which makes being 'White' and being 'Brown' so different. I've been told that I'm a 'plastic', somebody who is an islander but doesn't act like one. And I'm sure, I definitely don't act like your typical islander, and this becomes even more apparent when I'm in a group of them – I can laugh at their jokes, but I'll never truly be one of them because I guess I don't have the same lived experiences...I don't come from a poor family, I have a White mum, I don't go to a big Samoan church and I don't speak Samoan. Having Samoan ancestry isn't really enough. But the weird thing is that it is enough when you first meet people – it's kind of like an instant connection.*

*What do I think about race? Well I think that race is a cultural construct that can be anything at all – it just happens that we've attached meaning to skin colour. But I think that in recent times, as race becomes more of a taboo subject, race is still played out under the guise of other things, like 'nationality' and ethnicity and culture. It's kind of like the whole "racism without race" thing. It's not so much about people themselves being inferior or superior, but about their lifestyles or cultures being a point of difference which carries the same kind of meanings as 'race'. I think that my observations of how people think about other people, like Muslims or Arabs being terrorists or Māori all being lazy dole-bludgers...these kinds of stereotypes make me REALLY mad, maybe it's because I'm Samoan and part of a minority group and so can feel sympathy for that kind of thing.*

*I've never been subjected to racism (to my knowledge), so I can't say what it's like as a Samoan. So when my [relative] talks about people being racist and sometimes towards him, I find it hard to believe him because it's never been an issue for me. However, that's not to say that I haven't felt uncomfortable or out of place in terms of race issues etc., but there IS racism in NZ. So many people are so naïve about that, and usually White people, because they can't comprehend that people with darker skin have completely different experiences to them in the same places.*

**Luke:**

*I am a New Zealand European, White skin, Brown hair, Brown eyes. My experience of race relations has been different than most peoples. I spent the first 9 years of my life in [an Asian country] where I was very much a minority being White. I grew up in an Asian culture and slowly it became mine. In [year] my family returned to New Zealand so I could attend a New Zealand high school. This was a very confusing time of my life as I was used to being in a different culture. I found myself making friends with the asian students at the primary school I was attending. I then went to a high school which did not have much ethnic diversity. About 70% of the students were NZ European, and there was only a tiny percentage of Māori and Pacific Islanders. I now work at a high school of which 64% of its students are Māori or Polynesian. These different circumstances I have been in have given me a lot of different interactions with different races, as well as different views on race.*

**Zane:**

*I am a Christian and I guess this is a fundamental part of where I get my ideas of who I am and my outlook on life. I have been brought up in a Christian home and so the Christian message and values have been deeply engrained in me. What this really means is that I am accountable to a higher being who has a purpose for me and everyone on this earth. This gives me a sense of belonging and security. It makes me realise that I am fundamentally flawed but that I am loved (as is everyone else) despite this. I am very aware of these flaws and in particular I feel I am selfish, easily distracted, always seeking the next piece of excitement/adventure in my life and I anger easily. I can also be very judgemental. Part of what I believe or know is that all races are equal in the sight of God. Although on a shallower level I find it easier to talk to foreigners (non-Whites) as I find them less threatening. Maybe this is because I subconsciously feel superior because I am White. Although mostly in fact entirely all the people I hang out with are White New Zealanders. I am a practical person and I tend to think about things in a practical way – without necessarily paying too much attention to feelings and emotions. I love the outdoors, and activities such as snowboarding, boating, hunting, swimming. I constantly have the notion in the back of my mind that in modern society we have lost the ability to really experience life as it should be. We are removed from physical hardship and most men can't do the most simple/practical tasks. I feel that as a society we have forgotten how to appreciate the simple tasks in life such as preparing food and just*

generally BEING. We want everything instantly and get everything instantly so we don't get the satisfaction of working hard for something. I struggle to think of the last time I had to work hard to achieve something. Life has been served to me on a platter. Although I have never considered this of myself but in reality I am quite spoilt.

I have never really given much thought to race. I think of it as a PC topic that is overdone and people are overly sensitive about. I get frustrated at people who get upset by minor things as I feel they over analyse things and see intents that actually don't exist. I frequently use racially derogatory references in jest such as 'Nigger!' But they have no meaning behind them. I guess I find it humorous to use the words completely out of context. For example – "Nigger! I forgot my keys!"

Growing up I lived over the road from a dairy run by a Pakistani family and my experience has taught me that most dairies seem to be run by Indians and \$2 shops and takeaways are run by Asians. If I go into a dairy or takeaway shop and there is a White person at the counter I notice it and think of it as unusual.

### **Natalie:**

I am 23 years old, female and live in Auckland, NZ. I know this because of my recalling of time and my legal documents and a sense of geographic space and the elements of what defines this space. I am female because of my physical makeup, because I choose to associate myself with the gender binary. I live in Auckland but I plan to live elsewhere, I'm not sure whether my heart will stay here after I move.

Racially, my mother is Chinese, born in Guangzhou and moved to [name of city], NZ when she was an infant. My father is half Scottish half English, although he only answers vaguely on this topic and I can't be sure. Both are secretive and have little to no desire to tell me any more on this topic and I am currently making efforts to explore my racial roots more.

I am half ching-chong half gwee-moi. Both my Chinese and White sides have derogative names for the other and I've spent my earlier life in conflict trying to favour one side while the other is no around. Now, I try to celebrate my diversity as I know it has afforded me a lot of good things and know that it has allowed me to sympathise with the underspoken voices. It also annoys me when people do not fight their stereotypes and remain passive.

To be honest, I've already spent a lot of time thinking and writing about this prior...but it did make me realise that I've been deceptive and that there is now a

*way to be both cultures simultaneously – one cannot adopt a ‘bicultural’ voice at any one time but must play out both cultures singularly, one after the other.*

*I wonder if the researcher assumes that these questions are new to the subjects being interviewed. Indeed, I realise that race is a very unexplored topic on the public forum but I am hopeful that most people have experienced this topic in isolation previously and already have some logical opinions formed on the matter.*

## EMERGENT THEMES

### **Theme 1: Everyday living in a multicultural society**

One of the ways in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand for participants was simply in everyday living in a multicultural society. Participants seemed to be aware that New Zealand was becoming increasingly multicultural. They seemed to hold a number of different opinions on whether New Zealand as a country and New Zealanders were or were not managing/adapting to this change well.

#### **1a. NZ European dominance is eroding**

Participants were aware that New Zealand Europeans are becoming less dominant in New Zealand. Rachel’s diary and my interview with Timothy provide evidence of this awareness. Extracts are presented, explained, autoethnographically responded to, and given a preliminary analysis below. The first extract is from Rachel’s diary.

(Rachel’s diary):

*A friend of mine worked in a company where, over the years, she became one of the few NZ Europeans on the team in her company, the rest were of Asian origin. She was not invited out to lunch or social events because she was not part of the ‘Asian Club’ as they called it. Made her feel outcast.*

*I believe this racism towards NZ Europeans is something that is new with the arrival of more and more people of different cultural backgrounds to N.Z.*

*Racism towards all different cultures is definitely still around as well. (Rachel)*

In this extract, it seems that Rachel is concerned that racist practices are beginning to be directed towards New Zealand Europeans by minority groups such as ‘Asians’. There would have been a time in which this sort of

behaviour would not have been seen as exclusionary but rather simply status quo, because of the existence of a commonplace knowledge that any respectable New Zealand European would not want to be seen socialising with Asians. In any case, the important point is that Rachel uses this example to express her awareness of a shift in which ethnic group holds the power to include and exclude, signaling an awareness of the increasing influence of Asians and the decreasing influence of New Zealand Europeans.

*I was surprised to read of this encounter. I would not have imagined that Asians would have excluded the non-Asian employee maliciously. In my half-caste mind there are two possible explanations for Rachel's friend's accusation here. Either Rachel's friend actually wanted to socialize with her Asian colleagues and felt genuinely upset and convinced that they excluded her on the basis of her skin colour, or she actually did not want to socialize with them as she held them in contempt for being Asian, and framed this exclusionary behaviour as a further contemptible action and a further justification for her negative feelings.*

*There are also two possible explanations for the behavior of the Asian colleagues that I can surmise. The first would be that they were intentionally excluding her out of spite due to the colour of her skin. The second would be that they may have sensed their New Zealand European's contempt for Asians through subtle actions and concluded that she would not want to be invited out to lunch with the group of them.*

*In keeping with a desire to stick up for the goodness of the Asian minority (someone has to), amongst other influences, I would have assumed that the Asians were acting in accordance with the second line of reasoning: in shyness and consistency with a belief that the NZ European would not want to go out to lunch with a bunch of Asians (lesser people) anyway. Moreover, cultural inconsistencies with regard to social conventions and preferred topics of conversation may have made the social outings awkward. They would have felt that they were doing their European colleague a favour by not asking her. I am not as certain of the underlying intentions of and motivations for the New Zealand European's accusation of malicious exclusion based on racial grounds. It may have been either of the above explanations. Perhaps I am less willing to pick for the New Zealand European as I have a critical scholarly desire to pin her with the later explanation that paints her as a racist. Accusing a White person of being a racist is a tricky business. It is not the same as accusing a non-White person because with a non-White person their reputation is salvageable/crime acquitable based on the fact that they can be excused for racism because it is only done in retaliation for what has been done to them and their ancestors – they are simply leveling the playing field (an eye for an eye...). The racism of a White person, however, cannot be excused on the basis of past injustice – their crime stands as it is and cannot be pardoned. Moreover, this is my friend's friend I am talking about. I do not want to hurt my friend.*

The second extract that is included as an example of participants' awareness that New Zealand European dominance is eroding is also from Rachel's diary.

(Rachel's diary):

*I had my interview at Uni today – I am going to be studying [soon] and have to go through a process to see if I get in or not. At the interview I was with three other students. One was Kiwi, one Tongan and the other Korean. We had to sit in an area to get to know one another so we could introduce each other to the interview panel. The first question the Tongan student asked everyone was "so are any of you part Māori/Pacific Islander." I thought that was a really WEIRD question to ask straight off. I'm still not sure of her reasons as to why. In the*

*interview the student who was Tongan seemed to be encouraged because of her ethnicity – I guess I felt in the interview because I am a Kiwi European that I wasn't as special as two of the students because I didn't have a culture. This reminded me of another time at uni where in an intro to uni they said there was a 'Pasifika' group on campus for those of Pacific Island descent. They had a common room, hang out place. After the explanation of the Pasifika place the lecturer said that although it was called 'Pasifika Group' that the doors were open to all ethnicities. I felt a bit segregated – although the invitation was there to go along I simply wouldn't because it was marketed as a Pasifika group. I questioned – where isn't there a Kiwi group. I'm not sure that would go down as well as it could be viewed as racist. (Rachel)*

Both events in this narrative seem to illustrate a feeling that Pacific Islanders as an ethnic group are gaining advantage at the expense of the New Zealand European ethnic group. They seem to indicate awareness of a change in which New Zealand Europeans are no longer the unchallenged dominant majority and a fear of what could happen to New Zealand Europeans if other ethnic groups such as Pacific Islanders were allowed by New Zealand Europeans to cultivate too much privilege for themselves as a group, using colonial guilt and inequality as leverage. Following this line of thinking, New Zealand Europeans could potentially be disadvantaged to the point where New Zealand European interests were secondary to the interests of Pacific Islanders. Only a society in which Pacific Island voices were increasing in power and proportion could Pacific Islanders gain such an advantage. The first event in the above extract indicates a sense that the Māori/Pacific Island cohort is large enough and confident enough to foster pride in themselves, invalidate others, and command respect in the education industry, and when it boils down to a competition for a limited number of coveted places available in a teaching course, a preference for minority candidates based on their ethnicity rather than purely their skills and attributes will concern New Zealand European applicants.

*Good on the Tongan student for showing pride in her ethnicity in a traditionally non-Island institutional setting I say! If she had not done so then the default higher value of the White applicant (in societies eyes, White>Brown) may have influenced the interview process. Also, I am of the opinion that a Pasifika group on campus at a university is a good thing because of the same notion – that university space is White space, developed by and for White Westerners. Pacific Islanders are at a disadvantage from the moment they enter the university space. Rachel brought the Pasifika group experience up in our interview and I wanted to explain the reasoning behind such a group but I couldn't think of how best to in the confines of a one-on-one conversation with a friend. I did not want to argue in case it caused tension between us and influenced her future decisions to share her other points of view/experiences.*

The third extract is from Timothy's interview.

(Timothy's interview):

Timothy: "...a lot of the comments I get from Japanese people are especially those who just come here is they thought they were coming to a Western country to learn English? They didn't realise they were moving to Hong Kong."

Liz: (laughs)

Timothy: "That's because all their language schools are in town and if you walk down Queen St now it looks like you're in the middle of Hong Kong it's just, Singapore it's just Chinese faces everywhere like Asian faces everywhere..."

Liz: "mm. mm."

Timothy: "...Indian faces everywhere and I suppose that more has to do with, the New Zealand's problem with racial identification where the fact that New Zealander or Kiwi has up until now, always been promoted as being someone who's White."

In this extract Timothy indicates that both he and acquaintances of his have been surprised by the unexpected colour of the average face in New Zealand – they are not mostly White, often they are Chinese and Indian, especially in certain areas in Auckland such as Queen Street, the main street in Auckland’s CBD. He shows in this extract that he too is aware that the ethnic makeup of New Zealanders is changing, that a New Zealander is less likely to be White, and more likely to be Asian than before.

*I have witnessed many bouts of concern over Asian immigration, especially in the media. As I listened to Timothy speak, I felt like he was communicating the fear that many ‘ordinary’ New Zealanders harbour of Asians ‘taking over’ Auckland and even New Zealand. I confess I too am afraid of this happening – I like the fact that New Zealand is a White country and if it became an Asian country I expect that my preference for it as my comfortable and familiar and respectable homeland would be fundamentally challenged.*

### **1b. New Zealanders are managing this change well**

Participants had contrasting opinions on how well New Zealanders were managing this demographic transition. Some pointed to the comparative tolerance of New Zealanders towards non-mainstream cultures. They pointed out that New Zealand is not known for its racial problems. Moreover, race is generally not considered to be of central everyday significance as it is in some other countries such as the United States or South Africa or France. New Zealanders pride themselves on their love of multiculturalism and many have friends from other cultures and races. However, participants found evidence of widespread cultural insensitivity in New Zealand, which at times seemed to constitute a form of racism. It was suggested that there is a racist trend of unwillingness to learn about cultural others. Ignorance was thought to be widespread amongst New Zealanders who were considered to be quick to use essentialising racial stereotypes. New Zealand was considered backwards in that New Zealanders have been slow to include other skin colours in their conceptualisation of national identity. Descriptions of cross-cultural relationships suggested that cross-racial/cross-cultural contact does not necessarily break down negative racial stereotypes. Participants felt that some

cultural differences were insurmountable. The also felt that there was a lot of segregation in everyday spaces.

*i. New Zealand is doing diversity better than other countries...?*

The idea that other countries have and are experiencing far greater problems with multiculturalism than New Zealand emerged from the data. A way in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand was in seeing and registering what is going on racially and multiculturally in other national contexts through the globalised media system. An awareness of the process of globalisation as bringing diverse and incompatible peoples together, sometimes with less than ideal outcomes, was expressed. For example, Rachel talked about the burqa issue in France. Timothy brought up apartheid in South Africa. Heather and I talked in her interview about security concerns associated with increased global multiculturalism. I asked her if she thought of race as a problem. In her answer she expressed the view that it was not a problem, just a challenge, up until it becomes tied up with religion and 'if that religion says we must kill all the people that aren't us...that's not a challenge that's a problem they want to kill everyone that's not them'. For Heather it seemed that she was not personally aware of race as a problem until it had a role to play in genocide or genocidal intentions. Race for her was a challenge, but not a big problem in New Zealand.

Ameera and Luke both expressed the view that New Zealand was doing better than other countries, with regards to recognition of indignity and managing immigration. Rachel felt that New Zealand was doing its best to welcome other cultures. However, Lana questioned this and vented her frustration at people who feel that Māori should be simply grateful that the suppression tactics they experienced at the hands of New Zealand's colonisers were not as brutal as in other places. These views are outlined in the following extracts.

(Focus group 1):

Ameera: "that's what makes us different like we could be any European colony in the world, pretty much the way that we are, you know we could be, but what makes us different, is our indigenous culture and we, you know, there's we could be Australia or Canada or the US or whatever."

Heather: "We did make the best go out of all the colonies that tried to make it work."

Ameera: "We tried at least."

Heather: "We didn't just go we're gonna kill you all this is ours..."

(Luke's interview):

Luke: "I'm actually quite proud to live in a country where, people are welcome, to come..."

Liz: "...do you actually think that New Zealand is a welcoming country?"

Luke: "Ah I know that there are it is fairly hard to get in with regards to getting a visa and things like that, but I know also that it's a lot more welcoming than a lot of other countries,"

Liz: "Like what."

Luke: "Like Australia,"

Liz: (laughs)

Luke: "and I can see that it's become a lot more diverse, so, going on that I'm guessing that, people are, allowed to come?"

(Focus group 1):

Rachel: "I think we are trying our best as a country, to include all the cultures..."

Lana: "I don't know if we are. Just my opinion."

(Lana's interview):

Lana: "People always wanna compare New Zealand to Australia and the US? Because, I hear people say all the time, the Māori people shouldn't be complaining like look how bad the Aboriginals got it look how bad the Africans got it, and stuff like that but it's like, you cannot compare."

This suggests that there is a sense of satisfaction at the fact that New Zealand is known as a country that is doing and has done multiculturalism 'better' than other countries. But, as Lana questions, are we deluding ourselves? In comparing the experience of Māori with the experience of indigenous peoples

in other countries in terms of which country has the worst racism record we distract ourselves from our own issues. There are still racial issues in New Zealand and just because our history is supposedly less sordid does not mean that effort is not required to confront the forms of racial discrimination that can be found on our own soil.

*ii. New Zealanders pride themselves on their multiculturalism and many have friends from other races and cultures*

Several participants expressed a love of multiculturalism and their excitement at the plurality of sights, sounds, tastes etc. that different cultures bring to New Zealand. Yasmin and Rachel had both moved from predominantly White cities to more multicultural cities at points during their lives and both said they loved the diversity of the new cities they moved to. Yasmin said that when she first moved to the new city, she felt excited, like she was 'in a movie that had Brown people in it'. She sensed the 'exoticness' of it all, an indication of how people are brought up to understand 'other' cultures from afar. Rachel felt like she had become 'richer' as a person for having had different races around her. She felt that the presence of others had not taken anything away from her, instead, she had become 'better' for it. Zane and Luke both felt that a world without diversity would be boring. Heather and Ameera both appreciated the number of different types of food that was available.

### **1c. New Zealanders are not managing this change well**

*i. For NZ Europeans, race is not of everyday significance. However, for non-White individuals, it is.*

For White participants, race was not of everyday significance. Timothy found it very difficult to pick up on anything in his everyday life that made him think of race. Yasmin seemed to resort to asking others for their opinions as she felt unsure of her own opinions. However, while Zane mentioned that race had never been important for him as he was growing up, he found that when he focused on it, there were many incidences in which he could detect an intent somewhat akin to racism. Luke felt he would not have much to say on the topic, but in mulling it over he realised his own opinions and how he felt they were different to mainstream opinions. Heather had not really given much thought to race before, as she said one of the main things she got out of the exercise was the opportunity to think about her own race and perspectives on the topic. Rachel felt that over the reflective diary phase she was able to come to terms with the racism in some of her everyday thoughts that she had not previously been aware of. By and large, White participants

were not negatively affected by race in their daily lives, but came to see the ways in which non-White participants might be.

(Timothy's interview):

Timothy: "I don't think about race in my daily life so much."

(Focus group 2):

Zane: "race...wasn't overt while I was growing up, I guess we kind of just grew up I grew up in quite a White society...when to, you know White schools and that kinda thing, and...I guess I've just kinda grown up with the feeling that White is just neutral...I probably haven't given much attention to race...I've always thought of it as something people are really...touchy feely about and it's all there's a bit too much PC stuff around it..."

(Luke's interview):

Luke: "I sort of, just came from, this standpoint that I wouldn't have any views I wouldn't have much to offer, but nah it definitely surprised me that I had all this stuff in my head somewhere."

Non-White participants provided a sharp contrast to White participants. For them, race had been an issue that they had had been well aware of, sometimes painfully, throughout their lives.

(Lana's diary; Lana's interview):

*I feel very passionate about issues within Pacific society in NZ, especially to do with inequality and racism...We are lucky to live in NZ, I think it's just better than a lot of other places in terms of race issues etc, but there IS racism in NZ. So many people are so naïve about that, and usually White people, because they can't comprehend that people with darker skin have completely different experiences to them in the same places. (Lana)*

Lana: "...people who aren't White generally, can pick up on like race issues quicker? Just because...it's like around us everyday?"

(Natalie's interview):

Liz: "Is [race] a big part of your life or have you not really...thought about it that much."

Natalie: Yeah it's been huge. It's been so huge...um more huge than I admit probably. Like um, cos...like OK I'm not, emotionally bothered by it but I am sensitive. Like it drives my head crazy on an intellectual level not necessarily an emotional level it used to be.

(Liz in FG1; Liz in FG2):

Liz: "I am kind of mixed race or half caste...and that's often been a problem for me"

Liz: "race for me is a bit of a confusing thing...it's kinda been a bit of a point of contention for me during my life..."

(Ameera's interview):

Ameera: "race matters in my life on a...very much everyday basis...because...I look different...I know when people see me they see someone that is, different...my family...are about as New Zealand...as you could come...it takes a while for people to realise it?"

Race was not thought of as an urgent and top priority issue or frame in New Zealand compared with other countries and White participants said that it had not been a big issue for them over the course of their lives, but non-White participants felt differently. They were more aware of and more passionate about discussing race as race had often impacted their lives and they had had to wrestle with racism and racial tensions in the past<sup>13</sup>. Their experiences will be discussed to a greater extent under theme seven, 'Race matters to me because I look different.'

*ii. Older New Zealanders are culturally insensitive*

Participants noted a trend of cultural insensitivity in New Zealand, and a general patronising unwillingness to respect and learn about the cultures of racial 'others'. In his diary, Timothy recounted the performances of an

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<sup>13</sup> The shared experiences of non-White participants will be discussed further in Theme 7: "Race matters to me because I look different".

individual that he observed during the diary phase that led him to this conclusion:

(Timothy's diary):

*A member of the [intercultural] council of which I am a member, decided to have spot prizes at our final gathering for the year. I agreed along with everyone else that this would be good.*

*Unfortunately, the prizes this lady chose would only be considered good or funny in a rest home, where people of her generation would find them hilarious. Everyone else, in particular the Japanese at the event were shocked and insulted. Toilet paper and shower caps are NOT fun. (Timothy)*

*The same lady from the other night really does not get it. She refuses to learn people's names or show proper respect to others and just tries to treat everyone as a child. This is common amongst Kiwis of her generation, I've found.*

*She insists on volunteering on the [intercultural] council, yet doesn't speak Japanese or even know the first thing about Japan. And the way in which she treats Japanese is insulting and makes me embarrassed to be a Kiwi.*

*The old "she'll be alright" attitude is not universally accepted. It's no wonder a lot of other cultures/countries find us backwards and uncultured, or as the Aussies put it, "a country of sheep shaggers". (Timothy)*

These incidents suggest not only that cultural insensitivity can be observed in New Zealand, but also that Timothy was aware of how the outdated mentality of the older generations clashed with the new, culturally sensitive mentality of the younger generations. In observing this lady, Timothy picked up on a patronising attitude that older White New Zealanders have towards people of different cultures: a subconscious sense of superiority over them, that jarred with his more cosmopolitan, multicultural education and experience which told him that this attitude was wrong and moreover showed an ignorance and lack of propriety that repulsed him/'got on his nerves', compounded or perhaps pre-framed by his awareness of the label 'sheep shagger', a term applied to New Zealanders to signify their backwards ways. The performance of the second individual develops his idea that older White New Zealanders are culturally insensitive into the idea that older White New Zealanders are somewhat culturally unrefined and unsophisticated, and make offensive cultural blunders to which they are completely oblivious.

*As an aside, “Culture’ seems to have been used in two ways here – culture as a set of ways that a group of people share, and culture (see ‘uncultured’ in the text) meaning refined or civilized. Natalie also seemed to refer to ‘uncultured’ people with disdain in a disapproval of her reasoning for her family’s lack of interest in their own history. Culture has two reference points. It is both something that non-White or ‘ethnic’ people have and that needs to be tolerated/accommodated/tiptoeed around, and a set of attitudes and aesthetic appreciations that only educated Western elite have, that they turn up their noses at others for not having. Cultured people look down upon ‘ethnic’ cultures. This second meaning of culture seems a lot like Fanon’s (1952) ‘cultural racism’...*

*iii. NZ Europeans be can unwilling to acknowledge non-White cultures and non-White disadvantage*

Participants noted a culture of unwillingness to learn about and incorporate non-mainstream cultures, both in private and public forums. Luke, in his diary, spent time exploring the ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to education in New Zealand, which, he felt, was not working for Māori and Pacific Island students. As a secondary school teacher, he encountered this form of racism in his everyday work at a largely Māori and Pacific Island school in Auckland. In his reasoning as to why this approach might be sustained unfairly in schools, two of his diary entries talked about the fear of racism and being labeled a racist leading to what he described as a ‘cultural’ numbness, defined as ‘when people are so afraid of being racist that they treat all races and cultures exactly the same.’ His main conclusion in the diary seemed to be that New Zealanders needed to appreciate and take time to learn about different cultures to working towards solving the personal and structural problems we have with difference. Like other participants, Luke was attributing a lack of understanding of non-mainstream cultures in New Zealand to the fear of looking racist.

*By burying our heads in the sand, we can't step on anyone's toes.*

Ameera felt that it was particularly 'Pakeha males' who lacked understanding and discredited the feelings of minorities, particularly in an online environment:

(Focus group 1):

Ameera: "[Pakeha males are] just like race doesn't matter, it just matters, what you do with your life...it's like, well you can say that, because it doesn't for you?...because the world is constructed...for you and around you...People like me, are constantly, you know, learning how to, you know adapt into this world while holding on as much as we can, to who we are. But, [we] can't...and [we're] very conscious of that but you can unconsciously just go round the world and...operate in the world"

A comment Timothy made in the second focus group, could be construed as a potential reason for this culture of insensitivity. When I asked the participants whether they thought race was outdated, Timothy answered thus:

(Focus group 2):

Timothy: "Race is really just something for the census, books so it's, not, it's outdated in a way but it's more that it just has, the relevancy of it has just disappeared I mean before it kinda meant if you were this race you spoke this language and followed this religion and you ate this food, but that's like a hundred and fifty years ago. Nowadays everyone kind of especially in New Zealand we all speak English and we all pretty much eat the same food."

*Personally, I feel that this belief is a bit simplistic. In my mind, living according to this assumption and adopting the strategy of pushing pressures to integrate the cultures of minorities and Others out of our minds because in fifty years time or so we'll all be Westernized anyway may contribute to tension, discord, and possibly cultural/ethnic schisms, depending of course on how attached people remain to their cultural and ethnic uniqueness. Additionally I think that these age-old tried and true ways of life are replete with wisdoms that may very well come in handy in our future and the future of future generations. But perhaps this is all just based on a sense of nostalgia...*

Another reason for unwillingness to reach out to other cultures was voiced by Zane in his interview. He considered making an effort to reach out to other cultures to be something that many New Zealanders did not have the time or energy or inclination for.

(Zane's interview):

Liz: "Do you see [actively trying to build relationships with people of different cultures] as your responsibility?"

Zane: "No. I think it's because I recognise it would take a lot of energy and effort. Because until you get to that point where you're loving their culture it's, it's probably, it's quite hard work."

*iv. New Zealand is backwards (racially deluded)*

A trend of 'backwards-ness' emerged from the data in that participants observed ways in which New Zealand and New Zealanders displayed a kind of cultural 'immaturity'. For Rachel and Zane, New Zealanders seemed to possess a dated notion of what ethnicities New Zealanders are. For example, Rachel noted that there were no Kiwi Asians on New Zealand's longstanding and well-known television soap opera series *Shortland Street* and if there was an Asian, they "...can't talk. They have this really Asian accent".

Zane noticed print and television advertisements in which the models were all White. He wondered whether a) it was because New Zealand is majority White, b) having another ethnicity in the catalogue would put people off the clothing, or c) he was over thinking it and it was just a coincidence. In my diary I also wondered about b): whether having non-White people in positions of sale puts people off the product, because everyone believes that White equals good, powerful and desirable. After Rachel had told me about her *Shortland Street* contentions Liz hypothesised out loud that it could be because having Asians on the show would mean the ratings would go down. She could see that this might be a possibility.

Zane also noticed the use of mock Asian accents in advertisements and wrote about it in his diary:

(Zane's diary):

*It is interesting how society seems to find a lot of humour in Asian accents. Instances that spring to my mind are the "Spray and walk away" ads and also a radio ad for "Wok Noodle" in Mt Eden. I think it is popular for advertising because it sticks in our minds so much. The "Wok noodle" ad is probably the most vivid radio ad I can remember at the moment. Obviously advertisers pick up on this and that is why they do it. They exploit races because they know it sticks.*  
(Zane)

We talked about this 'imitative mockery' in the second focus group. The explanations we came up with as to the purpose of making fun of Asian accents were that it reinforces stereotypes and reinforces us feeling above them. In my thinking, these acts: reduce Asians to comic entertainment; paint them as unintelligent; and reassure 'us', the dominant group that they do not pose a threat. I am sure that these degrading characterisations are not consistent with how the growing number of Asians in New Zealand visualise themselves and how they would like to be viewed. In persisting with these types of depictions the dominant group could be cultivating and reinforcing a rift between New Zealand's majority and minority ethnic/cultural communities.

From the point of view of someone who had been a part of the 'creative' processes behind this trend of minority "misrepresentation" in the television and film and advertising industries, Natalie wrote about her problems with the endorsement and encouragement of those who are willing to portray crude Asian stereotypes in the performing arts industry. She vented her frustrations with the limited funding for non-comical and non-stereotypical,

non-degrading representations of 'being Asian' in New Zealand. Natalie explains this in the following narrative:

(Natalie's diary):

*I have been asked so many times to write about my race for theatre and poetry. I know exactly who to call on if I wanted an outlet for this kind of work. But most of the time I'm in a room full of 'Brown' skin and the reason for telling the stories is motivated by funding opportunities provided by Government organisations and narrow minded audiences who still find the Naked Samoans hilarious.*

*I don't want to joke about squinty eyes and being teased for being good at maths – these are comfortable, generic Asian stereotypes which are completely irrelevant to me! But they are accessible and commonly understood conventions of Asian humour and before we can subvert the racial profiles we're still at that state where all we can do is laugh at ourselves. (Natalie)*

Natalie follows by this by talking about her 'diverse looking bone structure' and a play she is writing in which she modulates between 'racial personae'. She ends the diary entry and her diary with a wish for a more continuous rather than discrete spectrum in not just race but 'language, culture, physicalisation, gravity, medium'; race seems to matter to her because it divides instead of combines, separates instead of bringing together, forces which are negative in her thinking. For Natalie, we rely too much on established labels instead of creating new spaces and identities. Her desire is for us to move beyond our segregated-ness into a new, productive, harmonious racial project.

*Her awareness of the delusionary simplicity of New Zealanders' constructions of difference seems to me to be evident.*

*iv. New Zealanders are ignorant*

Another way in which a lack of cross-cultural understanding was noticed by participants was through everyday high profile ignorant-sounding use of simplistic stereotypes. Lana and Ameera referred to and expressed differing views on the speech acts of prominent politicians in which they had incorporated negative stereotypes about groups in the lead up to the national parliamentary elections. Lana wrote in her diary about watching John Banks,

on national television, saying that ‘the root cause of law and order is young Māori and Polynesian men in South Auckland being paid the dole to sit in front of the T.V. watching pornography and smoking marijuana while they’re planning to come through our windows’. She referred to this incident in a way that indicated her hurt and anger about it. Ameera raised the issue of Banks’ comments in the first focus group and went on to say that it was Prime Minister John Key’s tacit agreement to John Banks’ statements that had really shocked and hurt her.

(Focus group 1):

Ameera: “I found that, especially the John Banks stuff,”

Lana: “Yes!”

Ameera: “That was huge for me all I kept thinking about for one week was John Banks John Banks John Banks John Banks John Banks and,”

Lana: “Like what a complete idiot he is?”

Ameera: “Well how offensive it is that he’s going to be associate minister of education and he’s such a racist man, and I felt I felt very emotionally hurt by the fact that people could see all that, then vote him,”

Lana: “I know.”

Ameera: “and then still vote for him like I felt very, like personally, like,”

Liz: “...attacked.”

Ameera: “Yeah it’s it’s like how can how could people do that,”

Lana: “But you know what I found was really interesting about that was he’s voicing these thoughts but really, I think a lot of people are thinking them...he’s not the only one he’s just the famous one who’s saying it.”

Ameera: “...and also the tacit approval of the prime minister, to him? And you know he tacitly approved the comment by, by um, and he’s just so calm and casual about it all, and,”

Lana: “He never even challenged it...”

...

Ameera: "...he kinda just sat there and he kind of laughed it off...for me, that was really hurtful..that, he wouldn't in that circumstance, stand up and challenge that? And and because I don't think he could do it with conviction..."

*I was wondering the other day about how the presence of someone like me, a half-caste, in parliament would work out. I wonder if someone like me would be seen as a representative for the Asian community when I could actually not represent them at all. It seems likely that a half-caste would not stand a good chance in a national election as their identify would confuse voters. Reductionist ethnic stereotypes seem to be frequently employed in political circles and forums in New Zealand.*

Another incident of high profile ignorance that was discussed in the first focus group was the Paul Henry saga, which was introduced by Ameera. In an interview with the Prime Minister about the end of one Governor General's term and the appointment by the Prime Minister of a new one, Henry asked, "Are you going to chose someone who looks like a New Zealander this time?" reflecting a view that a New Zealander does not look (and act) like a Fijian Indian, as the previous Governor General did. This view was insensitive to many Fijian Indians and other New Zealanders who do not carry the appearance of the ethnic European majority as it put them in an outsider position, suggesting that a real and authentic New Zealander was essentially White. The question revealed Henry as an ignorant and arrogant man, obviously uninformed of or unacquainted with the ethnic diversity within the label 'New Zealander' and of how his words would offend the growing number of non-White New Zealanders all around the country.

This incident could be passed off as one man's ignorance, but Ameera had met a lady at an airport who endorsed Paul and supported his question:

(Focus group 1):

Ameera: "The lady that I was arguing with, she was half Asian, and she said to me well I'm Asian but you know I'm I don't think that Paul Henry is racist and I have the right to say that because I'm from, I'm not

completely White...I thought she was quite racist...She clapped when he came on, the TV and I was like I can't believe you just clapped because he's a really racist man...she was like I just think he said what needed to be said. I got really angry about this and I said made me feel you know, like I was really unwelcome in New Zealand and, it basically came down to her saying to me that, well the fact that you feel uncomfortable is your problem, and you must feel very insecure in your position in New Zealand if you feel offended...stop crying race cos it's not an issue and, your offence is to do with your insecurities and you just need to deal with that..."

*But even I was surprised when I found out the governor general was a Fijian Indian. Wasn't he just saying what everyone was thinking but in the wrong way at/in an inconsiderate time/place? The discussion it resulted in around who can be a New Zealander was good for New Zealanders as it woke them up to the fact that a New Zealander may no longer be a White European. By painting himself as an ignorant idiot, was Paul doing us a favour?*

Clearly, race is significant for individuals in New Zealand in everyday reported speech acts of ignorance by prominent figures that may be indicative of a more general, Kiwi inclination towards simplistic stereotypes.

*v. Some cultural differences are insurmountable*

In their diaries, Heather, Yasmin, and Timothy wrote of the limits of understanding of other cultures that comes with being raised in a particular cultural position yourself. Heather wrote about not being able to understand how a friend of hers could not celebrate Diwali ('the Hindi equivalent to Christmas') because a relative had died. She described feeling "sorry for my friend that she has such a bleak outlook towards death and that her culture requires somber grieving". She compares her friend's response to death with her own response to and beliefs around a friend's death – that he is still alive in heaven, just dead on earth. She ends with:

(Heather's diary):

*I guess it makes me really think that although if you asked me I would consider myself very understanding and open to different races and how they go about living their lives, but I guess when it comes to the very nitty gritty of life's big questions I just can't comprehend how and why they chose to believe some things...I guess it really is impossible to truly understand or be open to all races especially when it comes to core beliefs and ways of thinking. (Heather)*

In this excerpt, Heather muses that on some things she will never fully be able to understand another's point of view.

Timothy was another participant who mentioned his inability to completely come round to the point of view of an 'other', even after living in their 'territory' for an extended period. In his interview, he talked about his experiences living in Japan:

(Timothy's interview):

Timothy: "...when I was in Japan I had to learn,...to adapt to a lot of things which...I initially thought were culturally insane and stupid like why the hell are we doing this type of thing, but after a time after a long time of being and actually looking into how they...why they...the reasons that they're doing it, it actually became less...confusing to me and more normal?...[but] there are certain things still which even though I understand why the Japanese do them I just don't agree with it. Or I find them, idiotic, but that's my own point of view and I'm sure there's plenty of things which they assume the same for my culture..."

Timothy accepts and tolerates the point of view of others but cannot perceive the world from the point of view of someone who has been socialised in the Japanese way their whole life. He cannot get beyond his own, primary perspective.

Yasmin alludes to this too when she talks about not feeling bad that she "would have trouble differentiating between a Korean and a Chinese person" because she "actually think[s] there is less variation in appearance between Asian people". She believes that because of the different colours of hair and eyes in European people, they are much easier to distinguish, but allows that Asian people might think that all European people look the same too, showing her understanding that different people see the world from completely different perspectives, and privilege different things about appearance, because of their upbringing. For Yasmin, like Heather, race in everyday life is about limits of socialised understanding.

Luke stated in his diary that he felt that New Zealanders (*whoever they are*) needed to make an effort to learn about other cultures. One way in which he thought that this could be achieved would be through cross-cultural relationships. Yasmin, Rachel and Heather all mentioned their non-White friends in their diaries. Rachel felt that being friends and interacting with people of other races had helped her in two ways: to be able to see them for who they are not what race they are, and to understand that some cultural practices were not wrong, they were just different. However, Yasmin and Heather both talked about how they could not understand their friends of different ethnicities sometimes. I have already detailed Heather's experience. Yasmin recounted incidents when her friend had been acting in a way that she thought was rude towards her own parents. Yasmin had confronted her friend about it and her friend had just brushed it off as a cultural thing. Yasmin felt unsure about this use of culture as an excuse, which could be understood in two ways: as Yasmin feeling that her sense of the way you should treat your parents should be applied across all families, or that her friend was just using culture as an excuse.

Similarly, Timothy mentioned that when he lived in Japan, he would sometimes use the 'gaijin' or foreigner card to play dumb and get out of doing cultural things he did not want to do. Likewise, Japanese would excuse themselves from explaining things to Timothy by using the excuse of Japanese culture being too difficult for him to understand. He felt that this was a 'cheapman's way of getting out of doing something', 'taking the easy way out of an argument', and 'painting everyone from that region with the same brush'. He felt as though the culture card was out of date now that people were more and more global in culture – 'you find people in New Zealand dress the same as people in Japan dress the same as people in South America'. I asked Luke whether working at a school with so many Pacific Islanders had broken down commonly held stereotypes about Pacific Islanders such as my stereotypical understanding that they are loud, funny, lazy and criminal. Luke implied that these stereotypes still held for him, however he had come to understand the reasons for them (such as a lack of support from parents at home) and had become more sympathetic to their disadvantaged plight.

*vi. Informal segregation might be extensive*

Another way in which the negotiation of increasing multiculturalism played out and was manifested in participant's everyday lives was through encountering, an awareness of and responding to everyday patterns of segregation. Schools, travel agencies, the rental market, job prospects and

jobs, social and community groups, socio-economic group, suburbs, malls and politics were perceived by participants as informally but noticeably segregated. Choosing where to locate yourself in each of these areas was influenced by one's race and ethnic group, and people were aware of which ethnic group 'looked right' in each location. For example, Lana was aware of who was in what mall and when she brought this up in the first focus group, the other participants also became aware of this trend. Ameera told us in her focus group that in deciding where to send her to school, her mum watched the kids from the local school walking home each day to judge whether these were the types of kids that she would want Ameera to undergo her secondary education with. Because they were mainly Pacific kids, Ameera said, her mum made the decision not to send her to the local public school as she herself had felt disadvantaged in going to a predominantly non-White school. Race was significant to her because predominantly 'White schools' are seen as the good schools to go to.

Other ways in which participants noticed racial segregation were Rachel going to a church and realising that her and her husband were the only White people there amongst a sea of Indians, me noting that my local church was overwhelmingly White in a suburb with a large Asian population, Luke hearing his landlord talk about his aversion to Pacific Island and Indian families living in his rental properties because of their smelly, dirty, messy lifestyles, Timothy and Zane noticing White people in non-White jobs (a White taxi driver who should have been Indian or African, and a White corner shop server who should have been Asian). Lana described this phenomenon as 'birds of a feather flock together'.

Often, participants realised the preconceptions they had about segregation through their surprise at seeing someone out of place. The knowledge that the Auckland suburb of Howick ("Chowick") and the Christchurch suburb of Avonhead ("Asianhead") were full of Asians, and that there were significant clusters of Koreans and South Africans on Auckland's North Shore as well as Pacific Islanders in South Auckland, was of an everyday, taken-for-granted nature. Zane became aware that at work, all the White guys sat on one table to eat their lunch while the non-White guys sat on the other "not as cool" table. Participants were aware of which ethnic groups supported particular political parties. It seems that segregation is often depicted verbally in ethnic terms, but noticed visually by skin colour, a racial not ethnic descriptor.

### **Concluding notes for theme one**

The first theme on how race was manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand for my participants was simply in 'Everyday living in a multicultural society'. Participants seemed to be aware that New

Zealand was becoming increasingly multicultural, and that intercultural encounters in everyday life present a challenge. Everyday ethnic or cultural tensions and clashes due to increasing multiculturalism seemed to be one of the ways in which race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. Participants seemed to hold a number of different opinions on whether New Zealand as a country and New Zealanders as individuals were or were not managing/adapting to this change well. In the end, the general feeling was that that New Zealanders are not managing as well as they think they are, and that race and racism has something to do with it.

## **Theme 2: References to ‘racisms’ past**

This next theme that answers the question of how race is manifested in everyday communication interactions focuses on the everyday continuing influence and awareness of past racist ideologies or past ‘racisms’ such as ‘colonisation’. The titles of the four subthemes identified are: “Ethnic inequality and redistribution”, “Crying race”, “Old racist attitudes”, and “The declining significance of race”.

### **2a. Ethnic inequality and redistribution**

Participants were aware of ethnic inequality as a product of past racisms. Luke talked about educational inequality, Lana talked about economic inequality, Natalie pointed out institutional discrimination in the judicial system. In focus group one we talked about inequality in employment, and also inequality in housing. Opinions around inequality reduction measures were also found in the data, specifically with regards to efforts to include Māori cultural practices in official ceremonies, and affirmative action measures aimed at Māori and Pacific Island students, which have been implemented in response to their marked presence in categories of disadvantage. Inferences were made to the need to repair colonial damage/dismantle White privilege in these discussions. In the first focus group, the topic of the inclusion of such elements as the Māori powhiri (a traditional welcoming ceremony) at important national events was discussed. Rachel, Ameera and Lana all felt passionately positive about the inclusion of Māori culture, with Rachel going so far as to say that it made her FEEL Māori.

Participants expressed a range of negative reactions to the redistribution of resource-based power towards Māori. Timothy’s reading of an article about the Māori party issuing what he described as ‘hate speech’ that would be illegal in most countries, led him to disclose a prediction that if Māori continued to receive the political privileges (the ability to form their own parties based on ethnic/racial grounds and say whatever they liked about

other ethnic groups) they were accustomed to, a Māori-run apartheid would result. Natalie and Timothy, in focus group two, expressed opposition to race-based educational scholarships offered to Māori and Pacific Islanders. Rachel, in her interview expressed the opinion that

(Rachel's interview):

Rachel: "we cotton wool certain cultures you know oh it's ok it's ok here's all this money sorry but that kinda makes me a wee bit angry...what's going to happen to my kids and their kids who are White...twenty years down the track, I know it's not very pc but are we the ones gonna be losing out..."

Tentative and more certain views were expressed around the idea that if Māori worked harder they would be just as successful as non-Māori, the underlying message being that resource redistribution was unfair and that a meritocratic system should govern socio-economic outcomes. Rachel told a story about a Māori manager of a New World who would not give his family money when they asked for it but instead encouraged them to work hard and succeed too. Yasmin talked about how it was up to the disadvantaged ethnic groups to break their chains of poverty.

*This reminds me of a Niuean's high-school speech that was widely reported on in 2012. In a nutshell, I interpreted the main message of the speech as an encouragement for Pacific Islanders to break away from their uninspiring stereotypes, work hard, and become successful in White man's terms, particularly in their careers. I couldn't decide whether this was a good or a bad thing. Is it giving in to the dominant system or is it the only way to achieve a non-racially divided society? From a critical vantage point I agree with the first interpretation, but practically, I can see the advantages of the second perspective. I fluctuate between the perspectives on resource redistribution outlined above. I was dining with an older couple the other day – they were talking about the Māori and how annoying they were to keep demanding money and that for every 1 dollar they pay in tax they get 4 back in government assistance. I felt upset about this but could totally understand it at the same time. I know not to think like this, but I don't know know it, because I haven't heard the Māori side of the story from a Māori and actually empathized with it.*

*One evening I was discussing the restoration of lands taken unfairly by Pakeha to Māori with a White acquaintance. Their opinion seemed to be that you can't just give land back even if it was unjustly acquired and that Māori should get over it and move on. I was surprised and upset at this opinion, especially as it came from such a generous and genuinely kind person, but once it was explained I found myself agreeing with it, even though I felt I should try to stick up for Māori and their grievances. It does seem entirely plausible to me that if Māori just got stuck into making a contribution to society in the way that society thinks that a good citizen should, then they would reap the benefits that the system distributes, but perhaps this is only because this is the dominant viewpoint that I have heard so many more times than I have heard the views of the dominated. The only thing stopping me from thinking this is my head knowledge that Māori have fewer opportunities in life and are disadvantaged, and my limited and partial experience with racial/cultural discrimination. I swing from one extreme to the other, although I am inclined to side with the Māori underdog, as long as my chances are not directly affected. But even if they were, I think would still try to convince myself that because of my immense past privileges, it is only fair that it is my turn to be disadvantaged. I realize that this is easier said than done, especially if the chances of one's offspring are at stake.*

*There seems to be a perception that anyone fighting for Māori rights is just a crazy lunatic stuck in the past. Maybe the Māori renaissance was not a good thing because thought it's making people proud to be Māori, it is placing them and encouraging them to thrive in a completely different system from the mainstream. By only knowing how to operate outside of mainstream systems they cannot actually understand and work the mainstream system in Māori favour. Their energies are going into projects that are part of a completely different conceptual universe, on a completely different tangent, and their efforts will never influence the decisions they want to influence. Could encouraging Māori autonomy position them in a more vulnerable place than ever by removing their opportunity to learn how to function in and negotiate mainstream environments?*

However, there were other views on symbolic and resource-based redistribution. Heather raised the idea that she sometimes felt as though by including Māori elements officials were just 'ticking a box'. The other participants responded dismissively of Heather's idea.

*I felt understood what she meant. We enjoy this symbolic inclusion because it gives us a sense of what makes us different to the rest of the world and makes us feel as though we are being good at celebrating diversity and respecting our indigenous roots. But it does sometimes seem as though these Māori elements serve only the purpose of providing some ceremonial pomp and circumstance and are not actually a part of the important proceedings and decision making processes – they could be done without. They pacify Māori and make them feel included but really, they are not. Despite participants being for and proud of Māori culture being spotlighted, there is a sense that the efforts made to include Māori and Māori culture are superficial and purely for show. Māori and Māori culture seem to be understood as standing in the way of progress and therefore need to be compartmentalized and controlled by the Western majority culture. Māori are simply pacified. The reason that New Zealand Europeans can feel positive about symbolic redistribution of power in the form of the inclusion of Māori cultural elements in official events is because they do not change anything about the system. They do not threaten the control and position that New Zealand Europeans have over the parts of the event that really matter.*

In terms of resource-based redistribution, some participants felt uncertain that allocating unmerited material resources to disadvantaged ethnic groups was unfair. Participants alluded to the unevenness of the distribution of resources amongst ethnic groups, expressing the opinion that ethnic inequality was not simply the result of an un-biased meritocratic system. Lana's experiences with seeing poverty led her to link certain ethnic groups (Māori and Pacific Islanders or 'Brown' people) and poverty and she felt passionately that these groups were not scoring low on well-being indicators due to their own deficiencies. In response to this, Ameera explained that it was because the government deliberately selected unskilled cheap labour when the big Pacific migration happened. Yasmin seemed to be torn between the positives and negatives of offering scholarships specifically for Māori and Pacific Islanders in amongst a discussion her colleagues were having on the subject. In the second focus group she attempted an argument in favour of affirmative action measures for ethnic groups by likening them to scholarships for deaf people, but was then persuaded by Timothy to agree with the stance that scholarships should be based on more socio-economic grounds. Her uncertainty was evident.

Luke, through his experiences in interactions with Māori and Pacific Island youth in his job as a teacher, felt that they were disadvantaged by the structure and content of the education system itself, which was biased in

favour of New Zealand European and Asian students. The solution he proposed, however, was to work harder towards the inclusion and appreciation of Māori and Pacific Island cultures in education standards. The specific measure he advocated was the introduction of project-based teaching, in which a practical project, such as the building of a waka (a traditional Pacific paddle boat) would be carried out over a certain timeframe, and would incorporate a number of subjects such as art, mathematics, technology, history, and physics. His recommendation involved altering the institution to accommodate the cultures of ethnic groups who experience societal disadvantage, as opposed to simply giving them material handouts.

*I really liked Luke's suggestion and so did a number of other participants when he raised it in the first focus group. It is a radical solution as it involves altering and removing bias from a biased system, and one of the most crucial institutional systems in the development of a young person. If affirmative action resources were reallocated towards these sorts of ideas I think it would result in a more ethnically equal society. This predicted outcome is based on the idea that all ethnic groups are equally as able when it comes to learning, it is just that the system favours the cultural capital of some groups over others.*

*However, Ameera's explanation as to why Pacific Islanders are found at the low end of many social spectrums (the skill-levels of Pacific Islanders that were introduced to New Zealand society during the Pacific migration of the 1970s were low) haunts me and makes me wonder whether the reason members of New Zealand's Pacific Island community do so badly at school and in other social ranking systems is because they are a segment of Pacific island society whose brain mechanisms are not their strength. Western societies such as the one in New Zealand reward intelligence above all other virtues as intelligent individuals can make the greatest contribution to the never-ending Western project of progress. Less valuable is the contribution of those for whom braininess is not their forte. This could be a logical explanation as to why the Pacific Island community is one of the least 'successful' ethnic communities in New Zealand. Good brain functioning, in Western society, seems to equal success in life and determines one's social value.*

## 2b. Crying race

Another set of incidents that participants notice were interactions in which individuals ‘cried race’ or ‘played the race card’, meaning they used their racial disadvantage to their advantage. Non-Whites seemingly made efforts to shame White people into either get things or get out of things, making them feel guilty for the crimes of their ancestors. The main incident discussed was a news story that a famous Pacific Island rap artist, Scribe, had accused Wellington police of racism when they arrested him for drunk and disorderly behavior one night. My immediate interpretation as well as Rachel’s (she had read the same article) was that Scribe was over-attributing the actions of others to racism, when it was more likely that he actually was arrested for drunk and disorderly behavior.

*It is interesting how the media can get us to believe certain things. For all we know, having heard about it second hand, the police were actually being racist. Moreover, are we more inclined to think that Scribe was just ‘crying race’ because we are more likely to believe that a Pacific Islander could be drunk and disorderly?*

Upon discussion of this reported event in the focus group, I questioned who we were to say Scribe was simply crying race when there probably are people out there who have had similar experiences and would sympathise with him. Ameera extended this, pointing out that “I guess I’ll never know what it’s like to be a Pacific Island male out on the town”, going on to say that for that reason, she always tried to reserve judgment on such situations. But, as I expressed in the focus group, I also felt as though Scribe might be letting people down who cry race when it really matters, by over-attributing the behavior of the police in question to racist motives. Timothy pointed out and questioned the assumption he thought we were making that the policemen who arrested Scribe were White, stating that the New Zealand police force was one of the most diverse in the world so they couldn’t be racist. He then immediately pointed out the hole in his argument, saying that actually, one *could* be racist to one’s own kind. In short, some participants expressed a frustration with non-White people who cried race and others were more sympathetic as to why they might do so.

*A while ago I went to a stand-up comedy show. There were some jokes around race and other crude things and I had to laugh because females were delivering the show and I had to show support for my gender at the expense of my other allegiances. Today I had a moment of thinking that nobody thinks less of me because of my skin colour and I shouldn't be so sensitive and silly about it. There are more important things than worrying about how certain ignorant people act towards me. However I did wonder whether if it's mildly bad for me, then it's way worse for some others, especially those with cultural as well as racial visible signifiers. Whilst travelling I have been particularly aware of how I am being treated as many of the people I come into contact with have never met me before. It seems that once you start interacting with them, they realise you're just like them (Westernised) anyway. Lots of interesting stuff goes on in the first few seconds of interacting with someone.*

Some participants felt that there was building resentment amongst White New Zealanders towards the race card being used. They were sick of having to be PC and slightly angry at being made to feel guilty for crimes they did not commit. They felt that oversensitive minority individuals read racism into everything. This trend was identified by Zane and Yasmin. This attitude could be categorised as invalidation: invalidating the feeling of non-Whites that race still matters. White participants felt that they were not personally responsible for past injustice, their ancestors were, and they themselves should not have to make sacrifices to assist the descendants of those that may or may not still be disadvantaged by colonial practices.

### **2c. Old racist attitudes**

Another way in which our racist past is referenced in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand is through the surfacing of old racist attitudes. Yasmin talked about how at her previous place of work in a hospital some of the dementia patients would yell out racist abuse at the non-White caregivers. Another example of old racist attitudes was in Rachel's story of an event at a relative's house. I recount the exchange here:

(Rachel's interview):

Rachel: "...my grandparents actually live in [an Auckland suburb where many Asians live]... my grandma still does complain a whole heap about, Asian people [living there] and, I think I've said this to you before but, I was once round at her house and my cousin's grandma, was there as well,

and my grandma's neighbours who are, Polynesian? And my cousin's grandma said, that there'd been a study in some university and in the paper they'd reported that Black-skinned people had smaller brains than White people and it's actually scientific,"

Liz: "How many years ago was this?"

Rachel: "Oh seriously about 3 years ago?"

Liz: I think that study was actually done like, a hundred years ago"

Rachel: "She was like, adamant that she'd just read it in the paper and that, she,"

Liz: "She said that in front of them? What did they do?"

Rachel: "I was so embarrassed...I wanted to like, apologise...they just like looked down at the floor and looked, really angry, like, they couldn't say anything..."

It seems that the belief that Black-skinned people have smaller brains than White people may still be around in New Zealand, perhaps in the older generation who grew up with such propaganda. I cannot validate or not whether such an article was reported, but it obviously had been for her and she believed it. Moreover, she informed a group of people with darker skin that their brains had been scientifically proven to be smaller than her own, in expectation or under the deluded assumption that in this racially emancipated era they would find no fault with her comments.

*I imagine this type of exchange happening in the American South, at least 50 years ago, with a White employer and Black housemaid, not in New Zealand, circa 2008, between White and Polynesian neighbours. I was as shocked as Rachel was that this had happened. Something else that interested me upon re-reading this excerpt was the use of 'Black-skinned' people and 'White' people as opposed to 'Black' and 'White' people or 'Black-skinned' and 'White-skinned' people. If it had been simply 'Black people had smaller brains than White people' it would have sounded much more aggressive as the rationality of the scientific 'Black-skinned' descriptor would not have mellowed the statement. Moreover, 'Black-skinned' does not implicate cultural deficiencies in the same way that 'Black' does. The sentence clearly implies that it is not Black people that are less intelligent because of factors under their control, but that Black people are less intelligent because their brain-size, which is out of their control, is smaller.*

## 2d. The declining significance of race?

Race was described by participants as declining, continuing, and increasing in importance in comparison to its past significance. Yasmin, Ameera, Natalie, and Timothy referred to ways in which race is declining in significance. Increasing encounters with interracial marriage suggested that race was declining in significance and would one day be irrelevant as we would all be some sort of 'beige' colour as Yasmin put it. Ameera questioned why we even care which part of the world an individual is from anymore. Natalie highlighted the multitude of meanings behind any particular racial/ethnic label, drawing particular attention to how a label could refer to its meaning in many different contexts at different points in time:

(Natalie's interview):

Natalie: "By identifying with a group you're talking about thousands of years of history, and there's this discomfort because you don't know at which point of time you're holding on to?...like are you...identifying with contemporary Chinese culture, are you identifying with your family...Chinese is such a broad phrase...there's no such thing as Chinese...which context, the Kiwi context the homeland context, the written literary context...or just your raci- genetic makeup..."

This suggests that racial labels are not as useful as they once were because they are increasingly unable to impart standardised information about the labeled. Timothy pointed out a disjoint between race and culture – that one's race in today's world was not as surely linked to a particular culture as it had been, implying that racial categories are not as comprehensive in terms of their ability to describe an individual as they might once have been.

*This is the case in my situation. I look Asian but am culturally New Zealand European.*

At the same time as race was seen to be becoming less important and less informative as a personal characteristic, allusions were made to its continuing significance and how we are not far removed historically-speaking from performances of the sorts of racist behavior that we would nowadays condemn. Luke's discussion of bias in the education system, along with Lana's discussion of encounters with statistical information that she

interpreted as proof that some racial groups are better off than other groups suggested that some participants were aware that institutional racism existed in New Zealand as a direct result of colonialism. The assignment of taking notice of race in their everyday lives served to consolidate in some participants and increase in others belief in the notion that race was of continuing significance in New Zealand. Timothy, for example, who had struggled to see race in his everyday life in New Zealand stated at the end of his interview that race “[seriously] play[s]...a role...in Western society...and if we’re gonna continue on as an immigrant society, we seriously need to look at race...”, suggesting that if we did not, it would result in “massive problems, like it has in Europe”.

### **Concluding notes for theme two**

Race was manifested in everyday communication interactions in an awareness of the fact that we have moved beyond our racist past but reminders of it surface from time to time, and we are still aware of, influenced, and impacted by the memory of it. Despite support for the inclusion of Māori cultural elements in New Zealand’s national and official culture, the suspicion that efforts are an empty and superficial gesture circulates. Oppositional views on ethnic inequality reduction are lurking beneath the surface of current affirmative action policies. New Zealand Europeans are annoyed with ethnic minorities over-accusing them of racism. Old racist attitudes and beliefs can still be found amongst older generations, who sometimes, but not always, hide them beneath a degree of social tact. Finally, opinions on the extent to which race is important at present and whether it will continue to be in the future in New Zealand in comparison to the past are varied.

## **Theme 3: Everyday awareness and negotiation of social hierarchy**

The third theme that emerged from the data was to do with the everyday awareness participants had of a racial hierarchy and the way it influenced their negotiation of social hierarchy. Four sub-themes will be presented under this second main theme: ‘White superiority’, ‘negotiating the social ladder’, and ‘legitimacy’.

### **3a. White superiority**

The idea that in New Zealand White people subconsciously think they are superior was raised by Zane and Timothy. Zane wrote of several instances in which White individuals indicated that they held this belief:

(Zane's diary):

*A young White [colleague of mine] called [another colleague of ours] on the phone and greeted him with familiarity saying "Hey Black man how's it going." This seems grossly arrogant and disrespectful but...probably...no nastiness is meant.*

*Back at work on Friday we had an incident where [a colleague] (Fiji Indian) backed the company [vehicle] into a bollard. When this was brought up at the team meeting [another colleague] ([a] Welsh guy) made the comment "f#@king foreigners." It was not meant in a nasty way at all – just a bit of humour...*

*At lunch at work [the same Welsh colleague]...was discussing with [another colleague] how they should get some Chinese in to do some of the work because they are "20 for a fiver" (cheap).*

Zane also analysed his own attitudes to come to this conclusion. Zane and I were talking in his interview about our common experience of feeling more confident around people who are not White.

(Zane's interview):

Zane: "I would say I probably had more confidence talking to people of, who weren't White...I think you feel people of your race are more likely to interpret what you're saying and doing as it actually is. For example if...if I was sitting at my computer and...discussing issues with someone, and then a Polynesian came and started cleaning the room, you would probably tend to just assume, because you're so different culturally and whatnot, that it would just go over their head. But if it was a White person who came in then you might think, um, they can comprehend and relate to and understand more what you're saying, because you guys are of a similar culture."

When I asked Zane why this was, he referred to our history and the ease with which we take on a role of authority because we have been doing it for generations.

During the second focus group, he raised this observation when he said:

(Focus group 2):

Zane: "...subconsciously a lot of particularly, you know White people, White Europeans, like they might say hey I'm not, you know, race doesn't matter but then, often, they'll say things and remarks that...actually it, um reflects, a kind of, ingrained thing that secretly, Europeans,...kind of think they've got a leg up on other people?"

The rather cautious way he went about communicating this idea to other participants, two of whom were White, shows his fear that they might strongly disagree with him. His suggestion was risky in that it was one that many New Zealand Europeans would strongly and heatedly deny. However, perhaps to his relief, Timothy, another White participant, immediately and vehemently agreed with him.

It was not only White people who were found by participants to believe in 'White supremacy'. Zane found evidence of this a White supremacy complex in non-White's subtle behaviors that he recorded in his diary. One such incident is recounted here:

(Zane's diary):

*I got a ride to work with a part Māori [colleague]...on Friday and on the way down in the car he was stuck behind someone travelling slow in the fast lane. "I bet you it's a bloody Indian". To his credit, it was an Indian and he was quite please with himself for getting it right. On paper this reads worse than it is because [name] is a really good natured guy that would be hard to take offense from. He doesn't let the weight of the world get to him. He also quite freely refers to the work force from his old job as Indians. Not sure how loose he would be referring to the like that if the was an Indian in the car. (Zane)*

Nearing the end of his diary, Zane wrote:

*I think that what I am experiences is a lot of people making derogatory remarks against non White races but none of it is done maliciously or with much thought so it is harmless from their point of view. But I think what it does on a subconscious level is reinforce lots of race stereotypes that become difficult to get rid of and subtly put White man above everyone else. White supremacy is something that most people don't realise they actually believe. (Zane)*

There was the sense though that these subtle derogatory actions were not a product of malicious intent. For example, in his diary Zane repeatedly made excuses for the racist actions of those around him by highlighting their other

good qualities and emphasising that they were not acting hatefully, rather they were just making jokes. He stated this up during his interview:

(Zane's interview):

Zane: "We're not colourblind, we're not intentionally racist, we're not maliciously racist. But we do naturally by default look down on other races."

In his interview, Zane repeated this observation: that people of all different races, not just White people, believe in White supremacy: "I think people do, view, White people as superior. Subconsciously". Yasmin also implicated all people, not just White people, when she said in her interview that "...people do kind of look down on ESOL people<sup>14</sup>. Like immigrants or whatever." Yasmin also recorded feeling a "sense of victory" when she encountered and stereotyped an Asian driver.

Timothy raised the idea of the aspiration to *be* White: that for the past three hundred years, Europeans have had the best, cleanest cities and hygiene and have been the "leaders of everything so everyone wants to *be* White". He seemed to be committed to the 'betterment of society' and was against affirmative action scholarships for Māori and Pacific Island students as he felt that the money would be better entrusted to candidates based on intelligence rather than race in order to achieve this 'betterment of society'.<sup>15</sup>

*I totally disagree with this definition of the betterment of society. I am not sold on the idea of affirmative action, but for me, a better society is not one in which technological and scientific and academic progress is the foremost goal, but one in which all people are equally respected...in which everyone has equal opportunity...in which discrimination does not exist... what IS my idea of a better society? At least I know what it isn't. Perhaps a society in which everyone is equally valued and included.*

Both Ameera and Yasmin spoke on racism from one minority towards another or one non-White group towards another non-White group. Yasmin

<sup>14</sup> 'ESOL people', in this instance, refers to people for whom English is their second language.

<sup>15</sup> In the following speech bubble, some phrases have been deliberately and stylistically struck-out.

felt that White people were not the only people who thought they were superior to others.

(Yasmin's interview):

Yasmin: "...we think of White people being the only racist people but, other races are racist too. [My friend]'s mum, well [my friend] says her mum [who is non-White] is racist and doesn't want her to marry, a Brown person like, as in a Māori person. At the rest home, the different groups were quite racist towards each other I talk about this a little bit in my diary<sup>16</sup>. I think we think of racism as being this White person's, problem but, it's just that White people have tended to do better."

Ameera talked about a further two non-White racist attitudes – an Indian sense of superiority towards Somali people, and towards Pacific Islanders.

(Focus group 1):

Ameera: "I find that whole like, a, this is like when I think, the people that I'm probably, in terms of, culturally when I think about, you know I come from you know a min minority culture but I definitely know in my family (untranscribable) that there is definite racism and I know it, you know, I know at the mosque there's racism towards Somalians and I know that the Somali kids they can really feel that and that's a, an issue with my own community that I come from that I get really angry about it, and then um, they, I know I know because, you know my [relatives], have this, you know this racist attitude towards Pacific Islanders...[a relative of mine make] comment[s] about South Auckland all the time and it's just like, are you serious? Like and whereas, you know, and it's, and he feels like he is justified in saying that because he's like well, you know I used to drive the buses for lots of Pacific Islanders and I used to live in [an Auckland suburb where many Pacific Islanders lived] and so I know Ameera and you don't because, you know you mostly interact...and my mum is like

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<sup>16</sup> *I started working in a [hospital]...I was the only White member of staff.*

*The rest of my workmates were all pretty much either Tongan, Indian or Filipino. At times there was definite tension between the different groups. The Indians would complain about the Tongans being lazy or the Tongans muttered about the 'dirty' eating habits of the Indians and how the Filipino girls were too little to lift the residents. The Filipinos more gossiped away amongst themselves. (Yasmin)*

Ameera you don't understand I went to [a school that lots of Pacific Islanders went to] and they were, you know really rough, and I'm like oh gosh, seriously?"

*To me, this sounds kinda like what I was taught at school: that bullies usually bully other children because they are bullied themselves at home. People distract themselves from their own racial 'shortcomings' and try to make themselves feel better by focusing their attention on other minority groups, targeting groups who even worse off/darker than them.*

Another observation that suggested the existence of 'White superiority' in New Zealand is that New Zealand Europeans are not readily associated with an oft-used negative stereotype. The most commonly referenced stereotypes about ethnic groups in New Zealand found in the data were that Māori and Pacific Islanders are lazy (which accounts for their low socio-economic position) and that Asians (including Indians) are untrustworthy. The fact that these stereotypes were so well-known amongst participants points us towards the group that does not have a well-known oft-used negative stereotype attached to it: Europeans. It could be suggested that because they do not have their own negative stereotype, they must be the 'superior' ones perpetuating the negative stereotypes about other 'inferior' groups. In terms of how this could play out in reality, in his diary, Zane hypothesised that a trend of many labourers at his work calling another labourer 'Abo', to refer to his habit of 'going walk-about' was the result of them copying the White New Zealand European foreman who came up with the term and who was setting the example. However, it is also arguable that the White perspective was privileged in this observation because all of the participants involved in this research identified to some extent or other with the White, New Zealand European habitus<sup>17</sup>. Therefore we did not get a first hand perspective of how non-White groups stereotype all other ethnic groups around them.

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<sup>17</sup> Here, I am using Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus', which can be defined as a system of dispositions (lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action) that an individual agent develops in response to the objective conditions it encounters. Habitus does not only, or even primarily, function at the level of explicit, discursive consciousness. The internal structures become embodied and work in a deeper, practical and often pre-reflexive way (Maton, 2008).

Though it was not as pronounced as those for non-White ethnic groups, White-skinned participants did seem to feel that there was a stereotype in New Zealand that all White people are racist, which could be said to have contributed to their general fear of the research process uncovering racist attitudes in them or framing them as racists. In some ways, non-White skinned participants seemed to find it easier to take responsibility for the ways in which they might be racist as a serious problem (especially Natalie and Liz), whereas White-skinned participants either felt they were not racist (Timothy) or were only intermittently and vaguely concerned with the small amounts of prejudice they might reproduce in subtle interactions (Zane, Yasmin and Heather). The exceptions to this trend were Rachel, who admitted that she was racist and seemed to feel guilty about it, and Lana the only non-White participant who never alluded to the ways in which she might be racist.

Unlike many of other participants who admitted or considered their own racist attitudes, and despite his enthusiastic agreement with Zane's idea that New Zealand Europeans "think they've got a leg up on other people", Timothy did not consider himself to be racist at all. In his diary, he surveyed the behavior of another White person and conflated this with his other experiences of White people of the older generation to deduce the same supposition. Unlike Zane though who at times acknowledged his having felt superior as a White individual, Timothy dissociated himself from the subtle racist attitudes he identified by writing that he felt that race does not determine how you act. He differentiated his own attitudes as a White person towards non-White people from the racist attitudes of this other White person, making it clear that Whiteness does not necessarily indicate feelings of superiority. In the focus group, when I admitted that skin colour did affect how I would judge a stranger, he called himself 'classist' as opposed to 'racist', saying that he would judge people on markers such as their clothes as symbolic of their class affiliations rather than the colour of their skin, in predicting their personality and how they might behave towards him and deciding how he should behave toward them.

My perceptions about White superiority as a dynamic in my parent's Asian/White mixed-race marriage were reinforced by both Natalie and Ameera. Natalie who talked about how her (White) father, whose wife (Natalie's mother) has an Asian background, was openly racist towards Asians in her interview with me. She communicated to me that her own relationship with her dad was fraught because of this racism. She had heard him use derogatory terms for Asians like "Chinnie", "Chinks" and "Honkie". Though she had tried to challenge him on it, 'he's just overtly racist and he doesn't see a problem with it...he just doesn't care.' Here was an example of

an interracial marriage with a dynamic of overt racism, whereas in my parent's marriage, the racism dynamic was subtle.

*It was no wonder then that she stated in her interview and in her focus group that she felt terribly uncomfortable around groups of Asians and tried to avoid them. It seemed that the anti-Asian attitudes her dad exposed her to as she grew up have resulted in her internalizing this disgust and disrespect and to distancing herself as much as possible from any Asian-ness in her life. I assume this is the case because I attribute my own discomfort around Asians partly to the subtle anti-Asian attitudes I was exposed to in watching my parents interact as I grew up.*

When I told Ameera about White superiority as an aspect of my parent's marriage in her interview, she told me that she had sensed a 'thing' about her dad and her having issues with her mother's family because "...they...thought that they were...somewhat superior even though...you know, my dad in Fiji came from a middle class background whereas in New Zealand my mum's family were very working class but there was something about, coming from a country that was predominantly European, or whatever that was...better...? Whereas in Fiji, my dad went to...one of the best schools in Fiji but that wasn't appreciated, here?" She had noticed how a sense of White or European superiority impacted on interactions between her parents and their families.

Participants also felt that in New Zealand, Whiteness was the norm; it was neutral. Heather and Rachel both talked about not feeling as though they had a race as they were just "White". They talked about being jealous of those who had ethnicity and culture as if they themselves didn't have any. Lana spoke about White areas in Auckland; how she could understand how some people could feel uncomfortable in some areas, as she herself had felt the odd one out (as a non-White person) in spaces such as university and the up-market Auckland suburb of Remuera. The sense that Whiteness was a non-ethnicity was pervasive for participants.

Several participants indicated that White privilege might exist in New Zealand. The idea that Whites might experience better treatment was evident in Heather's diary entry:

(Heather's diary):

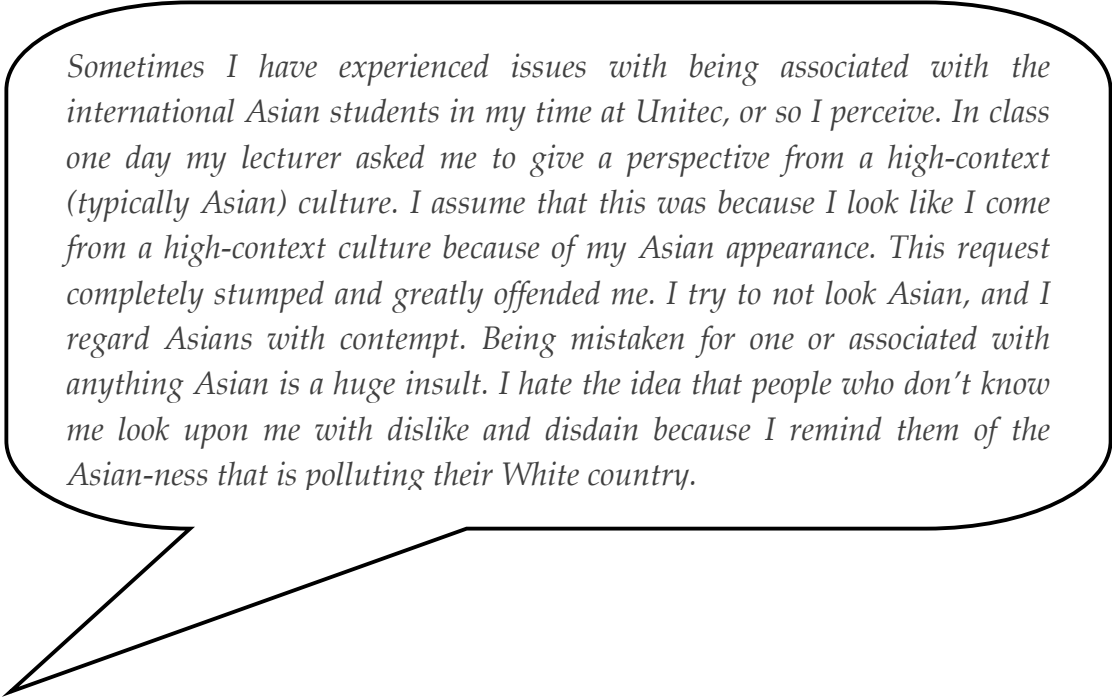
*I often wonder if I would be treated differently by people say strangers on the street and shop owners if I was a different race. Like if I was born Chinese would people think oh there goes another Asian, and that makes me wonder if I was in another country would someone thing of me, oh there goes another White girl...I sometimes wonder as well if it's true and if as a White female I get treated better by people. I don't feel as if my race gives me an advantage over other people but I suppose to some people it may do. (Heather)*

Heather had the head knowledge that as a White girl she was considered by some to have a 'better placing in society', and talked about becoming aware of this during her teenage years when she began to notice the poverty and brokenness of non-White homes. However, she was not aware of her privilege in everyday life and interactions. Ameera, Lana and Natalie were certain of White privilege's existence in New Zealand. Ameera described her awareness of White privilege as a stance along with her awareness of the privilege that wealth and male-ness and heterosexuality give an individual. She seemed to be aware of privilege from a critical academic perspective and in it giving you access to powerful people, and it being harder for non-privileged people to 'get ahead'. Lana and Natalie and Liz had also found resonance in studying race from a critical perspective at university and were aware of the concept of White privilege. Lana felt that many rich, White, private school girls were totally unaware of 'the huge gap that divides them from poor PIs who life in South Auckland' and because of this, felt it was ok to use derogatory racial stereotypes about Pacific Islanders in joking. Natalie described Whiteness as 'a vehicle for your instantaneous acceptance in life' and that it 'does afford you things'. Liz provided more concrete evidence of discrimination when she recalled a friend telling her that she was lucky to have a European-sounding surname as some employers would immediately discard a Curriculum Vitae on registering a foreign-sounding surname. Another friend of hers confirmed this, lamenting how her surname worked against her when applying for a new job. It seemed that participants who did not possess White privilege were more acutely aware of its existence in New Zealand.

Another way in which Whites were 'afforded things'/'instantaneously accepted' was in the transition from immigrant to New Zealander. Although she was an immigrant from Britain, Heather did not have a problem with repeatedly being asked where she was from like Ameera, Natalie and I (non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders) did. In my diary I expressed frustration at how one of my university classmates subtly conveyed a belief

that he was more Kiwi than I in my interactions with him, though I was born and raised here too.

Although he lived most of the first nine years of his life in an Asian country, Luke was externally regarded as and felt very much that he was a New Zealander. Additionally, I sensed that when participants talked or wrote about immigrants, they were referring to non-White non-Westernised immigrants.



*Sometimes I have experienced issues with being associated with the international Asian students in my time at Unitec, or so I perceive. In class one day my lecturer asked me to give a perspective from a high-context (typically Asian) culture. I assume that this was because I look like I come from a high-context culture because of my Asian appearance. This request completely stumped and greatly offended me. I try to not look Asian, and I regard Asians with contempt. Being mistaken for one or associated with anything Asian is a huge insult. I hate the idea that people who don't know me look upon me with dislike and disdain because I remind them of the Asian-ness that is polluting their White country.*

### **3b. Negotiating the social ladder**

In their everyday lives, non-White participants felt they had to negotiate, or were aware of others' negotiation of positions on a number of social ladders, one of the most instantly-recognisable ones in face-to-face interactions being the racial ladder, which served to automatically place them (as non-Whites) in a lower position. They had to prove that they deserved respect despite their skin colour. Skin colour was not the only marker of race that was contributed to immediate racial placement by the mainstream/dominant group. For example, I recorded feelings of embarrassment at Asian "behavior" performed by Asians such as speaking loudly and telling 'lame' jokes and wearing too many clothing labels, as I could understand how mainstream White society would judge them for their actions.

Snobbery and exclusion of particular races were important in deciding who to develop friendships and visual relations with. I mentioned to Natalie that I would probably feel less confident walking into a room of White people with a non-White partner, than I would with a White partner, as I felt that having an Asian as opposed to a White partner would bring me down a couple of notches in their eyes. Natalie spoke to me of her racially-conscious decision to abandon her Asian friends at primary school for the cool, predominantly White kids. As previously discussed, in choosing schools, Ameera quipped that White schools were seen as the best schools to go to around New Zealand and that her mum and grandparents chose and funded her schooling based on this idea.

Liz wrote of her disbelief that a friend would want to send her child to a full-immersion Māori school when it could not be of any social advantage to the child to network with and learn Māori.

*I have often heard an acquaintance talk about intercultural issues at a school she teaches at where over the last decade the school roll has become more and more Asian. Her stories of communication issues with Asian parents smell to me a bit like frustrated resignation at their 'uncooperativeness' and unwillingness to abide by the 'established' (euphemism for White) conventions of school parent conduct to me.*

The notion that Whites were more inherently valuable than non-Whites was evident in the minds of participants themselves and those they observed. Zane recalled teasing his sister about her non-White friends, putting her down for not being able to acquire “proper” friends, when they were both young. Natalie and Liz had a discussion about what she called a ‘centre of your compass’ concept – the location from which you judge others. Liz had been saying to her that she was particularly aware of social rank and people’s worth based on their race. Liz said to Zane in his interview that she could see how some, including herself, could think that one White person was worth as much as a large group of Asian people. The idea that the Chinese are cheap and worth less was inferred by a senior manager at Zane’s work when he, in a speech at a company dinner, said that the Chinese had forced them out of the Pacific by bringing in their own labour and their own ‘containers of rice’ and doing the work ‘incredibly cheaply’, implying that their disregard for building relationships with the local people and pursuit of parsimony above

all else made them unethical and somehow less valuable as a people. White, Western people were seen to be of more inherent worth than racial others.

Altering or concern with appearance was another way in which non-White people negotiated the social ladder in New Zealand. Ameera and I wondered if our mothers' concern with dressing us 'well' as children was subconsciously or consciously undertaken in order to compensate for our non-White skin. Ameera had questioned herself as a Muslim over her decision not to wear a veil, as it meant that Muslim communities were slower to trust her and she felt she had to earn acceptance with them. Yasmin talked about an Indian friend who had consciously avoided gold jewelry for many years as she did not want to look too Indian or be associated with the immigrant stereotype.

For mixed-race participants, an advantage was felt in the form of a general social view that to be half-caste was a good thing because half-castes or mixed-race individuals are beautiful. We were aware, however, of this not having always been the case. Even Timothy alluded to the fact that I would have been outcast not so long ago for my mixed race-ness.

*I find it strange when I see mixed-race people who are older than me. It's almost like you can see their struggle in their eyes, having always been a social outcast with their generation. Even I see them as strange. Yet I see mixed-race individuals of my generation as the face of the future. I feel like it only became cool to be mixed-race as I grew up. Full-caste friends often say they think I'm beautiful because I am mixed and that they want to have half-caste babies.*

In Lana's words, "it's beautiful to be mixed, but not to be full", implying that to be half White and half non-White is enviable according to the beauty verdicts of our time, but to be fully non-White is ugly and not enviable. Lana felt it was not right that Black women should desire 'long flowing' hair to the extent that they shave their own hair off and have other hair clipped to the short hair that is left. She seemed to imply that because Whites were in control of global beauty standards due to their access to propaganda production tools, Black people were denied the opportunity to love the looks they were born with.

The labels "plastic", "fail-Asian" and "fail-Indian" were mentioned in the data as tools that could assist determining racial status. These terms refer to people of minority backgrounds who have assimilated into White society so

far as to have abandoned their non-White identity. It seemed that the labels could both be used to by minority individuals themselves signify allegiance to Whiteness and therefore to negotiate for increased social status, and by ethnic minority group members to signify the ruination and excommunication of a minority individual of the same ethnicity who had 'gone over to the White side'. In Pacific Island communities, according to Lana, the label 'plastic' is seemingly used to designate fellow Islanders who are 'traitors' and therefore cannot be trusted. Contrastingly, Liz felt that the labels 'fail-Asian' and 'fail Indian' were more commonly employed as a kind of 'badge of honour', used by the failed-individual themselves to signal loyalty to the dominant White culture and not to the culture they were brought up with or the culture of their ancestors.

Other social ladders could intersect and mitigate the positioning affect of the racial social ladder. Timothy talked about the kids of a Māori judge at his school, saying that their Māori-ness was debatable on account of their father's job. Ameera spoke of the privilege she was able to access through her socio-economic status. Like clothes, job titles and money seemed to be able to compensate for skin colour in New Zealand.

Internalised racism (non-White racial self-hatred) manifested itself in a number of places in the data. A large percentage of participants referred to the way in which Indians have a 'fetish' for White skin, in that they do not want to go in the sun and get any Browner and they often use light foundation or skin lightening creams. One incident that Yasmin recounted even illustrates this common Indian belief being expressed overtly:

(Yasmin's diary):

*I remember one afternoon when I was working in the kitchen with [a Māori woman]...who was filling in for our usual cook. One of the Indian caregivers...came in and complimented me on my outfit. Then she started saying things like, "You White people always look so nice in clothes like that. Us Blacks could wear the same thing but we could never look as nice as you." She kept going on like this for a while, and was directing her comments at [the Māori woman] like she expected her to agree.*

*I was feeling quite uncomfortable and just did this sort of awkward laugh. [The Māori woman] was quiet. After [the Indian caregiver] left, [the Māori woman] and I didn't say anything for a while but I could tell we were both thinking about it. Then suddenly [the Māori woman] burst out saying something like, "Well she can speak for herself but I don't agree with any of that."*

*We talked about how we were shocked that [the Indian caregiver] could think such things and thought it was sad that [she] was passing on messages like that to her daughter. (Yasmin)*

Lana felt that it was quite sad that Black women, most notably celebrities, wore weaves<sup>18</sup> in their hair because it signaled to her that frizzy Black Afros were out, long flowing hair was in, and that they could not love what they were born with. In response, Liz told Lana about how she had been shocked to watch a clip about Black mothers in the US who bleach their kids' skin.

In her interview, Ameera told me about how she could remember very specifically being taught by her mother how to use a fork and knife, and how to sit on a mat on the floor and eat with your hands 'in a really humble kind of way because, you need to know how to interact in different environments...that will be fundamental to your success'. She described the reasoning for this double instruction as not wanting 'to be alienated from your culture but also you...also want to be able to go out there and, be amongst everybody else, and compete with them". The idea of learning to use a knife and fork to compete with everyone else clearly demonstrates that Ameera's mum believes that White cultural currency, or as Bourdieu would have it, White habitus, is the most powerful cultural currency to trade in, or the most valuable habitus to possess.

In this next example, Natalie describes how in her experience, Chinese people seem to always put themselves in a subordinate position to her because of her part-Whiteness, a feature that explained their consequent respect for her.

(Natalie's interview):

Natalie: "I don't like to be comfortable? I like to constantly be challenged and that's in social circles too I like being, around people who are like, more experienced in life and I don't like being comfortable so like I know when I'm with a bunch of Asians Chinese people, it's easier to be accepted and just, I don't like that either?...I get really arrogant when I'm with, like I automatically take on a leader role when I'm with a bunch of Asians. Always..."

Liz: "And...are they accepting of that?"

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<sup>18</sup> A weave, according to Lana, is a whole lot of little clips of someone else's hair. Black women who have frizzy hair often cut their hair extremely short and then get clips of other people's long-flowing hair attached all over their scalp.

Natalie: “Yeah. Always. Always always always. Like I remember in primary school I was friends with the Chinese group I had it wasn’t till year four when this happened, but um I got I kept getting...pushed forwards a year? Again and again and um, so I was friends with the year above? And even then I was the leader?”

This could suggest internalised racism in the form of Asians having internalised the belief that Whiteness is better than Asian-ness.

I noticed a trend of public displays of minority self-deprecation in the form of jokes. Both Heather and Yasmin talked about their Indian friends who would joke about themselves using well-known Indian stereotypes.

*I have always felt slightly uneasy about minorities mocking themselves. Why would a minority character choose to play a negatively stereotypical role in a television show? Why would my friend make jokes about her Indian-ness? Over this reflexive process I think have realised why this is. My theory is this. Minorities mock themselves to align themselves with the dominant group and disassociate themselves from their own people. They play to the dominant group’s representation of them implying that they also believe these things about these groups and that they are therefore able to be trusted as members of the dominant group. It can either be an external manifestation of their internal racism or a strategic move in a particular situation in which gaining favour with the majority is important. Minorities must show that they are good sports and can play along with this majority-group game without getting all offended. Once a minority member expresses their offence at the act of a majority group member, they are rejected as they are implying that the majority group member is racist or defective in some way. The majority group member then tries to regain their superiority by disregarding or making light of the minority member’s contentions.*

In one incident that I recounted to Rachel in her interview, I found myself using my internalised racism knowledge to orchestrate a favourable situation.

(Rachel’s interview):

Liz: “An experience I had the other day...me and [my friend] went to get...flowers? ...to this house in the middle of nowhere...I was kinda nervous about like just going up to their front door cos it’s their house,

like it's not a shop...so I sent, I kinda sent [my friend]...and...I wondered if I thought, part of the reason [my friend] should do it is cos she's, like, a White girl?...and she's blonde? People are more likely to think that, I dunno to think that, she's harmless?"

Rachel could understand what I meant:

Rachel: "Yeah I totally agree with you? Like I know that what you mean? Like, I get that?"

In this interaction I used my internalised racist worldview to surmise that it would be better to send a representative blonde, White girl to a first meeting as opposed to me, a non-White individual. I thought our chances of making a good impression would be higher and that it would positively affect the trust levels between us and the house's inhabitants.

Non-White participants generally felt stretched between two groups – White or New Zealand or dominant culture and non-White or non-dominant culture/s. As has already been mentioned, Lana had been called 'plastic', by Pacific Islanders, a derogatory term that refers to somebody who is an Islander but doesn't act like one. To expand on this, she felt like she was 'not 'Brown' enough' when she was with a group of Islanders. She felt that she was forced to choose a side and seemed agitated that the fact that she *was* Samoan ancestrally was not enough, she had to *act* Samoan to gain full access to the Samoan community and be a 'real' Samoan. She said, "it's easy to get stuck in this mindset that you have to act and be a certain way to be considered, like what you actually are anyway". In the focus group she reiterated this:

(Focus group 1):

Lana: "it's easy to get stuck in a race and to feel like, you can't cross over like especially for somebody who is multiracial...it's...easy to feel like you're trapped in one identity?...and um, to feel like you can't be that other part of you which you are?...um, yeah so it's kinda confusing sometimes."

Natalie also talked about spending her 'earlier live in conflict trying to favour one side while the other is not around', as both her Asian and European sides had derogatory names (Gwee-moi/Ching Chong) for each other. I wrote about tensions between my two groups and how I favoured the European perspective and culture because of social advancement, and tried to distance

myself from anything Asian as a general rule in everyday interactions, Unlike Lana I did not mention feeling like I had to choose between my identities, instead I felt a strong allegiance to Whiteness, but sensed that I could manipulate my Asian features to fit in to an extent in Asian society. Ameera talked about how being spread across groups is hard but it is also rewarding as one can see the world from different points of reference. Here we see cultural difference being accentuated by perceptions of race. We can be certain of this as White participants did not feel such a cultural tension, even though they may have had ties with a non-dominant New Zealand culture, such as Heather who was originally British, or Luke, who was originally Nepali in cultural affiliation.

Non-White participants had experienced both racial 'passing' and being taken for a race that they were not. Liz felt she had been accepted as part of White culture although she did not always feel White. Natalie had been misidentified as fully White and a number of other ethnicities due to her 'diverse bone structure'. Both Liz and Natalie had experienced communication instances when members of the dominant culture had been ignorant of or nasty towards Asians, and had both felt uncomfortable at these admissions. We both felt in situations such as this, derogatory comments towards certain peoples would not be made if a misidentified individual's identity was known. It is at these times that the misidentified person is acutely aware of their racial allegiances and how they differ from the dominant group. In terms of strategic social climbing, a non-White person can disguise or obscure their visual difference through acting like the dominant group and can then go along with derogatory comments made toward minorities to cement their belonging in the dominant group. However, whilst being aware of this, both Liz and Natalie had felt, at times, the need to stick up for minority groups, knowing well that to do so would put their own personal social standing in jeopardy.

School seemed to be a time of figuring out racial identity, social ladders and how to negotiate them, in particular for Liz and Natalie. The contrast in their responses to growing racial awareness was quite different. As has already been mentioned, Natalie described being friends with the Asian kids up until a point, when she decided 'literally overnight' to become friends with the White kids. In her later school years she found herself identifying with and performing 'Black culture'. Liz, who was friends with a dominant but multicultural crowd found herself more and more in the company of Kiwi Asians as her school life progressed.

Yasmin recounts an incident in which she realised that one of her best friends was Māori for the first time. Her friend was singing and another friend commented that "Māoris are always good at singing". She described

her reaction as shock, that she had never previously considered her friend as Māori. Luke talked about his transition into a New Zealand primary school from a Nepalese international school. He found himself making friends with 'the Asian kids' and described a time of confusion in which he got into lots of fights. It would seem that as his schooling progressed, he learnt the way in which someone of his skin colour should behave. This could be described as learning one's place and expected behavioral patterns in a new country and trying to fit in.

In the first focus group, Lana told us of how some girls at her predominantly White school had acted "Brown". However, she suggested that though they acted Brown, they would definitely not want to actually "be Brown". Rachel, like Natalie, had gone through a stage of acting "Brown" whilst at school. This suggested that despite Whiteness and White behavior being at the top of the racial hierarchy, experiments in which White people act non-White are undertaken, especially during adolescence, but when it counts towards one's social privilege, Whiteness is the envied skin tone. There were times at school when it was advantageous to act and be White, and other times when and places where people chose to act non-White. It was in the everyday context of school that racial hierarchy was learnt and rehearsed. Gradually, race became more and more salient in choosing how to act.

A final example of that points to race's role in negotiating social standing in everyday communication interactions was in Ameera's concern over not knowing the 'cultural markers' when she went to Australia, not being able to fit people in to a social structure using their outer appearance. She brought this up in her interview:

(Ameera's interview):

Ameera: "I definitely think that what I've learnt, from this is that, when I went away I kind of noticed things a little bit more, but it took me, I think I was unsettled, slightly, by the fact that I didn't know? A lot of, you know where people, fit in the city? Whereas in a place like Auckland I know the city so well, that I understand where different people fit in the city? And, um, and in Australia I didn't understand a lot of the cultural...markers...as much as, I do here?"

Liz: "Did that make you feel kinda...what like...did that make you feel a little bit anxious or..."

Ameera: "It did it definitely made me feel anxious I felt very anxious by it like I didn't, understand things?"

This illustrates the importance of race in an everyday sense of security in knowing how to interact with others. Ameera did not know where people 'fitted' in a city that was not Auckland, and suggested that she would continue to be uncomfortable until she learned these local knowledges (localised racial common sense). This may indicate that in particular localised contexts, local people act toward others and expect to be acted toward in certain racialised ways in interaction. One draws upon a set of appropriate contextual learned behaviors in response to racial markers. Knowledge of appropriate behaviors can help to guide an individual smoothly through social interactions and lack of such knowledge might result in social awkwardness. Until then, one does not know whether one's actions are detrimental or advantageous to their status. As a budding politician, this was particularly important for Ameera.

### **3c. Legitimacy**

The final way in which an awareness and negotiation of social rank and status in terms of race was manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand, was in the question of legitimacy. Who can "legitimately" call themselves a New Zealander? Participants indicated that the label "New Zealander" or "Kiwi" was commonly associated with the image of a White New Zealand European, and also an awareness that a New Zealander is not necessarily White and European nowadays (Yasmin: "Who can say what a Kiwi is these days"). Timothy brought up the idea that from a 'racial' point of view, only the Māori could legitimately call themselves New Zealanders. He felt that to non-New Zealanders, a New Zealander would be White. But to New Zealanders, a New Zealander would not necessarily be White – it was "more to do with a state of mind than anything". From experience, Liz told him that she had deduced the opposite – that people are more likely to accept that she is a New Zealander when she is outside of New Zealand but question my legitimacy to call herself a New Zealander when she is in New Zealand.

The observation that New Zealand culture was still aligned to a great extent with New Zealand European culture when there were many different cultures in New Zealand had bearing on the notion that only White people can legitimately call themselves New Zealanders. Liz and Timothy talked in Timothy's interview about how Kiwi culture was the same as White New Zealand culture, a viewpoint that he initially tried to avoid, but eventually conceded existed. The idea that New Zealand culture was White was a part of Lana's observations too. Sometimes she'd felt like an outsider as a part Samoan individual because she was not White, even though she knew she was just as 'kiwi' as White New Zealanders. To illustrate how she might have

been conditioned in this way she spoke of a subtle message she received while at preschool:

(Lana's diary):

*...lots of little kids love to draw and colour in, and when I was younger there was always the creamy/pink coloured pencil which would get referred to as 'skin colour'...and I was thinking, whose skin colour is that????? It's not MY skin colour, it's not my dad's skin colour cos he's Brown, and most of the people around me when I was younger were Brown as well because I went to a Samoan preschool and primary school...so why did me and all my friends refer to this weird light cream colour as 'skin colour'?!! Maybe I was just a strange child...*

For Lana, "when we talk about 'NZ culture/identity' what comes to mind is not amalgamation or multi-culturalism, its very much European/Anglo norms". For her, New Zealand culture was about "not wearing burqas, speaking in a Kiwi accent, forcing our kids to play rugby, NOT forcing our kids to play the piano and do maths (because that would be too Asian)". For Zane, the typical Kiwi thing was to 'get out on the beach in jandals and go out and play sport. Yasmin also mentioned the outdoors along with two dollar shops and having a two dollar (lolly) mixture from the dairy. Timothy and Yasmin talked about casual attire. For Timothy, a New Zealander does not feel the need to dress up to go down to the local shops. For Yasmin, walking around barefoot is part of what it means to be a Kiwi.

What these examples mean is that in everyday communication interactions, the knowledge of what it means to be a New Zealander (being White and following New Zealand European norms) hovers over and affects our judgments of who has the most authority to call themselves a New Zealander and therefore who has the most power to host, guide and lead and represent others in not only New Zealand's main public arena, but internationally too. However, it is important to acknowledge, as Timothy and Heather did, that there are other less legitimate and influential institutions and spaces in New Zealand in which other cultural norms and other skin tones are symbols of authority. In these environments, non-White non-culturally European individuals and groups may be dignified, but as Chinese, as Samoan, as Indian, not as New Zealanders, at least not at this point in time. They hold power over the definition and practice of Samoan-ness, of Chinese-ness of Indian-ness, not of New Zealand-ness. It is important to note the special legitimacy of Māori as the original New Zealanders in some of the highest institutional settings as the exception to this rule. Principally though, in New Zealand, the most legitimate New Zealanders are both "White", and act in a

New Zealand European manner, and non-White New Zealanders are New Zealand Chinese, New Zealand Samoan, New Zealand Indian – they can never just be New Zealanders.

### **Concluding notes for theme three**

Participants found that they were aware of racial superiority and inferiority in their everyday lives. Sometimes, they used their racial 'rank' for personal reassurance that they were better and better off than others. At other times, they used appraisals of racial worth in conjunction with their desire increase their social standing to inform their own actions. Patriotic and host legitimacy was a subtheme that emerged in the data – who is a New Zealander and who is unofficially publically endorsed to decide what a New Zealander is: who can be truly patriotic without any other 'cultural' or 'national' or 'ethnic' or 'religious' commitments?

## **Theme 4: Conversational tact - Everyday speech conventions**

The fourth theme that emerged from the data I labeled "Conversational tact – everyday speech conventions". This refers to the set of tacit rules that we learn to guide and censor our talk on race in our everyday lives. Two ways in which we talk about race in an everyday environment are through 'Racialised neutral terms', and 'Racial stereotypes'. I also found a trend of 'Censoring' politically incorrect comments about race as well as an attempt to suppress race as a topic all together, to avoid conflict. These findings are presented and explained below.

### **4a. Racialised 'neutral' terms**

One way in which race is manifested in speech in everyday communication interactions was in the underlying racial meanings of the seemingly neutral terms participants used to talk about race. Terms that were used in ways that implied racial connotations included 'race', 'ethnic', 'Chinese', 'Indian', 'Asian', 'Kiwi', and 'New Zealander'.

'Race' seemed to mean 'non-Whiteness' in some participant's imaginations. Experiences of 'race' seemed to only be the experiences of non-White minority groups, not of White individuals. Heather, Rachel, and Yasmin all wrote about non-White friends of theirs, implying that they felt that their friends had more authority speak on the subject of race because of their potential experiences with racism and as victims. Rachel was the only participant who felt that she had experienced racism as a White person but even she spoke mainly of her observation of the experiences of non-White people.

Likewise, the term 'ethnic' was used to demarcate non-White individuals and practices. At times, it seemed as though it was the new term for oriental, a word whose purpose was to 'other', a term that separated 'us' from 'them'. Timothy spoke of his parents not having any 'ethnic' (meaning "non-Anglo-Saxon-New Zealand-European") friends. With Luke, when discussing jokes I said that it seemed to me that most racial jokes were about 'ethnic' people and quickly corrected myself that White people had an ethnicity too. In focus group one, Heather used the term 'ethnic' to describe the proliferation of restaurants selling cuisine 'from all over'. In calling them 'ethnic restaurants' she seemed to be using the term to refer to non-normal, exotic food types, in particular Asian cuisines. Ameera in describing an experience in which her background was questioned because of her skin colour surmised that the reason for the investigation was that she was an 'ethnic person'. Heather told us in focus group one of her jealousy that her non-White friends "had culture, they had ethnicity".

The terms 'Chinese', 'Indian' and 'Asian', when they were spoken in everyday communication interactions, seemed to be what Zane referred to as 'trigger' words, or words that triggered what Liz described as a "cringe". These words evoked an instant emotional reaction from some participants. Zane wrote the following in his diary:

(Zane's diary):

*We had a company briefing dinner tonight and the General Manager stood up and talked about how it was tough at the moment and that in the Pacific the Chinese had come in bringing their...containers of rice etc. and were doing work incredibly cheaply and effectively forced [the company] out of the market in the Pacific. Mentioning Chinese put me on the 'racism' edge. It is as though "Chinese" or "Indian" are now trigger words to the point of it meaning we actually can't talk about them without being racist in some form or another. We can quite happily talk about "Americans" but mention Chinese and you are in dangerous waters because of all the stigma behind it. It's a bit silly really now that we can't even talk normally." (Zane)*

In this account, Zane seems to be expressing his frustration that Chinese and Indian people are so sensitive about being criticised or even talked about and when they are talked about will nit pick at every subtle meaning of the exchange to find the racism within.

*To me, in the above example that Zane gave, the general manager was painting the Chinese as cheap, nasty and unfriendly, and in opposition to the quality, ethical, culturally sensitive and community-engaging practices that his own company adopted when working amongst people of another culture. I think the reason that I cringe at the word Asian is that I sense that people use it to separate and distance themselves from Asians. It seems to me that there is a general feeling in New Zealand that Asians are the "root of all evil" and that their wild, dirty and dishonest cultural practices are tarnishing our own. When I hear the word Asian, things such as the term 'Asian Invasion', memories of incidents in which I have heard people refer with disgust and fear at the large number of Asians populating downtown Auckland city, and the contempt with which non-Asians at my high school held the Asians flood into my mind. I feel both responsible and scared of defending those who look like me, even though I feel no cultural attachment to them, as well as the repulsion that the White New Zealand European culture seems to experience when encountering Asian-ness. Use of the term Asian makes me aware of my hypocritical internal emotions.*

Additionally, Natalie felt uncomfortable when describing herself as half-Chinese because "it's like ooh what does that mean" and was more comfortable describing herself by the labels that she did not associate with. Liz could empathise with this and determined that associating with the term 'Chinese' caused her discomfort because of its negative racial connotations in the New Zealand mindset, negative connotations which stem from the Chinese, as an ethnic group, having been alienated and ostracised since the times of New Zealand's early settlers. Liz did not want other people to feel hereditary anti-Asiatic hostility towards her.

*I feel that the typical White, Westerner's evaluation of me suffers when I use the term 'half-Chinese' in explaining my ambiguous phenotypical features. I then have to work harder in interaction to show that I am not and do not believe in any of those evil, unethical, non-democratic things associated with Chinese-ness.*

The labels 'Kiwi' and 'New Zealander' seemed most often to refer to New Zealand Europeans or White New Zealanders. As has already been acknowledged under the subtheme 'Legitimacy', although participants did seem to be aware that it was politically correct to think of New Zealanders/Kiwis as of many different skin colours (Timothy, Yasmin), and historically correct to think of New Zealanders as Māori (Timothy), they slipped in ordinary interactions by associating the terms with New Zealand Europeans. Liz mentioned to Luke in his interview that most of the time she felt normal and valid in her New Zealand identity but that "every so often I get reminded that I'm not one of the people who actually belong here", on account of my non-Whiteness. Ameera told us in focus group two of her friends often being surprised that her granddad had a Kiwi accent and was from New Zealand, saying that her family are about "as New Zealand as you could come but it takes a while for people to realise it", the implication being that non-White racial features inhibit the external ascription of the term 'New Zealander'.

Timothy, when Liz asked him what a New Zealander was, responded that for him "a Kiwi is anyone who lives in New Zealand". He suggested (as has been previously alluded to) that Māori were the only people who could truly call themselves New Zealanders<sup>19</sup>. However, he seemed to exhibit the sub-conscious belief that a New Zealander/Kiwi is European-looking in the following statement to do with who hung out with who at lunch time when he was at high-school:

(Timothy's interview):

<sup>19</sup> According to a Māori expert, there would be many Māori today who would argue strongly that they would in the first instance identify as 'Māori', then with their iwi/hapu (clan/tribe/sub-tribe), and as a 'New Zealander' last (H. Paniora, personal communication, October 4, 2012).

Timothy: "...the Islanders had their own sports type of things um, Kiwis would have their own like the New Zealand Europeans would have their own ones, Asians tended to fit in more with I suppose the New Zealander like at least the ones in my year were always with the New Zealand Europeans..."

Upon analysis, it is clear that in this statement he initially uses the labels 'Kiwis' and 'New Zealanders' to refer to 'New Zealand Europeans', and then corrects himself, in describing the different social groups at his high school. It could be inferred that, like many New Zealanders, he is aware of how one should conceive of New Zealanders (as not solely European and White-looking), However, this mental connection is secondary to the primary "New Zealanders are White" definition. A number of participants exhibited the same primary knowledge in their statements.

The use of 'racial' labels in everyday communication was felt to be problematic by Timothy and Natalie, due to their homogenising properties, when there really is a lot of diversity within labeled groups. Moreover, because these labels are associated with vast number of different meanings, whatever particular meaning a user might be trying to convey can easily be misapprehended by an audience. Both Timothy and Natalie seemed to feel that they were a non-stereotypical member of their racial categorical group and that they were limited in naming their racial selves and at the same time distinguishing themselves from popular stereotypes. Timothy, as has already been mentioned, spent a large proportion of his diary discussing how his sentiments and actions were different from those of another White person, coming to the conclusion that one's race did not determine one's actions and attitudes. It could be inferred that he was aware that he was White, and aware of the ignorant White man stereotype and wanted to distance himself from it.

#### **4b. Racial stereotyping**

The significance of racial stereotyping in everyday life involved the creation and use of stereotypes in communication encounters, both verbally and non-verbally. Stereotypes seemed to be the main way in which race was manifested in communication encounters. They seemed to be created in intra-cultural discussions of interracial interaction: when people of similar culture are discussing encounters with those of a different race. For example, I encountered what I perceived as rudeness from an Indian shop owner (interracial interaction). When I mentioned this to my friend who is culturally similar to me, he reassured me that Indian shop owners were often like that (intra-cultural discussion), establishing the stereotype in my mind.

Another example of this was offered by Ameera when she talked about how a relative came over to their family's house one day and was commenting on how her daughter's ballet teacher was rude to the Indian mothers and nice to the White mothers. This intracultural discussion of the White 'other' can be seen as the formation of and drawing upon a stereotype about White people as racists, perhaps even more specifically, White female ballet teachers as racist. A number of participants talked about their encounters with Asian drivers and discussions with culturally similar others over how bad Asians were at driving.

Culturally similar Yasmin and I even produced a stereotype ourselves about a group we termed 'Kiwi Chinese' during Yasmin's interview. We were talking about a Kiwi Chinese woman that I had just encountered: I was describing her to Yasmin. I was surprised to learn that she too had encountered a Kiwi Chinese individual with the behavioral traits I was describing.

(Yasmin's interview):

Liz: "...and she seems quite Kiwi too. But Kiwi Chinese? Like..."

Yasmin: "Yea,"

Liz: "...there's a...difference? Like there's quite a distinct Kiwi Chinese culture, and there's Kiwi Chinese groups and things like the Auckland Chinese Association and stuff,"

Yasmin: "Yeah,"

Liz: "and I think...that she reminds me of my mum and dad's friend, (name), they kind of have the same, very friendly fast talking,"

Yasmin: "Mm,"

Liz: "generous culture?"

Yasmin: "Yeah. I think our old landlord's part of that group too. Like Chinese but Kiwi Accent and just kinda..."

Liz: "Like really Kiwi accent even."

Yasmin: "Yeah, yeah."

Yasmin and I had both individually identified this distinct way of behaving and its association with the visual characteristics of Chinese-ness. Such an

incident is an example of the way in which such stereotypes can be easily produced in communicative descriptive interactions.

The number of stereotypes discussed in the data was large. Stereotypes could be grouped into those that were negative, and those that were neutral. Negative stereotypes included:

- Africans and Indians drive taxis, New Zealand Europeans don't
- CEOs are White men
- Asians and Indians run dairies
- Pacific Islanders are cleaners
- Black/Brown men are stronger than other men
- Asians are bad drivers
- Māori and Pacific Islander men are criminals and dangerous
- Pacific Islanders are less intelligent
- Asians are intelligent
- Māori and Pacific Islanders are lazy
- Western cultures are less liberal than Eastern cultures about the role of women in the private and public sphere
- White people are leaders and leads in movies
- White people are racist
- White people and Asians have money to spare
- Dark-skinned people are poor, Lighter-skinned people are rich

Lana separated what she saw as neutral stereotypes into their own category of racial "identifiers". Identifiers or allegedly neutral stereotypes included:

- Accents and languages (especially Indian English and Asian English accents)
- Smells (for example, Indians smell like curry)
- Interests and hobbies (for example Asians play the piano and study maths/New Zealand Europeans spend time outdoors)
- Types of music listened to (for example White people listen to Dubstep or Indie Rock or Classical, Brown people listen to Rhythm and Blues and Hip Hop)
- Asians don't do Bachelor of Arts degrees, they study medicine
- Asians live in Howick
- Indians live in Sandringham
- South Africans and Koreans live on the North Shore
- Asians drive boy racer cars with soft-toys in the boot
- Pacific Islanders drive big vans
- Samoans drink juice and eat KFC

Stereotypes were used in communication encounters for a number of reasons. These included, to amuse, to mock, to hassle, to tease, to express affection, to criminalise, to release anger and frustration, to make decisions, to assist in the telling of stories, and in shaping expectations.

In terms of stereotypes and jokes, the first incident Zane recorded in his diary, the intent of which he described as humorous, was of an episode when he and some of his colleagues went into a dark room at work and one of the workers who was a Pacific Islander said to the Fijian Indian, "Remember to smile so we can see you", in reference to his dark skin. An incident in which Heather's Indian friend joked about having to put sunscreen on otherwise she would go so Brown Heather would not be able to see her. A South African friend of Rachel's made what she perceived to be an extremely derogatory comment towards Black people (the specifics of which she could not recall) and when Rachel expressed her shock, he replied that he was "just joking". The reason for making the joke may have been to induce laughter but may have contained some seed of frustration or bad feeling towards Black people. Rachel's shock was compounded by her knowledge that South Africans have a reputation for being very racist, and her friend referred to this in saying that he had better be careful 'being South African and all'. Rachel could not believe that it was just a joke and would not have if he had not explicitly told her.

In her diary, Natalie wrote about race in theatre and poetry work and that government funding opportunities were available in this area for performers who were willing to joke about their non-mainstream identity. She talked about not wanting to joke about 'squinty eyes and being teased for being good at maths' as those stereotypes were irrelevant to her. Her assessment of the situation was that 'before we can subvert the racial profiles we're still at that stage where all we can do is laugh at ourselves'. We talked about this in her interview – the idea that New Zealanders can only talk about race through jokes and that any other discussion around race is thwarted in order to not stir the pot of discontent.

As well as to joke to entertain, stereotypical jokes were used to hassle and tease. In most cases though, the acts were not overly malicious, although Zane in his observations picked up on the fact that repeated joking on a person could 'get to [you] after a while'. He wrote of a number of incidents in which the same Fijian Indian construction worker on his site was made fun of by his co-workers. He was given the title of "Abo" because of his habit of 'going walk-about' or wandering about on the construction site. When he backed the company van into a bollard, another worker jokingly muttered "Fucking foreigners". Zane felt that the root of the mocking may have been the example

set by a White New Zealand European foreman, and that the other workers were following his lead.

*I unpack the 'mocking' as follows. The White foreman, who manages the labourers, would feel that his masculinity was threatened by the Pacific Island labourers as they are stereotypically stronger than he. Because of this, the foreman would want to assert his dominance over the workers by bringing others down and himself up. He would pick on the least likely to retaliate – the nice, friendly Fijian Indian labourer. The others would find his comments funny as it validated them and by using them they would protect themselves against similar mockery. The Fijian Indian labourer would go along with the jokes because he was aware of his subordinate position and would not want to confront someone with more organizational power than himself in case of retaliation or even the loss of his job.*

A trend of minorities using their own negative stereotypes to mock themselves and make others laugh was noted. In particular, Lana was shocked upon hearing of her part-Islander sister using and allowing the use of negative Pacific Island stereotypes for a laugh in communication encounters with White friends. Lana noticed a comment on her sister's Facebook page by a particular White friend that read "[Lana's sister] stole my cup, cheeky darky". Another incident involved her sister walking past a car and joking that she could break into it. This same friend extended the play on the negative stereotype that Pacific Islanders are criminals by saying "oh, learning the family trade!". Lana 'couldn't believe that [her] sister's 'friend' would say things like this, and that neither girl thought that there was anything wrong with the joking. A friend of Liz's would often joke about her 'Indian-ness'.

Yasmin talked about mocking her Indian friend as a form of affection. She said that she teased her friend about being Brown to show that she was close to her and that her friend knew she did not mean to bring her down for being Brown in a serious way. She said, "if you weren't as close to someone you wouldn't feel comfortable enough to do it". Heather spoke similarly in her diary, of an Indian friend:

(Heather's diary):

*I can't really recall many occasions when I've had thoughts related to racial stereotypes except for jokes among friends and those are ones about myself or my friend and their race, the kind of banter you only get between good friends...laughing with my friend when she is hating on Indians even though she is, her saying she's Black, me telling her she's not, and she's not a real Indian because she was born in Fiji, silly things like that, but none really serious.*  
(Heather)

Luke admitted that he had friends who “do sort of racist-ish jokes but that’s always every light hearted.” He hadn’t felt the need to confront them on these comments as they were usually just joking. Out of these three, Heather was the one who questioned this sort of joking, wondering whether there was some truth in such jokes and whether one could “buy into [stereotypes] without being conscious”. She felt that the solution to this issue was to adopt a policy of laughing with and not judging the joked-on, although she concluded that there is a fine line between stereotypical jokes that were ok and ones that are not, even between good friends.

In focus group two, we discussed mockery and stereotypical accents. Zane brought up a radio ad for ‘Wok noodle’, a fast food noodle outlet and attempted to perform the gist of the ad in a mock Asian accent. He attributed this type of mockery to a form of entertainment in which Chinese accents were used for the comedic value. He said that the use of the accent had worked as it was a memorable advertisement to him. Yasmin then raised the personality of Chang on the Edge, an Asian radio presenter with such an Asian accent who the other presenters generally make fun of. Zane suggested that the reason the dominant group like to hear these accents is that they make us feel superior in our command of English, and Natalie chimed in saying that such mockery was easy to imitate.

Another way in which stereotypes were used in everyday communication interactions were in criminalising certain ethnic groups. Lana felt very angry about this use of stereotypes. She gave several examples, including the politician John Banks’ use of the stereotype of ‘young Māori and Polynesian men in South Auckland being paid the dole to sit in front of the TV watching pornography and smoking marijuana while they’re planning to come through our windows.’ Banks used this stereotype to appeal to the similar opinions of New Zealanders who fear South Aucklanders because of these types of stereotypes. She summarised the criminalising and stereotypical comment of a friend who ‘basically said that she was ‘sick of all these Māoris sitting around on the dole when they should be getting jobs like the rest of us’’. These types of comments serve to racialise Māori and Pacific Island men,

conflating Brown skin with discreditable qualities. Lana felt that these sorts of comments about Māori and Pacific Islanders were common in her experience.

Negative stereotypes were used to release pent up anger and frustration. Timothy recounted his frustration at some Pacific Island/Māori ‘pan-handlers’ he encountered on Queen Street in the Auckland CBD, whose behaviour seemed to him to reinforce the stereotype that Māori/Pis are lazy. In describing their behavior, he gave the reason for his frustration, which seemed to be they were not making any effort to ‘sort themselves out’. Instead, they were expecting hand-outs from people who were busy working for and earning their livings.

*He was, however, talking to the wrong person. I believe that the disadvantaged plight of ‘Brown’ people in New Zealand is not simply their own fault. I am convinced that it takes significantly more effort for them to earn a living and be what is known as a “good NZ citizen” than it does for a White person, and that White people (including myself) cannot understand this.*

*Despite this belief, it does appear to me at times that the only solution to their disadvantage is for them to work their way out of poverty, as Yasmin suggested, rather than demanding pity payments. Does this make me guilty of selling out to the White doctrines of liberalism and meritocracy?*

Racial stereotypes are used in everyday communication interactions in story-telling. One of Lana’s diary entries describes how this can occur.

(Lana’s diary):

*Today [someone I know] who lives in Australia was telling us a story about something that happened one night while he was at home. He was in his house...and outside there were about 15 drunk young Aboriginal men. [He] told us that they were making a lot of noise and just drunkenly wandering through their street, he said that one of them came up to his house and unscrewed the security light, but ran away when [he] opened the door. He said he’d “never been more scared in his life.” (Lana)*

The point of her telling this tale was to illustrate the use of the stereotype that 'Black' men are more aggressive or violent. She stated that she "felt like the way [her] Uncle was telling the story made the fact that they were Aboriginal an important one" to the events that happened.

An acquaintance of Rachel's had expressed to Rachel that she used racial stereotypes in making decisions about how to behave. The acquaintance said that she 'avoid[s] driving behind Asians because [she doesn't] trust the way that they drive'. Rachel knew of and recalled using the stereotype that Asians are bad drivers in the past, but not in altering her driving. She considered her acquaintance's actions to be 'mental'.

The final way in which racial stereotypes were used in everyday communication interactions were in shaping expectations and reducing uncertainty in interactions with strangers. Lana witnessed an encounter she could only attribute to one man judging another man by his stereotype. According to her (and paraphrased by me), an old White man at a service station seemed to be overcome by paranoia at the sight of a Polynesian man leaning on a stand whilst in the cashier line and repeatedly asked him to get back into the line proper (the full story as Lana told it can be found on page 187), suggesting that the colour of his skin shaped an expectation that the man might cause trouble. In the first focus group we discussed how a moko can be a barrier to employment because of the Māori-ness (= lazy, trouble-making), dissent and rebellion from the mainstream that might symbolise to employers, shaping their expectations of potential employees.<sup>20</sup> In his interview, Timothy recounted a high-school memory: when the new Asian immigrants came to New Zealand during the 1990s, Kiwi Asians, to their surprise and ire, found that their intelligence and command of English was questioned as teachers applied the new Asian stereotype to them.

Sometimes expectations were violated, which, more often than not, alerted the observer to and reinforced their expectations. Zane and Timothy both recounted incidences in which their interaction with another person evoked surprise and alerted them to their stereotypical assumptions about who does what job. Timothy found himself surprised when a taxi driver he encountered was White instead of African or Indian, and Zane recalled surprise when the person at a dairy's counter was White not Asian. Both felt that they would be more likely to trust and do good business with such people. Yasmin unpacked her use of the bad Asian driver stereotype saying that if she encountered a bad driver who turned out not to be Asian she dismissed the

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<sup>20</sup> According to a Māori expert, the visual manifestation of a moko often conjures up feelings of 'fear' in individuals due to their association with images of gangs and warriors (H. Paniora, personal communication, October 4, 2012).

incident as not relevant to the stereotype, but when a bad driver was Asian, the stereotype was greatly reinforced. In these non-stereotypical encounters, though the logical expectation would be that counter-information would work to dismantle the stereotype, stereotypes were repeated and confirmed in the consciousnesses of the participants.

#### 4c. Censoring

Lastly, race was manifested in talk in everyday communication interactions through social censorship norms. The idea that the topic of race is taboo in New Zealand was prevalent throughout the data. Timothy stated in his interview that he had been taught that race along with politics and religion were “taboo” topics of conversation in New Zealand. Luke wrote two of his diary entries on New Zealanders’ ‘fear of being racist’. Rachel felt like ‘race’ and its derivatives (‘racism’ and ‘racist’) were “swearwords” in New Zealand and that they “offended her more than actual swearwords” (“when you hear that on the news or the radio it’s like, oh crap”). Racism for Yasmin was “the worst thing you could do” as she explained in her interview. A number of facets of this sub-theme are explored here.

Participants illustrated a tacit knowledge of what one should and should not say in public, regardless of whether one is thinking it or not. Rachel felt that she had assessed that some of her inner thoughts were definitely not ones she would say out loud. She wrote:

(Rachel’s diary):

*I often think what people say aloud is just as bad as someone’s thought but I guess the consequences in society are less when you keep the comment or thought to yourself.*

*The people who do say things aloud are they just saying what everyone is thinking? Not sure – I think there is an arrogance with people who say such things in the open. (Rachel)*

She mentioned in her interview how she struggled with her non-politically correct thoughts such as feeling that the law against women wearing Burqas in public places in France was a good thing. However, she wrote of her shock and disgust at her South African friend making overtly negative comments about Black people. Lana wrote of her outrage that people such as John Banks, who explicitly used a negative racist stereotype towards Māori and Polynesians, are allowed to hold powerful positions in government. However, she could sympathise with the arguably overtly racist comments of

Mana Party leader Hone Harawira towards New Zealand Europeans. These were acceptable to her because minority racism towards the majority (acceptable) was nowhere near as damaging as majority racism towards the minority (unacceptable). Yasmin recounted her shock at an incident (presented in full on page 149) in which an Indian colleague praised her White skin and how it was the reason she looked so nice in the clothes she was wearing, saying that 'us Blacks could never look as nice as you'. To her, this was not an acceptable thought to communicate out loud (or even to think for that matter). Ameera was dumbfounded and upset when a respected colleague of her informed her that she would never be White in response to his observation that she was trying to be White. Zane felt that it was inappropriate for his workmates to be calling their colleague 'Abo', because it was a 'racist term'.

Some comments were perceived by participants as legitimate in the company of similar persons but were censored in front of others. Zane noted how a colleague 'freely referred to the workforce at his old job as Indians', but he was not sure how comfortably his colleague would use that term if his old workforce were present. Due to our ability to be accepted or 'pass' as 'White', both Natalie and I had witnessed people making derogatory comments towards Chinese people that, we presumed, would not have been made if the orators were conscious and aware that Chinese people were present. Because we were not always perceived as Asian in social situations, we had both at times been privy to the knowledge of how White people deprecatingly talk about Chinese people and Asians. Similarly, because of her capacity to be accepted in White social circles, Lana, who was part-Islander, had often found herself privy to the fear of White people from Remuera (a 'rich' 'White' suburb in Auckland) that young Brown Islander guys from ('poor', 'Brown') South Auckland were plotting to rob them.

These censorship rules were learned. Some examples of racism from the data that involved children showed their naivety in what was and was not appropriate behavior. This was picked up on by Heather following Liz's retelling of an encounter she had had:

(Heather's interview):

Liz: "I was walking down, one of the streets round here with my brother and a little Pacific Islander kid I don't know whether he was Tongan or Samoan...he was with like a bunch of his mates and they were just mucking round he was, a seven year old or something, he was like are you Chinese, and I was like oh we're half Chinese...then I said to him so what are you? And he was like oh I'm Chinese, and [in my head] I was

like...obviously you're not but I kinda just kept walking. And then after like a bit later he was like Go China! Like yelled down the road go China and I kind of felt...like...offended and upset...I felt like he'd been racist? For some reason I felt scared, um, and it was a seven year old boy, and I think my brother kind of felt a little bit intimidated by him as well just that he was...like it was, kinda maybe connected in some way to the whole ching chong china man thing back in the day..."

Heather responded to this spiel that she felt that it was sad when kids acted in such an insensitive and offensive way and wondered whether they were copying such behavior from television or from their parents.

Lana wrote of how her cousin's friend was told by a 'non-Brown' friend to make sure he told her 'Brown' cousin not to steal anything. Such a request (made in all seriousness as it was here) would be profoundly inappropriate and disguised in an adult context. This young person was explicitly communicating the discomfort and insecurity White people feel in Brown spaces in New Zealand, on account of the stereotype that Brown people are criminals and thieves who steal good White people's possessions. Both Lana and her cousin were shocked by "'the fact that he had the nerve to actually say it!'" To me, it shows the lack of social 'tact' that young people who have not been fully socialised into the adult world sometimes exhibit.

Participants felt that they had to acknowledge first that their comment might be offensive before they said it. This 'buffering' technique seemed to be used to prepare listeners for whatever opinion was to follow. It also seemed to increase the subsequent statement's legitimacy, as an individual point of view. Preambles such as "this might sound racist, but" were common in the data. One excerpt from the second focus group indicates the crucial importance of such phrases in order to avoid being labeled a racist. This excerpt has already been used in this chapter but it has one more offering for my findings. In it, Liz failed to begin her phrase by acknowledging that it was going to sound racist, and participants communicated their discomfort at her bold and unmitigated use of racist stereotypes. What is interesting here though is that Liz was not the first in this interaction to use this particular racist stereotype, the way in which she used it (without a buffer) allowed the other participants, to point the racism charge at Liz. They were talking about whether or not they agreed with educational scholarships offered to Māori and Pacific Islanders. Timothy was saying how he did not agree with scholarships based on "racial grounds" and would prefer that they were based on socio-economic grounds...:

(Focus group 2):

Timothy: "...otherwise a person who's parents are dirt poor and can't afford to pay for it but he's a, got an IQ equivalent to Einstein but he's White will miss out while someone who, I don't mean anything wrong with this, but who is maybe as dumb as bricks but because he's Māori will get in...it's not for the betterment of society."

Liz: "But do you think that in like, in the first instance,...taking the dumb Māori and giving him an opportunity, or taking the intelligent White guy, why are you looking at me like that [Zane]?"

Zane: "Just (laughs)...it sounds really bad..."

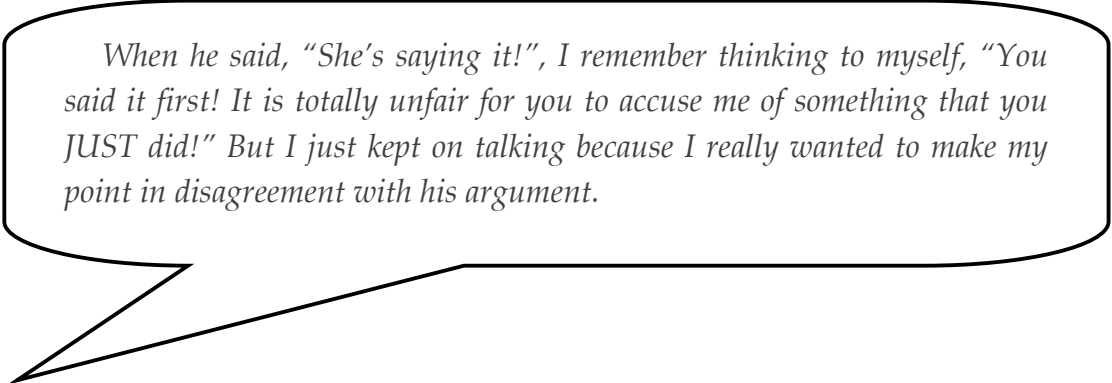
(laughter)

Timothy: "Yeah I know it does doesn't it."

Yasmin: "It's on tape."

Timothy: "She's saying it!"

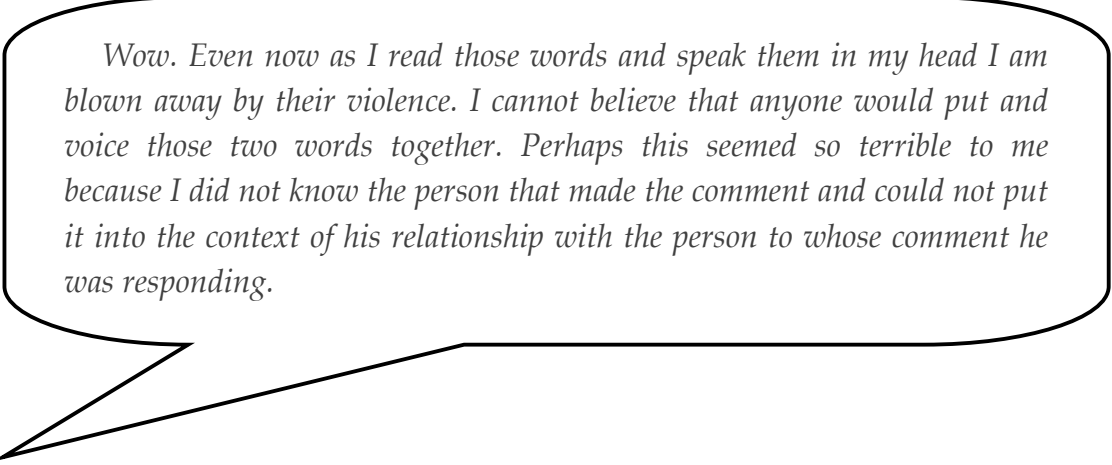
In this exchange, the racist stereotypes of 'dumb Māori' and 'intelligent White man' were drawn on, first by Timothy, then by Liz.



*When he said, "She's saying it!", I remember thinking to myself, "You said it first! It is totally unfair for you to accuse me of something that you JUST did!" But I just kept on talking because I really wanted to make my point in disagreement with his argument.*

This shows how the use of a convention such as buffering (Timothy: "I don't mean anything wrong with this, but...") can alter how an audience perceives a politically incorrect and possibly racist message in everyday communication interactions. Such a buffer can protect one from being accused of racism, as they 'didn't mean anything wrong by it'. Qualitative work has already captured these discursive maneuvers (see for examples Bonilla-Silva (2000): "*I am not a racist but...*").

Despite having to censor interpersonal communication around the subject of race, Liz noted that people seemed to be able to express these non-politically correct views in everyday online environments. A couple of times whilst on social media site Facebook she noted expressions that surprised and shocked her. She would not have expected these individuals to even think such things. One such comment was in response to a post about ethnic jokes being true in part: 'fucking niggers'.



*Wow. Even now as I read those words and speak them in my head I am blown away by their violence. I cannot believe that anyone would put and voice those two words together. Perhaps this seemed so terrible to me because I did not know the person that made the comment and could not put it into the context of his relationship with the person to whose comment he was responding.*

Participants felt that the social taboo against discussing race contributed to the creation of stigma and ignorance. Luke in particular felt that New Zealanders needed to cease their fearful and conservative avoidance of culturally and racially dissimilar others, and change their attitude into one of learning about, embracing, and including them.

According to Zane and Yasmin, a somewhat suppressed White backlash at "having to be politically correct" exists in New Zealand. Moreover, White participants felt that a double standard existed around having to be politically correct: they were not allowed to make non-politically correct comments but non-Whites were able to say what ever they wanted. Timothy, in his allegation that the rhetoric of some Māori politicians is what would be considered 'hate speech' in any other country, exemplified this well. He seemed to feel that Māori were able to get away with saying whatever they liked, no matter how offensive, about White New Zealanders.

Ameera raised the point that when people said to her that they were "sick of this P.C. (politically correct) bullshit" it was a way to "silence" her. What she seemed to be saying was that ridiculing political correctness invalidates the feelings of minorities and nullifies the damage inflicted on their sense of self-worth that occurs when insensitive and privileged majority individuals say whatever they want.

*I agree with Aameera, but I also have, over this research process come to sympathise with the angry mainstream as I can see how having to tiptoe around supposedly over-sensitive minority groups would be a huge disincentive to engaging with them.*

#### **Concluding notes for theme four**

The fourth way in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions was “Conversational tact: everyday speech conventions”. Under this theme, the set of tacit rules that we learn to guide and censor our talk on race in our everyday lives was presented. Two ways in which we talk about race in an everyday environment are through ‘Racialised neutral terms’, and ‘Racial stereotypes’. Individuals were also in the habit of ‘Censoring politically incorrect comments about race as well as an attempt to suppress race as a topic all together, to avoid conflict.

#### **Theme 5: Everyday emotional reactions to races**

Race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand in terms of participant’s emotional reactions to the visual manifestation of race. The following section groups these encounters into subthemes named after the emotional reactions experienced. A variety of emotions were experienced and attributed to racial, ethnic, and cultural characteristics and practices during interactions: ‘anger’, ‘disgust’, ‘instant connection’, ‘comfort/discomfort’, ‘fear’, and ‘romantic attraction/indifference/repulsion’. In some examples more than one of these emotions can be identified.

This and the following thematic sections will be full of non-explicated narrative vignettes as I felt that they best convey the emotions experienced without my interference. Furthermore, including complete stories, as co-autoethnographer-participants told them, enhances the collaborative nature of my research: the inclusion of the observations of my co-autoethnographers increases the importance of their voices relative to mine. It is contended that the participants as co-ethnographers had already identified, analysed and written accounts of their emotional reactions. My contribution as the main co-participant was to group and arrange them into a basic structure.

### 5a. Anger/cumulative anger towards a race

(Timothy's interview):

Liz: "...was there any other [encounter] that stuck out for you particularly?"

Timothy: "Oh yes. Um, being accosted while walking down Queen St by pan handlers wanting me to put money into their grubby little cups with their, just..."

Liz: "'Pan handlers', what are they?"

Timothy: "Beggars."

Liz: "Oh."

Timothy: "It's an old quaint term for it. Basically the beggars outside or the glue sniffers down outside um, what is it, you know, the Starbucks opposite Whitcoulls?"

Liz: "Yip."

Timothy: "Going down there to meet my girlfriend and walking..."

Liz: "Yip."

Timothy: "...back up and you got, all these dirty dirty dirty I don't know whether they're Islanders or Māori? But Polynesian in any respect just sitting out there grubbily doing it, and seriously I know I did feel kind of bad about it afterwards for hating all of them at the same...same budge but being like oh seriously guys, come on, I was just thinking having thoughts of like, oh their race will never get out of the gutters or type of thing it's so typical of them."

Liz: "Mm."

Timothy: "'Cos I was kind of tired of it by that stage, um, people just sitting round sniffing glue and, accosting, pretty much everyone that walked by for money."

Liz: "And what was the race thing in that?"

Timothy: "Basically the fact that they were all Islanders? And that the people that they were accosting were Asians who they assumed to be, rich,"

Liz: "...mm..."

Timothy: "...or White New Zealanders. And then, basically swearing at people if they didn't give them money. Or told them to go get a job and stop being a bum. Just like..."

Liz: "Sweet."

Timothy: "...They were just like, dirty looking..."

Liz: (laughs)

Timothy: "...dirty dirty dirty people."

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(Rachel's interview):

Rachel: "I was on Mt Eden, and there's that big hole, and no one's allowed down there now, so they put these signs up in every language, that no one's allowed in there, and...who's always down there? Like...I don't want to be offensive but...it's like Asian people, who are down there and I'm just like, hello! This is New Zealand. We don't know you and...you might think that's probably racist but I was like read the signs like if you expect us to, respect your country...that's the stuff I need to work on, and I didn't go down to them and say hey you're not allowed down here, I kinda just left them at it and let my anger inside of me whereas probably the best thing to do would have been to go down there and be like oh, you're not [allowed down here]."

## 5b. Disgust

(Yasmin's diary):

*I remember recently going down to the China town at the end of Dominion Road for a late night feed with a couple of friends. If I am to be honest, I do hold the opinion that Chinese people are a bit dirty and have some disgusting habits.*

*When we went into one Chinese restaurant I felt really repulsed by the sight of several tables absolutely covered with half chewed bones and gristle. The menu*

*put me off even more. It was filled with things like 'gizzards', 'necks', 'gristles' and the most unappetising cuts of meat I could imagine.*

*I left the restaurant feeling like my views about Chinese people being a bit gross were confirmed. Is this racist? Probably. I'm sure for most Chinese people their cuts of meat are perfectly acceptable and they would be equally disgusted at some of my habits. (Yasmin)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Liz's diary):

*I noticed the smell of a house inhabited by a majority Asian family. It was **gross** to me. I have been conditioned to air houses so those sorts of smells don't linger. I associate that smell with everything negative that I believe is part of the Asian culture....I feel like I can attribute this...[partly] to an incident when two [of my] friends were joking about Asian houses smelling like mothballs. And just general comments over the years about the smell of Asians and Indians and how you wouldn't want them as tenants because their cooking infiltrates the house. (Liz)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Yasmin's diary):

*One of my [acquaintances]...is Indian. She moved to NZ when she was a kid and has lived here ever since. She has a fully Kiwi accent and most of the time I forget she's not a Kiwi...She is also adamant that she will never marry an Indian man because she finds them gross. (Yasmin)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Zane's interview):

Zane: "I guess I find...Asian languages very unpleasant to listen to."

Liz: "Do you find Asian smells very unpleasant to smell?"

Zane: "Mm."

Liz: "Why do you think that is? Cos it's, do you think it's genetic?"

Zane: "No I think it's, it's just like stuff that's sung out of tune sounds bad, I don't think that's a genetic thing I think it's just a, the way you're wired, and I think..."

Liz: "So do you think you've been kind of acculturated or trained to like your own smells and like your own music and not like other people's smells or music or languages?"

Zane: "Yep...I'd say that there's languages like you'd like the like, you know, I think naturally you like the sound of Spanish. But I don't speak Spanish. And I like the sound of French. German's very unpleasant to listen to and so are Asian languages. So it's not a cos it's my own culture cos it's Spain isn't my culture or neither is Italian or whatever but I think it's, they're more pleasant to listen to they're ple - nicer to the ear..."

Liz: "But do you think that is actually how it is or it's just how you've grown up to understand, the world?"

Zane: "I would think it's how it is."

...

Liz: "Do you think Asians hate the sound of their own languages?"

Zane: "Well...I think...it's like if I was to come in and play a guitar...and just strum without playing any notes, it wouldn't sound nice would it? Is that a cultural thing? If you were to come from a background where you played guitars out of tune and stuff would it sound nice I don't think it would."

Liz: "Well...I'm not sure about music...but I definitely think that, the fact that I don't like, I get a I feel a little bit um, nauseas when I go into a house that smells really really Indian, is a cultural thing. I think I've been I've been, and I think it is attached to my ideas of that being wrong. Like it's different so it's wrong it must be wrong but I think, I'd be really interested for an Indian to come into our house and, smell it, like and si and tell us what it smelled like. And whether it made them feel a little bit sick."

Zane: "Mm."

Liz: "Like, I dunno, I feel like it's not, I feel like it's, so you you actually feel like it's, those languages are more disgusting?"

Zane: "Mm."

...

Liz: "Can you understand, do you think that someone from those cultures would think that their languages sounded disgusting?"

Zane: "Probably not."

Liz: "I guess what I'm trying to do is...make you think about the whole...it's not...necessarily wrong, it's just different, thing? And...when...[one is] hating on, someone else's culture...[one should think to themselves] it's actually not a good idea for me to hate their culture, and their smells and things...I think that's something I have to challenge myself with too like when I, when I hear a massive bunch of Chinese people speaking Chinese really loudly, and I get offended, um...I've gotta question why...they probably think that things I do are stupid and, horrible and wrong and stuff...cos, I guess it's a tolerance thing, well not even a tolerance thing it's a understanding thing...What do you think of that?"

Zane: "I think that's to a degree but I also think that there are, there is right and wrong, still..."

\*\*\*\*\*

(Liz's diary):

*I glanced out the window and saw a pretty girl as I was driving. As I continued to drive and look, I noticed she was Asian and all these negative stereotypes and thoughts came to mind and my evaluation of her and respect for her decreased significantly. I don't think anything of it until I put it under a critical race lens – then I knew it was wrong. (Liz)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Liz's diary):

*...walked round the corner the other day saw a Chinese person and immediately was like eugh...*

### 5c. Instant connection

(Liz's diary):

*I met a guy. I instantly recognised him as Asian...Then I looked closer and...[saw] that he was not fully Asian at the same time...I think he looked at me*

*in the same way and there was an...instant connection. Or maybe it was just me that thought it...I wanted to ask this guy what he was but I know that it offends me so thought I'd wait for him to ask me or offer the information. If he was like me we'd have lots of experiences to talk about and I'd feel a sort of sibling-hood with him – that our race made us closer. I have often found this with other half-castes. It may be a deceptive instinct though, excusing personality differences and classes to an extent. (Liz)*

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(Lana's diary):

*I've been told that I'm a 'plastic', somebody who is an Islander but doesn't act like one. And sure, I definitely don't act like your typical Islander, and this becomes even more apparent when I'm in a group of them – I can laugh at their jokes, but I'll never truly be one of them because I guess I don't have the same lived experiences...I don't come from a poor family, I have a White mum, I don't go to a big Samoan church and I don't speak Samoan. Having Samoan ancestry isn't really enough. But the weird thing is that it is enough when you first meet people – it's kind of like an instant connection. (Lana)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Ameera's interview):

Ameera: "I think about whether I would ever wear a headscarf...the being marked as something obviously from the outset is something I'm really conscious of and there's some benefit in that because people that come from the same community as you have that instant connection whereas for me I have to really work on that for people to trust me..."

## **5d. Comfort/discomfort**

(Natalie's interview):

Natalie: "...I experience extreme discomfort, when I'm around a bunch of Asians. Like extreme discomfort like I actually get so self-conscious..."

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(Focus group 1):

Lana: "Everywhere you go there's like...I don't know if that's just me talking as somebody who is part Samoan so I can see...or I can feel...like I go to Remuera that's a White suburb?...I know a lot of people who feel definitely really uncomfortable there, 'cos its such a White suburb but in a, place or in a space which like specifically for, Pacific Islanders or Māoris...that's like a special place where they can go and feel comfortable?...sometimes I don't notice when I'm in a big group of White people like I just feel like I'm one of the White people, but like, at other times you definitely notice like, there is not one Brown person here..."

Ameera: "Yeah it's really interesting and I think one of the things is that, sometimes you feel like you have to be on your best behavior, right you're interacting in this predominantly White world and you are, always an ambassador for, you know..."

Lana: "Yes!"

Ameera: "...the people you represent right? So you have to be, you have to behave,"

Lana: "You have to speak for your people kind of,"

Ameera: "You have to speak articulately, you can't, you know you have to have to be on your best behavior. And when you, are around your own people, then, there's this weight that's lifted cos you don't have to, do that all the time...for a moment, you can relax..."

\*\*\*\*\*

(Focus group 1):

Rachel: "I remember once when I was at a church service with, probably a thousand Indians, me and my now husband were the only White people there, and I felt completely out of my comfort zone, and, and I was just like, what the hang this is like, a, a club, and I felt completely out of my comfort zone..."

\*\*\*\*\*

(Yasmin's diary):

*[A friend of mine] said she feels more comfortable going to an Indian woman for a Bikini wax than to a White woman. She said she thinks it's because she doesn't*

*feel like an Indian woman would judge her as much. I suggested that maybe it is actually because she doesn't care as much what an Indian would think as a White person. Hmmm. (Yasmin)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Lana's diary):

*I was talking to someone about bikini waxes, and she told me that she would much rather get a wax done by an Asian at a random place than by her usual lady who is White. I questioned her about this, and tried to understand why she thought this, but she couldn't really explain it. Maybe it has something to do about a bikini wax being something quite personal and in a place which is quite awkward for some people...maybe she felt that it would be better for an Asian woman to do it because she would be less able to relate to her than she would to a White woman? I'm not sure. But I thought it was so strange that she had even thought about it...I remember my ex boyfriend couldn't believe how many non-White people there were working in our local supermarket...what's even more interesting is that he noticed that there were no White people working in the supermarket...maybe we notice when there are none of our own kind around. Because I definitely notice when I go to place where there are no Pacific Islanders or Māoris...that's part of the reason why I hate most of the North Shore! (Lana)*

### **5e. Fear**

(Liz's diary):

*Yesterday I was walking along the road and past a couple of dark skinned young males. I found myself intimidated by them. I don't think it was their skin, but the combination of skin and dress, or maybe just dress which signaled to me that they were part of a group of society that may be into crime and personal gain with disregard for others. But I did wonder if it was their skin colour...It could have been their body language, the fact that there were two of them, something I'd seen that day, the area we were in, my mood and dress, my body language (they may have been responding in a particular way to me). But because I've been thinking about race... (Liz)*

### **5f. Romantic attraction/indifference/repulsion**

(Heather's diary):

*I was out with my friend and we got on to the topic of dating and marriage and my friend who is Indian said she wouldn't marry an Indian man, that she knows what they are like and doesn't like them. Then I teased her about always being attracted to Asians and she said she would not go for Chinese, but maybe Japanese or something else and I laughed about my parents say that I can't name my children Japanese names unless I marry a Japanese man.*

*Anyway, this conversation got me thinking about race and who I would marry and if I would based on race. And I suppose in some way I would, I am inherently not attracted to Indian men, I don't find Pacific Island men attractive, and I rarely see a Chinese or Japanese man that I find attractive.*

*And that made me wonder about how and what is it about people we find attractive, perhaps I'm socialised to be or perhaps inherently I just am attracted to a more Western featured man, strong bone structure not too thin and looking older in the face, I find Asians look to young half the time, and not many have facial hair which is something I find attractive, a bit of stubble or well groomed hair and Indian men I find have too small a frame and I'd feel so huge standing next to them.*

*However sometimes there are exceptions but generally I naturally find White men more attractive for whatever reason whether social or genetic.*

*I don't really feel bad about it or like I'm being racist it's just a fact, and most likely if I do marry it will be a White guy.*

*I have also from a young age thought that I wouldn't be able to handle or want to handle marrying someone from a very different cultural background. For example I wouldn't put up with Pacific Islands culture of grandparents and family expecting to be as much involved with the raising of your kinds than you and I wouldn't be able to put up with a culture where the husband is the head of the house which you have to get permission from for things.*

*It may sound shallow to some or superficial or racist, but it's just me knowing who I am and openly saying if I want a happy marriage I better avoid certain things, I'm not trying to be a purist or anything. If someone wants and can make mixed ethnicity marriage work for them, which plenty do then that's great. Nothing wrong with that, I say go where your heart and your head lead you, after all that's what I am aiming to do as well. And who knows maybe I will end up a hypocrite and marry someone from Africa and go live there, but I doubt it.*

*As for my friend if she doesn't want to marry an Indian then she shouldn't. It would be silly to have to marry an Indian many just because you yourself are Indian. (Heather)*

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(Natalie's interview):

Liz: "Maybe we should unpack that thing about [not] being attracted to Asian guys. You know how Heather was saying...I'm just not attracted to Asian guys...Are you ever?"

Natalie: "No. No I'm really not. I can think of one and he's a actor,"

...

Liz: "Is he quite confident?"

Natalie: "Yup...He's in LA..."

Liz: "I was just wondering if it had anything to do with at the beginning how we were talking about, um,"

Natalie: "Social advantages..."

Liz: "Yeah social advantages but also how you were saying that, in a group of, when you walk into a group of Chinese people there's no challenge. And like,"

Natalie: "Ohhhh right yeah..."

Liz: "...and maybe going out, maybe going out with a Chinese guy they'd always be like following you?"

Natalie: "Yeah it's true."

Liz: "And looking up to you and stuff and sometimes you,"

Natalie: "Yeah."

Liz: "...you want someone to who's your equal?"

Natalie: "...Yeah true..."

Liz: "...To challenge you?"

...

Natalie: "That's really interesting."

\*\*\*\*\*

(Lana's diary):

*Today I had a conversation with a friend of mine who has a crush on an Indian guy (my friend is White). She mentioned that most of his friends are Indian, but that his mum said she wouldn't mind if he dated a White girl. It made me think of a time when I was dating a White guy and a friend from school who is Māori said to me "we need to stick to our own", and seemed almost disappointed in me for not dating a Brown guy. I don't know if this idea is racist, because 'birds of a feather flock together', and I wouldn't hold it against anyone if they just weren't into White girls/Indian boys...but maybe it becomes racist when the reasons for your not being into, say, 'White girls', are stereotypes and you actively reject the possibility based on the fact that they're White? I don't know...*

*I know that a lot of Samoan parents would hate the idea of their child marrying a Tongan...I've heard a lot of stereotypical comments about Tongans from people (not good ones) as reasons for their children not to marry one (a Tongan). I definitely feel that this is a bad attitude, to automatically rule a person out based on their 'race' or ethnicity. (Lana)*

### **Concluding notes for theme five**

The data showed that race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand in terms of participant's emotional reactions to members of particular racialised groups. The fifth theme 'Emotional reactions to races' grouped narratives of these encounters into subthemes of the emotional reactions experienced. They were: 'anger', 'disgust', 'instant connection', 'comfort/discomfort', 'fear', and 'romantic repulsion'.

## **Theme 6: Reacting to everyday racism**

Race is manifested in the lives of New Zealanders in reactions to everyday acts of racism. The theme of reacting to everyday racism describes emotions experienced upon perceiving racism, subsequent thought patterns, and stories of participant's experiences with challenging everyday acts of racism. Emotions felt included 'Anger', 'Hurt', 'Numbness', 'Pity', 'Guilt', and 'Shock'. Thought processes included 'Rationalisation', 'Deciding whether or not to challenge', 'Am I overreacting?'. Finally, three 'Experiences with challenging' are presented to exemplify the types of reactions one can provoke when confronting racism in New Zealand. As with the previous theme, un-elucidated narrative vignettes were considered to be the most effective way to present this theme.

### **6a. Emotional reactions to everyday racism**

*i. Anger*

(Lana's diary):

*Okay so a friend of mine was talking about 'dole-bludgers' and she mentioned something which REALLY irked me...she basically said that she was 'sick of all these Māoris sitting around on the dole when they should be getting jobs like the rest of us'...those aren't the exact words but you get the gist.*

*I don't even need to talk about how incredibly deluded and racist that comment was...I mean, it's so unfair that there are ALL kinds of people on the dole, but Māori get this really bad image of being lazy dole bludgers. This is a very real stereotype which I hear all the time about Māori people. It makes me really angry. As a Samoan, I feel like I'm connected to Māori people in some way (hahaha), and I always feel like I should defend them. Maybe it's because Samoans and other Pacific Islanders get stereotyped negatively as well...and it's the whole solidarity of the minority type thing. (Lana)*

\*\*\*\*\*

(Focus group 1):

Heather: "Whether the racism is against the minority or the majority I still don't like it, if someone's going to be like oh White people are so bad and evil they did this, this and this, that'll offend me cos I'm like why are you lumping me I didn't personally do that, where are you getting this from. If someone goes Indians are horrible I'm like excuse me, how dare you say that you know that's not true, of all Indians or whatever, so I get equally offended you know it doesn't matter if they're attacking the minority or the majority they're doing it from a place which is like, nasty."

*ii. Hurt*

(Lana's interview):

Lana: "I was at the service station this one time...it was quite late and...the doors were closed...and you had to go to the window to pay... there were like four people in the line...the cashier was an old White guy...there was this [man]...[in his] late twenties maybe... Polynesian...standing like in the middle of the line, and, he kind of like, moved to the side to lean on a box...a little bit close to the window...he was just resting on it like just leaning on it while he was waiting[.]...I was

standing at the back of the line...watching this whole thing[.]...[T]his...cashier guy...was really really distracted by [the Polynesian] man [who was leaning on the box.]...[H]e kept...glancing over...looking really like kind of scared and, eventually he was like, "Can you get back in the line please?" ...[The Polynesian guy] didn't move, and [again the cashier said], "Get back in the line." ...[L]iterally the line was here [(Lana indicates with her hands)], and he was here[.] ...[H]e pretty much was in the line, but he was just a little bit too close to the window[.] ...[The Polynesian guy said] "I'm not getting in the line," and the [cashier's] like, "Get back in the line," ...he just wouldn't let it go[.] ...[T]he [Polynesian] guy...knew it was...I knew it was racist[.] I left...I didn't need to pay for gas[,] I was buying something else but, I was like I'm not going to talk to you, and this guy left as well[.] ...I just left there feeling like I actually wanted to cry because, I felt soo like, I don't know. It was just really[,] really, kind of hurtful.

\*\*\*\*\*

(Liz's diary):

*I was chatting to a friend online and we were talking about hairdressers. I mentioned that I wanted to find a cheap Asian hairdresser because they tended to be cheap since no one would hire them in the expensive salons. She laughed. I was serious. I was being intentionally provocative to see what her reaction would be. I was kinda upset when she laughed because it makes me upset that some people are discriminated against because of the colour of their skin. People don't want to challenge things, they're too busy just being happy doing their own thing and don't care about how life gives everyone a different sized load. (Liz)*

iii. Numbness

(Natalie's interview)"

Natalie: "I think we all have different emotional capacities like, some people are objective and just a bit more grown up...they don't care what they get called...I feel I've become quite desensitised for example. Or, if it does hurt me so what? I'll get over it? Like I'm quite hard in that way? But that's from overcoming the grief that I grew up with. Like overcoming my dad's racism like I had to, learn the hard way, it wasn't a natural thing. I conditioned myself to get over it."

\*\*\*\*\*

(Yasmin's diary):

*I had an interesting email exchange with [a friend] at work today. She told me that being Indian at primary school was quite hard 'cos kids are actually really nasty. She was mocked a lot and called curry muncher. But as she got older it stopped happening.*

*She says she still gets a lot of Indian jokes thrown her way but none of it offends her. She is proud of the fact that she gets to eat yum food all the time and that has become her comeback to being called 'curry muncher'. (Yasmin)*

iv. Pity

(Liz's diary):

*A lecture on a new generation of socially-inept Japanese men with little interest in women evoked laughs from the audience and sadness from me. Why was it funny to them?...it made me sad for them which may have also been the incorrect response because it patronised them. Feeling sorry for someone is only ok when they want to be felt sorry for - when they need comfort, and is not ok when the person's pride is compromised...What if the Japanese lecture was on the demise of White men? Would it have been funny or more tragic? (Liz)*

v. Guilt

(Rachel's diary):

*Tonight I went on a plane to Christchurch. I was amazed at an incident when lining up for the baggage to be put through the scanner. There was a HUGE sign that said 'NO TROLLEYS' (yet it was in English). Two people in front of me proceeded to push their trolleys in. I can't believe how annoyed I was. Can't they read the sign? (The reason I was so annoyed was I was a wee bit late and the aisles were too small for the trolley but if you maneuvered it properly you could actually squeeze through at a slow pace).*

*Anyway – they get to the front of the queue looking absolutely bewildered not understanding anything and I was like 'Oh – they're Asian...' They got a HUGE telling off from the airport staff and I look back on the situation now and realise they actually couldn't speak English so probably couldn't read what the sign said...*

*But there was a picture of a trolley with a big cross through it...*

*The situation was crazy people getting cross at the and I feel now it was partly because of their ethnicity...*

*I mean I was being that way...*

*Doing this study helped me to reflect on how do they feel? I was able to assess the situation on many different angles – also see that my first reaction was one I probably wouldn't want other people to know. (Rachel)*

*vi. Shock*

*(Liz's diary):*

*I was watching a movie with some friends. At one point three men were being hanged. The first two were White and they got to speak some final words to the crowd before they were hanged but the third guy was Native American. He began to speak but a bag was put over his head, muffling him. One of the people I was with laughed at this. I was shocked and upset, firstly that N[ative] A[merican]'s had been treated in this way but my shock was compounded when an audience member laughed. I would have thought they would know better in this day and age. I hate it when someone laughs at something which is so morally unjust and there is no way for the person to retaliate. (Liz)*

**6b. Dealing with everyday racism**

*i. Rationalisation*

*(Luke's diary):*

*There are heaps of racial stereotypes out there, some I feel I have explanations for and others I don't.*

*One of these is that asians are worse drivers than Europeans. Growing up and visiting Nepal as well as other asian countries has given me an experience on asian roads and European roads. They are quite different. People who have gotten used to one way of driving will find it hard to adapt to another way of driving. Asians who have gotten used to driving on Asian roads will Asian protocols will find it difficult to switch their habits and get used to western rules and protocols. In the same way, and maybe even more so, Europeans who are used to NZ roads and rules would find it extremely difficult to adapt to asian roads. I myself am a confident driver in NZ but would do what every I could to avoid driving in Nepal as I would probably crash in less than 5 minutes.*

*Another stereotype is that Pacific Islanders are not as smart as Europeans. And that Europeans are not as smart as Asians. I believe this stereotype has*

*Arisen from the educational system in NZ. I know that the polynesians in the classes I teach have different learning methods than the Europeans and Asians. I also know that they perform a lot worse in exams as it is not an environment they thrive in. That is why I believe that a “one size fits all” approach is not good for education. (Luke)*

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(Focus group 1):

Ameera: “...it’s an interesting distinction between being um, racist and then prejudice because we’re pre, I guess we’re prejudging a place based on these racial connotations I don’t but it happens because we’ve gotta make decisions right? At certain points in time you’ve got to make decisions over things like,...where you’re gonna eat, who you’re gonna interact with, all that kind of stuff...”

ii. *Deciding whether or not to challenge*

(Luke’s interview):

Liz: “The other day, [some acquaintances of mine] were talking about like, the kind of things that they know about China because of negative, um, media images like they were saying how like, buckets of pollution get exported to China and I think the, milk scandal came up um, and I...felt a little bit uncomfortable about that and wondered whether I should say something...[but] I d[id]n’t want to burn bridges? (laughs) but I wonder whether it’s more important to, confront issues like that than to just leave them unsaid.”

iii. *Am I overreacting?*

*My normal thought process in the face of subtle racism: “There’s no point in challenging, they’ll just tell me I’m overreacting, or pretend to take me seriously when secretly they’re just thinking I’m overreacting and just need to be placated...I probably am overreacting...”*

(Natalie's interview):

Liz: "I just wanna tell you about this ad that I was watching on TV the other day for Countdown, it was a White family...they're sitting round the Xmas table and [the family dog is sitting at the table with them]. [T]he Granddad...[referring to the dog, says,]... "He's a funny looking guy, is he foreign?...[A]nd then [he says] "I hope he...has good table manners," or something...I was just like,...should I say something like should I ring them up and be like, "From a critical race perspective..." ...cos it's actually associating foreigners as being kinda funny-looking people that you joke about and you don't take seriously and kind of, dismiss their culture...but then I was like I won't do it because I'm too scared and...what if I'm making a big fuss about nothing. And I asked [my friend] about it and [he] was like nah you're making a big fuss about nothing..."

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(Liz's diary):

*[Whilst watching the live coverage of the 2011 New Zealand parliamentary elections on television with my family] I asked (rhetorically) why there was no representative from the Asian community commenting on the election when they'd obviously gone to [the trouble] to get a Pasifika rep. Mum said, "Maybe they're all too busy running their businesses," using a stereotype, and when I got annoyed at this, suggested that I could go and be the Asian rep, at which point I stormed out. It seemed exclusive to not have someone speaking for Asian communities somehow. I was surprised they'd even brought the Pasifika guy in the first place. (Liz)*

*iv. Experiences with challenging*

(Zane's interview):

Zane: "Well there's this guy at work...a Fijian Indian guy...And they started calling him, 'Abo'?...One of the guys came up with the name...cos he's always going walkabout?...[E]very time they'd say it I'd be like oh guys guys guys...and then one guy came into my office and I was like,... "Where's [our Fijian Indian colleague]?" And he was like, "No no, we don't call him [by his real name] we call him 'Abo'". And I said to him, do you even realise how racist that term is? And he's like, "Oh nah we're just joking we're joking we joke all the time...you know you know, he's

laughing and all...it's fine it's fine," and I said to him, "Well, put yourself in his boots...if someone was mocking you...would you kinda laugh at it or would you, you'd cert – it'd get to you after a while wouldn't it, but you wouldn't show it. 'Cos I know I've had the same experience where I think people are mocking me for always being inquisitive and asking questions and, I kinda pretend that it [doesn't] affect me but it actually [does]," and then he was just kinda like "Oh, yeah nah I see what you mean eh like...I definitely know what you mean that's like the last, 17 years of my life I've been called, fat boy," 'cos he's quite fat. And then so that was quite good...(Liz: So they stopped calling him 'Abo'?)...Nah he didn't stop calling him 'Abo' but I think it made him think about it?...[Then there was this other time when] the [manager]...called him 'Abo' and I was like, "That's a racist term don't call him 'Abo'," and he's like,... "Whadya mean racist, you were just telling me before how much you hated [two colleagues of ours] cos...(laughs) they're Pacific Islanders" ...(N.B. this is contrary to what Zane wrote about the incident in his diary. He wrote that the manager 'turned around and said that I did it too' and that 'Standing next to [a Pacific Islander colleague], he [said] that I called [the Pacific Islander colleague] a 'Black cunt'...all the time')...and blatantly made up a lie in front of them. But he was kidding. Um, and...then the guy who actually came up with the term 'Abo', he came in, and he's like, "Nah nah we're calling him 'Abo'," and I'm like, "Bro, 'Abo's' a very racist term," and he's like, "Oh, we're calling him 'Abo' cos he goes walkabout," [and I'm] like, "Do you know that, that's pretty much like me calling someone a nigger you calling him 'Abo'...that's how racist it is," and he just didn't really get it, and he didn't really care. So it wasn't as effective talking to him."

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(Rachel's diary):

*A few years back, I got sick of watching movies that had 3-4 White people in the movie with 1 pseudo funny dark skinned guy – this probably sounds REALLY racist. I guess I was angry that every movie I seem to watch had these sorts of characters, kinda boring and overdone. My friends were really shocked and mocked me about it.*

*To me it was a point of view. To them it was racism [in her interview she says, "my friend were angry with me because they just took it they never heard my point...they were like, "Cos there's a Black guy in it and I was like yes but I have a reason for that." I still think it is a point of view and kinda feel for that race that*

*they are being portrayed as the “comedy funny type”. Isn’t there more to them?  
(Rachel)*

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(Natalie’s interview):

Natalie: “I remember this one time, I was sitting in my...living room in my old apartment with [two of my close friends]...a commercial came on the television, and...my friend...who’s an actor, he’s Filipino, [was] playing, a Mexican or something?...[H]e was...playing this evil invisible thing, like Mexican crazy dododododo...he was like this evil conscience? Preying on this innocent White man? And...he was blatantly speaking in an American accent and [in my head] I was like, “Oh my god he’s Filipino and, he’s this invisible man and it’s tormenting everyone with it’s mythical spells.”...I...casually as, said, “Oh my gosh this is so racist,”...and then, it just immediately upset both [of my friends]?...[T]hey were like, “Why why is it racist? Natalie, what now?”...[T]hey were really pissed off[.] [In my head] I was just like, “Woah.” I [said], “Oh, oh yea this guy isn’t even Mexican haha,” and...they couldn’t laugh it off. ...[T]hey were like, “So? There’s not many actors around,” and I was like, “Yeah but he’s being this like, like they’re just playing up the Mexican stereotype and, everyone’s laughing at this Mexican guy for, can we leave it?” kind of thing and they were just like, “Go on, go on, what’s wrong?”...[T]hey were just getting really shitty. ...{These friends of mine} are as White as they come. ...[T]hey didn’t give me a chance like, they immediately went, “Oh, she’s dissing a White man,”...and they ganged up on me together...[This was two of my closest friends]...I almost broke into tears ‘cos they were just being horrible. Like over nothing. I wasn’t attacking them or anything I was just saying, “This commercial is racist.” Casually while we’re eating food like, and I remember just like not just having no energy after that like just feeling like anything I said would be shit...I don’t know if you agree but it’s pretty frickin hard to talk about this...because they, it got so much aggression out of them.... And imagine if I couldn’t claim being half-White. What if I was the Black guy in the room making those comments? I would no doubt have been harassed more but fortunately in that context, well maybe not fortunately but you know like, I was able to pull the White card and kind of be like oh it’s just awareness.... Like their volume of voice went right up and everything they were being blatantly aggressive...so yeah, I do think we need to talk about it ‘cos it really just made them so mean. They were really mean.”

*At this point in my thinking, I don't think that challenging racism in a confrontational way is a good idea at all, especially when there are others around for the perpetrator to lose out in front of. It seems that we can only very rarely challenge racism through direct confrontation. An open heart and a willingness to understand others and a favourable context can be a starting point, but whether this results in a lasting awareness is another matter. I still have to constantly challenge myself, and I've been reflecting for nearly two years now on this stuff.*

### **Concluding notes for theme six**

The sixth theme presented the ways in which race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in everyday acts of racism. The theme of reacting to everyday racism described emotions experienced upon perceiving racism, subsequent thought patterns, and stories of participant's experiences with challenging everyday acts of racism. Emotions felt included 'Anger', 'Hurt', 'Numbness', 'Pity', 'Guilt', and 'Shock'. Thought processes included 'Rationalisation', 'Deciding whether or not to challenge', and 'Am I overreacting?'. Three 'Experiences with challenging' were presented to exemplify the range of reactions one can provoke when confronting racism in New Zealand.

### **Theme 7: "Race matters to me because I look different"**

The final theme that emerged from the data is to do with the everyday experiences of those who 'look different'. These ideas will be discussed under the subtheme headings: "Race impacts how I am perceived and treated", "Most of the time I feel just like anyone else", 'The dreaded question: "Where are you from?"', and 'Levels of sensitivity'.

#### *7a. Race impacts how I am perceived and treated*

Non-White participants felt that race impacted how they were perceived and treated. In terms of an awareness of different treatment, Ameera reported experiences in which someone new had "recognised [her] as being something or an 'Other' and because of that [had] decided to engage in a conversation". Non-White individuals, it could be suggested, are able to distinguish this 'different treatment', because they have experienced how White people treat

them when they think they *are* one of them, and also how they treat them when they think they *are not* one of them.

*In my experience as a half-Asian New Zealander, I know what it is like to be treated like a New Zealander, and treated like a foreigner. Sometimes, upon meeting me, people, who are often White New Zealanders, assume I am not originally from New Zealand, because of the colour of my skin. Sometimes they outright ask me about it, but it is also evident in the patronizing and discriminatory behavior they display in these situations. Sometimes I feel that I can tell that people have feelings of indifference towards Asian-ness, because of their unwillingness to talk to me (or "distant-ness") in comparison with their willingness to talk to other, White people ("engaged-ness"), and sometimes I am aware of their awkwardness around me, and get the feeling that they are battling with their hostile feelings towards Asian-ness. Am I oversensitive because I know what it is like to feel indifference and hostility towards Asians? It is a possibility...*

Interestingly, Heather wrote that she had often wondered whether she would be treated differently if she were a different ethnicity. Assumedly, Heather, who is visibly White, has not experienced the transition from being considered an 'outsider' to being considered an 'insider', that many non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders undergo in the company of Whites.

Being aware of exactly how White people around you are judging you because of your skin colour, was reported by Liz and Ameera. Liz talked to Natalie about walking through the centre of Auckland city and being shamefully aware and uncomfortable that passersby might be assuming she was "just another Asian immigrant". In her diary she reports trying to speak really loudly in clear English whilst bushwalking so that White passersby would know she belonged to their community and would not think she was just some non-White trying to be White.

*Do I possess White envy? It is true that I try and shun my non-White identity but is it because I envy Whiteness or is it because I am actually White on the inside? Does my insecurity come from jealousy, or simply a fear of possible rejection from the White community I have always known? I think the latter.*

Moreover, she didn't want passers-by to think that she and her White husband (who was with her) were one of *those* couples that she knows some people look down on because they marry in spite of a language barrier out of some sort of 'lonely desperation'.

*How horrible is it to think that?! I would definitely not want anyone to know that I had these thoughts. But I do...*

In her interview, Ameera's comments showed that she is aware of how mainstream society sees her too: "I know when people see me they see someone that is different and I don't see that always myself because my family are about as New Zealand as you could come but it takes a while for people to realise it."

*7b. 'Most of the time I feel just like anyone else'*

For Ameera, these experiences of different treatment and incorrect assumption would initially surprise her as "you don't necessarily *feel* different". This 'Jekyll and Hyde' type consciousness was reported by Lana and Liz too. In Lana's interview, Liz and Lana discovered that they both felt 'White' much of the time, because 'White' to them was 'normal', and most of the time they felt 'normal'. Later in the interview Lana said, "I have to try to be Samoan...it's like my default is White". However, in her diary, her interview and the focus group she participated in, she talked about knowing the uncomfortable feeling of being the non-White in a White situation well, showing that she understood both what it was to feel normal (White amongst Whiteness), and abnormal (Brown amongst Whiteness).

Natalie was the only non-White participant who did not bring up her experience of this 'double consciousness' (Du Bois 1903). The reason for this could be that it simply did not come up in conversation. If it was because she did not possess this double (self-) consciousness like the other non-White participants, it could be explained by her possessing a (self-described) "diverse-looking bone structure", meaning that she could pass for, be accepted by, and more seamlessly gain insider status in many different ethnic groups. In her diary she recounted being mistaken for a number of different ethnicities not her own – including Polynesian, Māori, Spanish, European, 'just White', and Middle Eastern. Perhaps, particularly because of being able to pass as 'just White', she may not have experienced being treated as or

feeling like an 'Asian' or an 'Other' upon interacting with members of the White majority.

However, like the rest of the non-White participants (Ameera, Lana and Liz), Natalie felt that she should 'stick up' for the minority community she ethnically belonged to. Race affected her feelings of empathy in interaction. She recounted experiences when she had observed racism and ignorant insensitivity towards Chinese people, which had made her feel uncomfortable. In her first diary entry she writes of such an incident.

(Natalie's diary):

***"Chinese girls can't ride bikes."***

*My White, middle class [friend] made this comment after I said in front of him and my White, middle class female friend and I were talking about the merits of cycling (in Barcelona, despite the fact I can't ride a bike I've been told time again to do a bike tour).*

*He appeared to be motivated by the fact that his ex, who was Chinese could not ride a bike. This made me think of the small wristed girls who would sit out on PE class/skip class all together during high-school. I thought of all those anti social girls who would whisper in Chinese rather than speaking the common language.*

*My flatmate later apologised/corrected himself for the misstatement. But this was not all of his own intuition. By then I had already highlighted the obvious - more Chinese ride bikes than kiwis - every 100 households have nearly 143 bikes - as it is a far cheaper mode of transportation than the motor vehicle. (Natalie)*

Though she, like her flatmate, felt a sense of disdain at the inactive lifestyles of her Chinese school peers, she also felt that she needed to correct her flatmate's blatant oversight. In her interview, Liz asked her, "Do you often find yourself in those situations where someone says something against Chinese people and you're like, hang on," to which she replied, "All the time. All the time." She said that though she doesn't like the Chinese way of life, she feels "obliged to look out for other Chinese". She talked about how her Chinese grandma had made no effort to learn English, in a way, that indicated to Liz that she thought it contemptible. Liz responded in what she thought was agreement: that she too considered it rude when people move to a new country and do not attempt to fit in with the people there. However, Natalie surprised Liz by then acknowledging, empathetically, that "They would have struggled so much to set up life", in what Liz interpreted as a sort of defense of her grandma's actions through explanation and justification. Liz and Natalie spent much of the interview discussing our mutual disdain for our 'Asian-ness', even though they both define themselves as 'half-Chinese'.

However, it was evident from the data that when others are being racist towards Asians or Chinese people, they feel allegiance towards and sympathy for this community that they at all other times despise.

Lana felt strongly upset and angry about the use of negative stereotypes about Māori and Pacific Islanders, as well as Muslims or Arabs in New Zealand. She talked about the reason for this being that she was ethnically part of a minority group and could feel sympathy for ‘that kind of thing’, despite having never experienced overt racism herself. She wrote that she often felt really angry upon hearing the stereotype of Māori being ‘lazy dole-bludgers’, and felt as though she should defend them because of ‘the whole solidarity of the minority type thing’. A number of times in her diary she expressed anger at what she perceived to be racism, performed by majority groups and members towards minority groups and members, but followed these outbursts by writing of how she could understand how the majority group might arrived at this perspective.

*7c. The dreaded question: “Where are you from?” – others have issues with it too!*

In Ameera’s interview, when Liz brought up her frustrations with being asked the question, “Where are you from?”, Ameera commiserated with her. She said that when she was asked the question, that her response depended on whether she was in an annoyed mood or not.

(Ameera’s interview):

Ameera: “Like if I, am, then I’ll be really kind of, like I won’t, I’ll make it hard for people? But if I’m feeling alright (laughs)...asking people about their origins is a really personal thing and, I really really appreciate it now, when people, don’t ask me until they know me well.”

She went on to explain further:

(Ameera’s interview):

Ameera: “And, that is, yeah, ‘cos I’m not ashamed of it in any sense but I just think that, I know why people are doing it? And I think that that’s wrong? I think that they shouldn’t, they’re trying to place me and they’re trying to understand, me based on, a set of, you know, origins and all of that kind of stuff...where I fit in...and, that’s not ok with me? They need to know me...”

Interestingly, however, she felt that making one's frustration evident at being asked this question and being reluctant to answer it made it seem as though one was not proud of their ancestry.

The above quote of Ameera's expressed a similar sentiment to a comment made by Natalie. Natalie felt uncomfortable using the label 'Chinese' as a self-descriptor because of the stereotypical messages it could send about her to whoever was asking the question, messages she did not associate at all with: "It just so happens that my mother is Chinese I'm not necessarily claiming or expecting anything cos of Chinese it just that is my genetic makeup".

Lana was the only non-White participant who did not report having been asked the question 'Where are you from?' Perhaps this was because it was obvious. Alternatively, could it be explained by the following?: Pacific Islanders are not conceptualised of as threatening to the dominance of the White majority in the same way that Asians are...They therefore do not need to be "Othered" (for example, in the form of asking them the question "Where are you from?") in the same way that White New Zealanders subconsciously feel that Asians must be. Making ethnically Asian people feel like "Others" or outsiders somehow seems to reduce the threat they supposedly pose to the dominant White majority...?

#### *7d. Levels of sensitivity*

Lana wrote of how as a member of a minority ethnic group, she felt more attuned to subtle racism from the majority ethnic group in her everyday experience. At the start of her interview she told me of her surprise at the number of encounters affected by race in her everyday life, including many things she would have not picked up unless she had been focused on this study. When I said that this made her unusual compared to some of the other participants, who struggled to write down any interactions that made them think of race, she said, "I'm wondering if that's 'cos...people who aren't White generally, can pick up on like race issues, quicker? Just because I dunno. It's like around us everyday?"

However, an idea that came up in her interview and in the focus group was that there are different levels of sensitivity and offence. Participants felt that sometimes they thought that certain people were being too sensitive and seeing racism where it was not. Zane reported having felt like people like Liz, Ameera, Natalie and Lana pick up on racism that is not actually there. Because of his experience, he could not understand people like them, and invalidated their sensitivity to subtle racism. What Liz realised and suggested in Lana's interview, and the second focus group, was that just as Zane might invalidate her sensitivity to racism, she had been guilty of invalidating the

sensitivity of those even more stigmatised than herself. Ameera seemed to be able to understand this. This idea helped Liz to interpret Scribe's reported accusation of racism towards the Wellington police that Liz recorded in her diary, and that she spoke about in the first focus group. Although Liz initially felt that he was being too sensitive, she questioned who she was to say he was too sensitive, recalling her own experiences with people who have said that she herself was being too sensitive. But, herein lies a conundrum: since picking up on subtle racism is so subjective, who possesses (and moreover who can decide who possess) the correct level of sensitivity?

*In thinking this through, at this point in time, my new rule is to take people's perceptions of racism seriously at all times and not discredit them from the start, even when I think they are over-reacting. Once I have gathered more information on why they feel this is racist, I can then make a more informed judgment as to whether one can justifiably call the act in question a racist act. I just have to hope that no-one takes advantage of my crediting of all accusations of racism in order to gain pity and, in turn, ill-begotten charity.*

### **Concluding notes for chapter seven**

In Theme 7, the idea that 'looking different', racially, (that is, being non-White) is a way in which race is manifested in everyday communication interactions, was discussed. For the most part, participants felt as if they were 'normal'. But it seemed that every so often, they were reminded through comments and behaviors that because they looked racially 'different', they were the odd one out, and were perceived and treated as such. Non-White participants reported struggling with being asked the same dreaded question that initiated this research: "Where are you from?" Non-White participants felt that they were more attuned to subtle racism and discrimination, not just towards their minority group, but towards non-White minorities in general. This was because they had all, at times, experienced it in some form themselves. However, non-White participants noted that non-White individuals differ in level of sensitivity to racism.

## OVERALL CONCLUSION

This findings chapter has presented and explained the seven themes that emerged from the answer in response to the question “How is race manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand?” The first theme, ‘Everyday living in a multicultural society’, presented the idea that New Zealanders are aware that New Zealand European dominance is eroding, and New Zealanders are not managing and dealing with this transition very well. The second theme, ‘Reference to racism’s past’, was about how racist social systems of the past (such as slavery, colonialism, segregation, and apartheid) continue to be subtly or overtly referenced and used in everyday communication interactions. The third theme, ‘Social status’ was about how White superiority exists in New Zealand in the minds of not only White individuals, but also in the minds of non-White individuals, who sometimes try and maneuver their way into Whiteness in their everyday communication interactions. However, because they are not White, they can never ‘truly’ be New Zealanders.

The fourth theme, ‘Conversational tact – Everyday speech conventions’, looked at the tacit knowledges that are adhered to in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand: in the ways that people use seemingly neutral terms in a racialised way; in the use of stereotyping for a number of different purposes’ and in censoring comments they know are not appropriate to express in public. The fifth theme, ‘Emotional reactions to racism’ considered how emotions are manifested in everyday communication interactions based in reaction to visible racialised traits. The visual manifestation of race has an impact on our emotions in everyday communication interactions. The sixth theme, ‘Reactions to everyday racism’ was about how people react to acts they perceive to be racist, emotionally, and by challenging or not challenging. People have distinct emotional reactions to racism and are then faced with having to decide how to interpret it internally, and whether or not to respond to the perpetrator. Finally, the seventh theme, ‘Race matters to me because I look different’ looked at how non-White individuals understand how being non-White matters in everyday communication interactions.

Chapter 6 will discuss these findings with reference to relevant theories, concepts, and other studies, and will suggest what they might mean in terms of how race continues to be significant in New Zealand.

## CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

THIS RESEARCH SET OUT to examine how race is manifested in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand, using an unconventional, experimental methodological approach. It was envisaged that in doing this, the researcher would be able to draw some conclusions as to how race continues to be significant in New Zealand. Chapter six further analyses and discusses the meaning and implications of the findings of this research, thematically, with reference to the theories, concepts and studies described in chapter three.<sup>21</sup> A concise answer to the main research question is given, as is a set of concluding ideas as to what the answer means and implies in terms of the significance of race in New Zealand.

### THEMATIC DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

#### **Theme 1: Everyday living in a multicultural society**

The data collated under this first theme was on increasing multiculturalism in New Zealand and everyday intercultural issues. Participants were aware that New Zealand was becoming less visually White. Increased diversity was a celebrated change, and participants talked about how they loved diversity for the exciting new perspectives and cultural traditions that they had been exposed to as a result. However, there was a sense of concern that some cultural groups were not assimilating into the New Zealand way of life and were bringing in their own customs and traditions that clash with those of the host group. Another issue was the cultural insensitivity of New Zealand

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<sup>21</sup> Themes are not discussed in order of importance.

Europeans, and the 'backwards-ness' New Zealanders were showing in not embracing change as fast as it is happening. There seemed to be a passive resistance to some of the new ideas that different cultures were bringing to New Zealand, exhibited in everyday behavior in the form of an unwillingness to respectfully learn about other cultures. Moreover, informal segregation was found to be quite pronounced and noticeable in everyday settings.

These findings indicate that New Zealanders are becoming increasingly aware of what other research on the New Zealand identity (for example Bonilla-Silva (2000); Liu (2005); Hokowhitu and Scherer (2008)) has noted – that New Zealand's identity is changing.

The data collated under this theme can be interpreted using the concept of 'cultural racism', the replacement of outdated racial hierarchies with new cultural ones. In excerpts from the data used to illustrate this theme, a number of cultural racism discourses identified by Lentin (2005) can be discovered. They are: 'celebration of difference'; 'migrant impunity and threat'; and 'defending the nation'. Participants used the 'celebration of difference' discourse that Lentin (2005) designates as a potential indicator of cultural racism. A number of them alluded to the excitement and opportunity that comes with living amongst multiculturalism. The discourse of, 'migrant impunity and threat' was one that participants were aware of in New Zealand, specifically in reference to Asian migrants ("Indians are everywhere, Chinese are everywhere, Asians are everywhere..."). The discourse of 'defending the nation' was identified in one participant's statements ("New Zealand society has to protect what has been defined as being Kiwi culture, otherwise it will cause so many problems it's not funny...").

It was also apparent in this data that participants would attempt to discuss race through the concept of culture, another sign of cultural racism. One participant noted the disproportionate failure of darker-skinned ethnic groups at school, and felt that this was due to their cultures not being integrated into the educational system, placing them at a cultural disadvantage. Cultural sensitivity issues were spoken of as if they were racism. One participant spoke of the repeated cultural insensitivity of the older New Zealand European individuals. Repeated use of the word 'culture' to speak about race issues by participants in this research reinforces the finding of Wetherell and Potter (1992) that culture has become New Zealander's default term of reference for human categorisation.

At other points in the data, however, it seemed that the concept of 'ethnicity' and ethnic terms were being used to talk about race. Much of the data revolved around five main ethnic labels used in New Zealand. The first four were used in a straightforward way: Māori, Pacific Islander, Asian, and Indian. Sometimes Māori and Pacific Islander ethnicities were referred to in

conjunction (“Māori and Pacific Islanders”). However, participants were inconsistent when referring to, and sometimes seemed confused about what to call, the White majority. When they were not referred to as simply ‘White’, they were referred to as ‘New Zealand Europeans’, ‘New Zealanders’, ‘Kiwis’, and even ‘Anglo-Saxons’ by one participant. Callister (2008) has raised the idea that the main ethnic groupings in New Zealand are quite similar to racial categories. As participants often talked about race by using ethnic labels, it appeared that for them, ethnic labels in New Zealand are closely intertwined with racial categories. Perhaps, in New Zealand, race has been replaced with ethnicity as well as culture.

Everyday intercultural tensions can be interpreted as ‘everyday boundary processes’ that reproduce race (Dixon et al., 2005). Despite a general optimism around diversity, in ‘living multiculturalism’ in everyday settings, participants sometimes encountered minor clashes or tensions between cultural and ethnic groups. In alerting participants to race, these episodes seemed to remind participants of the problems that diversity can bring. Many of the tensions involve White New Zealanders being insensitive to members of non-White minority ethnicities or cultures. These episodes seem to reinforce not only an idea of insurmountable differences and boundaries between ethnic and cultural groups, but also the idea that non-New Zealand cultures are not worth learning about because New Zealand culture is superior. This places non-New Zealand cultures and the individuals that practice them in a lower position. Although they were minor disturbances or tensions nestled in amongst otherwise easy everyday encounters, it could be suggested that everyday intercultural tensions are one way in which race is subtly reproduced in everyday life.

Participants seemed to feel that New Zealanders are ‘behind’ or backwards in terms of their racial-ethnic-cultural conceptualisation of their national identity. Again, this seemed to indicate a sort of passive resistance to change with regards to the increasing Asian-ness of the New Zealand population. Michelle’s (2012) findings that Asians are absent from prime time television advertising were echoed in one participants’ observation that a long-running New Zealand television soap opera did not have an Asian character. This suggests that New Zealanders see Asians as ‘other’ – not part of their national identity. This is no doubt related to the repeated characterisation of Asians as alien and outsiders that is a part of New Zealand’s recorded history (Ip, 2005). Such sentiments seem to continue to influence our sense of identity today.

The idea that New Zealand Europeans exhibit a general lack of interest towards other cultures that was identified by my participants, has also been identified by Brebner (2008). Brebner found that ‘lack of motivation’ is a factor inhibiting the formation of friendships between Pakeha and Asian

international students at Auckland University. One participant in my study pointed out, like participants in Brebner's study, that there was no incentive to get to know cultural 'others'. In fact, in his opinion, there was a disincentive – cultural differences would mean that the time and energy invested in making a non-culturally similar friend would be greater. It could be inferred that this assumption is a barrier to the initiation of intercultural friendships. This is why, as another participant put it, "birds of a feather flock together". Moreover, my findings seem to show that the propensity of New Zealand Europeans to engage in a patronising way with non-New Zealand Europeans is linked to a sense of cultural superiority ("I would say I probably had more confidence talking to people who weren't White."). Perhaps what this means is that a lack of motivation on the part of Pakeha individuals is due to a sense of White superiority – that forming relationships with non-White individuals is not to their social advantage. It may even be considered detrimental to social status. One participant admitted that he used to "mock [his] sister a bit for having only Asian and Indian friends."

My research found that several participants felt that some cultural differences are insurmountable, even in close relationships. This has bearing on the notion of 'contact theory'. Gordon Allport's (1954) contact theory advises that one of the best ways to reduce conflict, and breakdown negative stereotyping and prejudice between majority and minority groups and individuals, is to get them interpersonally interacting with each other in a favourable environment. In two particular examples from the data, contact theory is challenged. Two European participants talked about how negative stereotypes about Indians were humourously employed in their friendships with individuals from Indian backgrounds. What this could suggest is that in some interethnic friendships, one friend strategically and humourously uses negative stereotypes of their own ethnic group commonly held by members of the other friend's ethnic group. This indicates to the other friend that they do not have a problem with the use of these negative stereotypes in a joking way. In some cases, they may even agree with them. For example, in a friendship between an individual with an Indian background, and an individual with a European background, the Indian might joke about Indians smelling like curry, to indicate to the European that use of negative European stereotypes about Indians is alright with them. This signals to the European individual that they can relax and do not have to worry about being culturally insensitive. This analysis could perhaps help to explain Fozdar's (2011) findings that interracial friendships do not necessarily lead to interracial empathy and decreased stereotyping in New Zealand.

However, a series of other examples from the data suggest that Allport's 'contact theory' works 'up to a point'. One participant's stereotypes of Pacific

Islanders were not reduced, but his empathy for them seemed to be increased. Another participant's extended contact with people of a different culture to his own did lead to an increased understanding of their culture, but he felt that there were some things that he could never understand. Two participants mentioned incidents in which they realised that they could not understand or accept particular parts of their 'ethnic' friends' cultures. Another participant described a process of coming to terms with her friend's 'unfair' cultural restrictions, the conclusion she had reached being that it was just different, and although it did not make sense to her, she could accept it. However, she did not go as far as to say that she agreed with it. Also, she indicated that since having taught at a majority Polynesian school for a time, she would feel more inclined to defend Polynesians when they were negatively stereotyped. What these examples suggest is that increased contact may result in increased empathy and tolerance, but complete empathy and understanding may never be achieved.

The findings around everyday informal segregation seem to resonate with the findings of a number of studies. Zembylas's (2010) findings that schools, as emotional spaces, are racialised was supported in participants' discussion of racial segregation that occurred among social groups at their schools. Lewis (2003) and Schwalbe et al. (2000) both mentioned boundary maintenance as a way in which race is reproduced in everyday communication interactions in their research, and it seemed in my research that informal everyday segregation was one way in which boundaries were maintained. Participants seemed to know 'who' (which ethnic group) looked appropriate in certain everyday contexts. Data suggested that it was not only Pacific Island and Asian ethnicities that are segregated in terms of the area of Auckland in which they live as was found by Johnston et al. (2008), but there are a number of ethnic groups that have clustered in areas in Auckland, including South Africans, Africans, Koreans, Chinese, and Indians. The result of cultural differences, informal ethnic segregation seems to reinforce the idea of a degree of insurmountable difference between ethnic groups in New Zealand.

## **Theme 2: References to 'racisms' past**

The second theme that emerged from the data was about the continuing awareness and effect of past racist regimes and ideologies. These included colonialism, the Holocaust, South African apartheid and the American civil rights movement. Race was manifested in attitudes to affirmative action measures, the phenomenon of 'crying race', the occasional overt experience of old racist attitudes, and continuing inequality. In this theme, the superior/inferior relationship between White and non-White people was both

reinvigorated and challenged. The idea that lighter-skinned people are superior to darker-skinned people was both reproduced and challenged when participants encountered light-skinned people being wealthy and successful, and darker-skinned people being poor and unsuccessful, and through overt expression of the belief that darker-skinned people are inferior.

However, some participants felt that White people should not have to continue to compensate for the actions of their ancestors during the time of colonialism that created such a racist system. They felt that non-White skinned people were taking advantage of 'White guilt' through demanding affirmative action and 'hand-outs', rewards that they had not worked for. Because White individuals are no longer racist in the overt way that their ancestors were, some participants felt that racism no longer negatively affects non-White people. According to this perspective, everyone has a fair chance in society nowadays, and if non-Whites just work hard and stop complaining they will be able to attain wealth and success too.

Amongst these findings, we can trace two of the four discourses that Nairn and McCreanor (1991) identified in Pakeha submissions to an overt racial conflict in 1979. The two that were found in my data were 'special treatment is unfair' and 'egalitarianism should inform policy'<sup>22</sup>. Wetherell and Potter (1992) identified a similar discourse of 'people should be treated equally' in their research into everyday Pakeha talk. However, some New Zealand European participants in my research engaged in contrasting discourses. They felt that special treatment might be good and necessary to assist individuals disadvantaged by their ethnicity. For them, it could not be a coincidence that those in the lowest spectrums of society were from particular ethnic groups. This could be explained by the fact that Nairn and McCreanor (1991) looked at public submissions, which would have been written by individuals who were particularly politically concerned with protecting Pakeha interests, and were not afraid to state their views out loud. Unlike Nairn and McCreanor (*ibid.*, 1991), I did not set out to analyse data collected from individuals who were certain enough of their opinions to make public submissions. As to why my findings are different to Wetherell and Potter's (1992) findings, it could be suggested that as I am carrying out my investigation twenty years after them, Pakeha sentiments have mellowed and changed because of the concepts of 'tolerance' and 'acceptance of diversity' now being taught in schools. Young people are now equipped with a better attitude towards diverse cultures and ethnicities.

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<sup>22</sup> There were no references to the other two of 'blaming Māori for their 'badness'', and 'biological authenticity is questionable'.

Three other discourses that Wetherell and Potter identified in their research on everyday Pakeha talk could be found in my data. In my opinion, these three discourses: 'resources should be used efficiently', 'we have to live in the present', and 'the importance of being practical', seem to all fall under a meta-discourse of 'civilisation must continue to develop and progress'. This meta-discourse was identified in my data when participants talked about moving beyond past grievances, especially colonial grievances, and into a new, more developed, and better world ("the betterment of society"). But other participants felt as though promises such as the Treaty of Waitangi should be honoured and settlements not rushed, some of whom identified as part White/New Zealand European/Pakeha ("we definitely have to stick to it...we shouldn't try to speed up the settlements or anything like that").

The final discourse identified by Wetherell and Potter (1992) which they labeled, 'Māori culture as heritage and therapeutic', was not identified in my data. Instead, Māori culture was seen by some participants as a distinct component of New Zealand culture and identity. Māori culture inspired feelings of patriotism and excitement ("[Taking part in a Powhiri (Maori welcoming ceremony)] makes me want to *be* Maori!"), a finding which seems to resonate with Sibley and Liu's (2004) finding that Pakeha students support biculturalism 'in principle'. My participants' support for the integration of Māori language in schools is important in light of Doerr's recent research on the marginalisation of te reo Māori (Māori language) in everyday life. Doerr's low estimation of support for te reo Māori in New Zealand was countered by participants feeling positively about Māori in schools. They felt it would be a good thing if te reo Māori was a compulsory in schools in the same way that English is at present, to honour our indigenous culture, and respect te reo Māori's status as a national language. If this attitude is widespread, the future of Māori culture in New Zealand is bright.

The discourse of meritocracy (the idea that everyone should have to work for their success and not be given goods undeservedly through affirmative action programmes) identified in the data could be taken as evidence that a form of 'symbolic racism' exists in New Zealand. 'Symbolic racists' believe that affirmative action programmes give resources away undeservedly to lazy individuals. However, Liu and Mills (2006) ask whether these sentiments are really symbolic racism or whether they reflect genuine concern for the future implications of the redistribution of resources among ethnic groups. My findings are inconclusive on this front. One White participant did talk about her concern for her potential children, that they would be disadvantaged in the future because of affirmative action programmes in place now. On the whole, participants' comments seemed to indicate to me that they really do feel as though redistributing resources is unfair and unwise and could cause

problems in the future. Some of these same participants, however, did not seem to feel that some ethnic groups were disadvantaged in any way. This belief shows, I think, an inability to understand what it is like to be disadvantaged by the system. Those participants who genuinely were worried about future social cohesion tended to be more willing to believe that systemic disadvantage exists, and lamented the fact that there was not another solution to unfair ethnic inequality.

In discussions on 'crying race' as a way in which race is manifested in everyday life, 'modern racist' opinions were apparent; such as that purportedly disadvantaged groups are getting too demanding, and that their anger is incomprehensible (Romm, 2011). 'Crying race', for some participants, was a strategy used too frequently to demand unearned privileges. Minorities' anger at their disadvantage was invalidated in the minds of some participants, as they felt it was not disadvantage but laziness that was the reason for their comparative lack of resources.

However, other participants felt sympathetically towards individuals who 'cry race', as they had sometimes 'cried race' themselves in response to perceiving others being racist towards them. Sue's (2010) 'microaggressions' in the form of 'microinvalidation' (invalidating accusations of racism) through accusations of hyper-sensitivity were reported in the data, both by performers and receivers of invalidation. Participants had differing opinions on what counted as racism and what did not ("My dad is always saying oh yeah, just cos they're racist to me, and I don't feel like that's the case..."). Interestingly, it was apparent in the data that White participants invalidated some of the accusations of non-White individuals, and that non-White participants invalidated some of the accusations of other non-White individuals even more disadvantaged than them. In both cases, it seemed as though invalidation was a result of not being able to imagine experiencing the type of racial discrimination identified by an accuser, due to not personally having experienced such discrimination.

'Microassaults', (Sue, 2010) or overt disdain for or rejection of other groups and cultures was evident in terms of one participant noting that they knew many individuals that would not allow their children to marry outside of their culture ("I know that a lot of Samoan parents would hate the idea of their child marrying a Tongan"). The same participant also noted the overtly hostile use of negative stereotypes to reinforce the superiority of the stereotype user's culture and group over the stereotyped culture and group ("...a friend of mine...basically said that she was "sick of all these Maoris sitting around on the dole when they should be getting jobs like the rest of us.").

Contradictory views around whether or not race was declining in significance in New Zealand, could be related in some way to Kirkwood et al.'s (2005) findings of a variety of views on the continuing significance of colonialism in New Zealand, in public submissions to indigenous rights claims over the foreshore and seabed. Participants felt that New Zealand needs to move beyond colonial relations and into a multicultural future, however, they also recognised that the legacy of colonialism and colonial institutions are continuing to have a negative impact on groups whose ancestors were colonised, and a positive impact on groups whose ancestors did the colonising. They were aware of the inequalities that scholars have identified in New Zealand, in terms of health, education, the justice system, employment, and housing. As well as being acknowledged as a product of colonialism, institutional racism was acknowledged as a problem in New Zealand.

In giving their opinion on measures such as affirmative action based on ethnicity, some participants fluctuated from one position to another, which could be interpreted as 'ambivalent modern racism' (the alteration of attitudes depending on what is appropriate in the social context (Romm, 2011)) and 'aversive racism' (hiding of negative evaluations of other races behind a non-prejudiced opinion (Trepagnier, 2010)). However, I would suggest that it was more that participants were confused as to how to solve the problem of racial inequality, rather than them trying to hide their true racist nature.

An analysis of the data for evidence of Bonilla-Silva's (2006) 'colour blind racism' reveals some indications that it exists, in terms of: participant support for meritocratic principles and policies; blaming groups for their own failure; and at times suggesting that they themselves did not judge others based on the colour of their skin. But other indications of 'colour blind racism' were not identified: participants did not attempt to attribute discrimination to reasons other than racism, and did not think that natural informal segregation is acceptable. Nor did White participants seem to feel angry when they were referred to as White (however they had been in situations in which individuals had been offended at being externally named in this way). This could mean that in New Zealand, in general, people are not as insistent on 'colour blindness' as in places such as the US, where the concept of 'colour blindness' originated.

### **Theme 3: Social status**

Both Addy (2008), and Consedine and Consedine (2005) argued that Whiteness is an advantage in New Zealand. A number of other authors also

mention Pakeha hegemony in New Zealand (Kobayashi, 2009; Wetherell & Potter, 1992; Borell et al., 2009; Stuart & Ward, 2009; Lyon et al., 2010; Dürr, 2007; Gilbertson, 2008; Huijser, 2004; Fitzgerald, 2009). My research found that race is manifested in everyday life in actions based on a belief in White, Western superiority, and could be seen to support the idea of Pakeha hegemony. Participants were aware that Whiteness is the invisible norm in New Zealand, and that White people had a monopoly not only on markers of success but the definition of success. Non-White participants were strongly aware of life being easier for White people, and success being more easily achieved because White people do not have to prove their capability to attain positions of influence.

In their research Yosso et al. (2009) talked about the 'Whiteness' of learning institutions. They found that for Latina/o students at three universities in the US, university was defined as a 'White space'. Two participants in this study reported feeling the same way when at a university in New Zealand. As Jones (1986) found relations of subordination and dominance in an all-girls high school between Pacific Islanders and Europeans, I identified relations of subordination and dominance between Asians and Europeans in reminiscing on memories of my high-school years.

Similarly to the findings reported by Hallgren (2005) who carried out research in Sweden, minorities in New Zealand may feel as though they have to 'work harder' to fit in to mainstream society. Two non-White participants felt that they had to be 'on their best behaviour' in some social situations because they felt as though they were representing their minority group.

Veninga's (2009) study of school desegregation in Seattle, Washington, found that students 'mobilized their bodies' to negotiate belongings that were denied on the basis of phenotype. My participants reported 'acting' like the ethnic group that they wanted to belong to. They had found that they were able to negotiate their way into an ethnic group that they were not part of on the basis of their phenotype, by performing that identity. Performing a non-aligned identity could mean altering dress, listening to particular music, and driving particular cars. At school particularly, 'Brown' culture was performed by White girls because it was cool, but as one participant indicated, "a lot of White girls wanna be Brown" in that "they wanna act Brown and do Brown things and listen to Brown music" but "they don't wanna be *Brown* Brown cos they would *not* wanna be Brown". By this, the participant meant that these White girls who acted Brown recognised the advantage that being White gave them and that they could always reap the benefits of these advantages by easily slipping back into the performance of a White identity.

Elhers (2006) writes of how inconsistencies in performance and skin colour are anti-hegemonic. What she means by this is that a White person acting like

a non-White or a non-White acting like a White disturbs the reproduction of essentialised racial categories and therefore disturbs the reproduction of race. However, my findings around internalised racism and its manifestation in everyday life (in terms of non-White individuals acting White to gain acceptance in to the dominant group) suggest that when non-White individuals act White, White hegemony is reproduced. It is only when a person whose ethnicity gives them power chooses to perform a non-powerful identity that racial hegemony is disrupted.

Everyday performances of race in my data consisted not only of speaking and dressing like someone from an essentialised racial group, but also making decisions like someone from that group. One non-White participant talked about having a White 'compass' – being very aware of how a White person would make decisions and judge the world. In the first focus group participants talked about choosing to eat at a café run by Europeans, as cafés run by Asians tend to produce inferior food. Moreover, choosing schools was a significant decision. One non-White participant mentioned how her parents worked hard to send her to a 'White' high school, based on the idea that a school that had a high rate of non-White students would disadvantage her, and not give her as many opportunities and/or open as many doors for her future. Performing Whiteness was a way in which non-Whites could work against the disadvantage that is their skin colour.

Performing Whiteness could suggest simple manipulation or role-playing for advantage's sake alone, or it could go deeper than that: Whiteness could become the non-White participants' sole identity. This seemed to be the case in the reflections of two non-White participants, and also in another participant's observations of non-White individuals around her. These non-White individuals had internalised the beliefs of White racism, including the stereotypical views that White individuals had of them, as well as of others ("[An Indian friend of mine] doesn't want to marry an Indian because she thinks they're gross" / "I don't like the Chinese way of life, the values that I've been brought up with"). They (the non-White individuals) tried to avoid their stereotype at all costs, exchanging their allegiances to their non-White group for sole allegiance to White society ("I tried to speak loudly in Kiwi English so passersby would know that I was Kiwi"). What separated this from mere manipulation was that these individuals looked down upon non-Whites and felt superior to them ("I noticed she was Asian and all these negative stereotypes came to mind and my evaluation and respect for her decreased significantly"). Others were simply able to act White but did not seem to think of their non-White ethnicity as inferior ("[I've] got a great mixture of backgrounds").

Like scholars who conducted their research in Canada (Brooks, 2008) and Australia (Mapedzahama et al., 2011), my findings also showed that long-term or New Zealand born non-White individuals feel uncomfortable when they were asked the question 'Where are you from?' as it makes them feel 'othered' and illegitimate. Gilbertson's (2008) research indicated that there is a problem in New Zealand with non-White (as opposed to White) immigrants not being accepted as fully-fledged New Zealanders because of their racial and cultural characteristics. My research seems to suggest that not only do non-White immigrants find it more difficult to be accepted, but that non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders experience difficulty as well, in that they often experience circumstances in which their origins are questioned, and are sometimes aware that they are being treated differently than White New Zealanders, because of the colour of their skin.

#### **Theme 4: Conversational tact – Everyday speech conventions**

The fourth theme that emerged from the data was about the way in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions through conversational tact, or the rules around how to talk about race with others. One of the ways in which race was inferred in speech was in using racialised ethnic/cultural/national terms. Though the use of these terms seemed neutral, they conveyed subtle racist beliefs and/or attitudes. The terms 'Kiwi' and 'New Zealander' were often used in place of 'New Zealand European' or 'White New Zealander', whereas at other times participants acknowledged the terms as referring to all New Zealanders with all different skin colours and backgrounds. The terms 'Asian', 'Chinese' and 'Indian' were thought of as having taken on racialised meanings, in that they are now, as one participant described, 'trigger' words, associated with racism. Using one of these terms invokes an alertness that is uncomfortable. Participants felt they had to tread carefully when using these terms so as not to come across as racist. The terms 'ethnic' and 'race' were associated with non-White individuals, which showed that White people are the norm, the blank slate from which others diversify. White participants felt that they did not have an ethnicity, or a culture, and they felt unqualified to talk about race because they did not feel as though they had experienced racism.

Unintentional use of the term 'New Zealander' to refer to 'White New Zealander' (a finding of this research), indicates how easily racial commonsense understandings can come to mind and be reproduced in everyday talk. Whitehead and Lerner's (2009) research found that people use racial common sense understandings in conversations even when they are trying not to. One of Critical Race Theory's main tenets is that race is

pervasive and Bonilla-Silva's (2011) notion of 'racial grammar' suggests that racial knowledge is embedded in our subconscious. It seems that the knowledge that a New Zealander is White is part of subconscious racial common sense in New Zealand.

This research also discovered that terms such as 'ethnic' and 'race' were used to refer to non-White people. Use of these terms can be seen as subtle 'othering', distinguishing 'us' who are normal (without race) from 'them' (who 'have' race). Essed (1991) calls this everyday form of racism 'problematization', which occurs when non-dominant groups are cast into the 'atypical' category by the dominant group.

One of the ways in which race was found to be talked about in everyday communication encounters, was through ethnic jokes or everyday comedy that made use of negative ethnic stereotypes. Participants noted that those around them would use negative ethnic stereotypes, but often in a 'just joking' way. According to Yosso et al. (ibid., 2009), even if the motivation is simply to ridicule and induce laughter from an audience, the joke reproduces the negative stereotype. The effect of such an act, according to Yosso et al. (2009), is that race is reproduced without the opportunity for challenge. What he means by this is that non-dominant ethnicities are ridiculed, but if anyone challenges the performance of a joke based on a negative ethnic stereotype, the accused can simply state that they were 'only joking, not serious'. In other words, the 'joker' can make a racist joke then use this statement to frame the joke as meaningless, and themselves as 'not racist' (Barnes et al., 2001).

Muiji and Solomos (2005) describe racialisation as the process by which social issues or problems are imbued with race. This seems to have occurred in New Zealand in some of the negative stereotypes that have developed and become well known. Wealthy inner-city residents of Auckland have, according to one participant, linked a problem with theft in their suburb to young Māori and Polynesian men from South Auckland. Another example of this from the data is that Aucklanders seem to have linked the problem of bad driving habits on Auckland roads to Asians.

The finding of my research that race talk is censored in everyday life has also been discussed by Eliasoph (1999), who not only discovered a propensity to censor talk in order to avoid offending others, but suggested that censoring, or following correct etiquette for talking about race, can reproduce instead of silence race. One participant in particular seemed to come to the conclusion that the social taboo against talking about race (except in non-serious or in confrontational ways), limits our ability to increase our cross-cultural understanding. Knowing not to talk about race was thought by one participant to be compounding the problem of interethnic group hostility and resentment. As New Zealand becomes more multicultural, perhaps New

Zealanders will have to somehow begin seriously and constructively talking about race again, in order to develop new forms of multiculturalism that are inclusive, not exclusive, and beneficial and fair to all.

### **Theme 5: Emotional reactions to races**

The fifth theme that emerged from the data in terms of how race is manifested in everyday communication interactions was about everyday emotional reactions to the visual manifestation of race. Participants reported feeling fear, anger and disgust towards other ethnic groups. Others talked about the sense of instant connection one feels when meeting someone who looks like them. Feelings of comfort were recorded when in the presence of racially/ethnically similar others, and discomfort was felt upon being the odd one out racially or ethnically. Finally, race and ethnicity affected who participants were drawn to /not drawn to romantically in their everyday communication interactions. What this suggests is that though individuals might try to claim that race has no impact on their interactions (in other words, that they are colour blind), our emotions betray us.

This demonstrates that the visual manifestation of race is one of the initial characteristics that we recognise and react to in interactions with others. Like the unintentional use of the term 'New Zealander' to refer to White individuals, this finding supports the Critical Race Theory notion that race is ordinary and pervasive. Participants realised that they did react to race in their everyday encounters; they were not as colour blind as they had thought. As Whitehead and Lerner (2009) experimentally found, people use racial common sense even when they are trying not to. Participants reported knowing that having feelings of anger, fear and disgust towards ethnic 'others' was 'wrong', but their racial common sense was manifested in their emotional reactions anyway. However, participants knew not to let negative emotional reactions show. Trepagnier's (2010) study of silent racism in White American women notes a series of unspoken negative thoughts towards non-White individuals. Participants were often surprised when they analysed their feelings towards 'other' non-White ethnic groups and found feelings of hostility. This could indicate that unconscious bias (Duster, 2008), or implicit prejudice towards Whites, and against other groups, is evident in people in New Zealand. It also shows the advantages of the chosen methodology for aiding individuals in realising their unconscious biases.

Participants' feelings of romantic attraction/indifference upon considering individuals of particular ethnic groups was interesting and important, because it indicates the extent to which people use negative stereotypes to assist them in prejudging a potential mate. A particular indifference towards

Asian and Indian men was found in the data. Participants cited cultural differences in attitudes towards women as reasons that they were not generally attracted to Asian and Indian men. Surprisingly, disgust and repulsion towards Asian men was felt by individuals with Indian and Asian heritage. This could be explained as an outcome of individuals of Asian and Indian heritage internalising White racism. New Zealand's White racism seems to contain a particular component of hostility towards Asian people. It was believed by one participant that social status was also a factor, and that she was attracted to White men because of the success they represented and respect they commanded in comparison to non-White men. Moreover, it was agreed, by two participants, that any individual under evaluation for a potential romantic relationship would need to be of an equal level of confidence to the evaluator, otherwise the relationship would not be balanced in terms of power and respect. It was felt that Asian men might constantly act inferior towards a partner of higher social status, which would be irritating. This finding on attitudes to interracial dating is interesting and requires a more thorough investigation.

### **Theme 6: Reacting to everyday racism**

Race is also manifested in everyday communication interactions in performances of everyday racism. These evoked emotional reactions from participants who then had to choose whether and how to respond to it. Emotional reactions were anger, hurt, numbness, pity, guilt, and shock. In dealing with everyday racism, participants would rationalise it, or analyse it to see what else, apart from racist attitudes, could explain the act. They would also often go through a process of deciding whether or not to challenge, which would consist of asking themselves if they were overreacting. When participants had decided to challenge racism, responses were mixed. The accused would often react negatively and angrily to being accused of racism.

One of the findings indicated that numbness or desensitisation was a way in which some individuals dealt with everyday acts of racism towards their own ethnic group, in order to not let the acts hurt them personally. This could be explained by Schwalbe et al.'s (2000) research conclusions on the reproduction of race in everyday contexts. Schwalbe et al. pointed to 'emotional management' in the form of coping strategies as one way in which race is reproduced everyday. When minority members desensitise themselves in order to cope with racial/ethnic insults, slurs and jokes from the majority group, they are in essence moving towards a position in tacit agreement with their ethnic group's inferior position. They lose their emotional motivation and therein their propensity to challenge racist acts.

Mitchell et al. (2011) found that in deciding whether or not to challenge racism, individuals would consider factors such as whether challenging would provoke aggression, social pressures to fit in, whether they could alter attitudes, the type of racism performed, how certain they felt about their views, and whether they were prepared for discomfort. These considerations were also evidenced in participants' recollections of having had to make the decision to challenge or not challenge racism in everyday encounters. One factor that was not identified by Mitchell et al. but emerged in my research could be summed up as 'being too upset to challenge calmly and effectively'. A reason that Mitchell et al. did not identify this factor in his research could be because they used interviews as their data collection method, resulting in non-immediate recollection of past experiences and distant memories. In contrast, I used diaries to collect data, meaning that participants could reflect on much more recent instances and recount experiences as unfolding narratives, in which I encouraged them to explore their feelings.

Condor et al. (2006) and Covarrubias (2008) suggest that silence in the face of perceived racism is an important everyday way that race and racism are reproduced. This relates to, but is slightly different, from the finding about censoring everyday speech around race. By not talking issues through, they are simply allowed to reaffirm themselves. Condor et al. (2006) describe racism as a collaborative practice and indicates that responsibility for acts of racism lies both with the performer of the act, and the audience to the act, because if the audience knows that it is racist and does not challenge it, they are complicit in the reproduction it encourages. Choosing not to challenge for various reasons, lets opportunities to disrupt the everyday reproduction of race slip by.

### **Theme 7: "Race matters to me because I look different"**

Another way in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions was 'looking different'. Participants that 'looked different' or looked non-White, reported having been perceived and treated as 'Others', though they felt that they were New Zealanders. Most of the time, they felt comfortable in any given situation, but every so often they were reminded that they were not 'normal', such as when standing in a room full of White people, or in being patronised, or in being asked the question "Where are you from?" when meeting someone for the first time, who is wanting to know where their ancestors originated from rather than where *they* originated. Non-White participants had an increased level of sensitivity to subtle racist acts, and often they felt that their accusations and explanations had been

invalidated. At times, however, they had privately invalidated the accusations and explanations of those even more sensitive than them.

Merino and Mellor's (2009) identification of the premeditated effect that expectation of external racial ascription has on ethnic minority individuals also emerged in the findings of my research. Non-White participants were aware of how they might be perceived, and acted in order to reduce the likelihood of stereotyping. For example, participants noted the way in which minorities alter their appearance to mitigate for their ethnicity. Two non-White participants felt that their parents might have dressed them well to compensate for the colour of their skin.

The question, 'Where are you from?' was identified by two non-White participants, as a way in which race was manifested in everyday communication interactions. This particular question was also identified as problematic by Brooks (2008) in her study of second-generation individuals of colour in Canada, and for Mapedzahama et al. (2011) in their autoethnographic reflections on being Black migrants to Australia, working in the Australian nursing industry. Both studies found the question to be exclusionary, and traced it to the reproduction of a White national identity embedded in the national consciousness of the long-term inhabitants of the country that they were researching.

The finding that there are different levels of sensitivity to racism, and that one person might invalidate the racism of an act that is racist to another, is significant to me personally as I battle with my opinions and assumptions on this topic. If I am to live by the principle of 'do unto others as you would have them do to you', I feel now that if I think someone is being oversensitive, I should remember the times that people have accused me of being oversensitive, and how this made me feel. My new approach is to give all those who 'cry race' immediate benefit of the doubt, and consider their feelings valid, at least until I have a better understanding of the details of the situation.

In weaving the strands of the above discussion together, the overall meaning of the findings is drawn as follows.

The concepts of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, and culture are intertwined in New Zealand. As New Zealand becomes increasingly multicultural, backlash and fear in the traditionally dominant New Zealand European ethnic group is also on the rise, and is manifested in subtle acts of everyday racism. New Zealanders do not feel the need (and do not want) to talk about race and ethnic conflict, reassuring themselves that they are fine as they are "doing better than other countries". In the meantime, ignorance and 'backwards-ness' are proliferating. Informal physical segregation, cultural

insensitivity, and ambivalence towards other cultures interact and reinforce each other.

It seems that the longstanding social taboo against talking about anything to do with race and racial tensions has contributed to the rise of a number of subtle manifestations of racist attitudes. These manifestations include comic (“just joking”) racist outbursts that are a product of negative feelings such as frustrations towards ethnic groups. The acts reinforce the subordination of minority members. The acts themselves are often noted but rarely challenged.

Unless they have made a conscious decision to live in a relatively segregated minority ethnic community in New Zealand, the phenomenon of internalised racism can be identified in non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders. In young individuals with ethnic minority backgrounds, multiple receipt of overt White racism can result in numbness in the face of subtle racism towards members of their ethnic minority group, because of a desire to belong to the White ethnic majority. It is difficult to balance both a positive ethnic minority identity and a positive ethnic majority identity, as majority and minority groups are often pitted against each other in New Zealand’s official and informal discourses.

## HOW IS RACE MANIFESTED IN EVERYDAY COMMUNICATION INTERACTIONS IN NEW ZEALAND?

This section will answer the main research question and discuss the implications of the answer. My findings show that in general, quite strong conscious and unconscious views on interracial/interethnic/intercultural issues, and negative feelings towards particular ethnic groups are often hidden away, but sometimes manifest themselves in subtle ways in New Zealand, particularly within an educated, middle-class, young adult, Auckland demographic. For these New Zealanders, performing overt racism is akin to ‘social suicide’, but many forms of subtle racism continue to be socially legitimate. Individuals are sometimes aware that they are performing subtle racism, and sometimes they are not. Most of the time subtle racism is performed without conscious racist intent, but sometimes a conscious racist intent or basis for the action in question can be internally or socially rationalised away using non-culturally specific principles.

More specifically, the findings of this research indicate that race is manifested in the following variety of subtle ways in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. It is manifested in the wide variety of cultures, ethnicities and skin colours we visually encounter in our

everyday environments; in encounters in which cultural ideals and values clash; in acts of cultural insensitivity that are not challenged and resolved; in the question “Where are you from?”; and in the patronising behavior of some White individuals towards non-White individuals.

Race is also manifested in seeing ethnic socio-economic inequality; in the process of challenging and in not challenging perceived racism; in opinion-sharing on whether or not affirmative action measures are fair; in encounters in which individuals ‘cry race’ or accuse someone of racism; when the feelings and opinions of ethnic minorities are invalidated; and in occasional incidences of overt racism.

Race is manifested in a hidden belief in White, Western superiority, the subconscious belief that a New Zealander is White, and performances of these views by New Zealand European individuals. It is also manifested when non-White immigrants and New Zealanders indicate, through social performance, that they have internalised these beliefs.

Race is manifested in the racialisation of ethnic and national categories in lay conceptualisations; the use of negative ethnic stereotypes in a variety of situations with a variety of different motives; the censoring of talk (the social taboo) on race and racism; and in instant emotional positive and negative reactions to different races.

Because of the subtlety and variedness of the everyday manifestation of race, racism becomes insidious in New Zealand, making it difficult to identify and challenge. Moreover, when race subtly manifests itself, the perpetrators are often unconscious of it. Often the audience is also either unconscious that it might be racism. But my findings show that individuals who do feel uneasy about it either just let it go (as it doesn’t negatively affect them) or are too afraid to challenge it. They are often too afraid because, in the past, those they have challenged have often reacted so forcefully and angrily that they come to think the better of it. Moreover, it is likely that those they challenge will not understand what they are trying to say and will vehemently defend their actions.

Perpetrators from the dominant group can justify and often justify their subtle racist actions by using what they think are universal and unbiased principles such as meritocracy, but they do not realise that these principles can be culturally biased. On the other hand, perpetrators from non-dominant groups can, and do point to their non-dominant status to reason that they cannot be racist. This rationalisation prevents them from critically considering that, if they are racist towards Whites, they are reversing the same sort of unhelpful attitudes as Whites and doing themselves a discredit. And if they are racist towards non-Whites, they are simply reproducing their non-

dominant identity as less valuable, inferior human beings. This social 'gridlock' means that subtly racist actions can continue to be performed.

There are negative implications to not disrupting these patterns in order to talk critically and constructively about the significance of race, ethnicity and other related concepts in New Zealand. If thoughts, feelings and attitudes on the topic of 'everyday living with multiculturalism' continue to only be aired in private spheres because of political correctness, they do not have a chance to be aired, discussed, and resolved in public, multicultural, multiracial spaces. However, if it is true, as some participants seemed to imply, that younger generations are becoming more tolerant and less racist towards other ethnic and cultural groups, and more willing to engage with them, New Zealand may simply have to wait for the older generation to expire.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RACE IN NEW ZEALAND

What can these findings tell us about the significance of race in New Zealand at the present time?

As the New Zealand European (White) majority decreases in size and dominance, some New Zealand European individuals are consciously and subconsciously refusing to let go of the idea that a New Zealander is white because of a) an outdated (and largely subconscious) belief that Whiteness and Western culture are superior, and b) a fear of 'losing out' to non-White ethnic and cultural groups. This is having a negative impact on non-White individuals in New Zealand in terms of how they are treated (they are 'othered', disrespected, and negatively stereotyped), and has resulted in some non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders having a fractured sense of identity, some of whose families have lived in New Zealand for generations.

Because New Zealand Europeans have held a great deal of power and have promoted their dominance in New Zealand for such a significant part of New Zealand's recorded history, some non-White New Zealanders have internalised 'White racism', aligning themselves with New Zealand European interests to gain access to White's monopoly on power. These individuals assist in reproducing White dominance. White racism and internalised White racism lead to certain emotional reactions toward non-White races such as anger, disgust, fear, discomfort, and romantic indifference and repulsion. Overt White racism occasionally manifests itself, but many subtle acts that reflect these views are performed on an everyday basis.

However, some individuals are aware of these subtle racist acts and want to challenge them. Some of the most enthusiastic of these individuals are non-White. This is because New Zealand European racism negatively affects them

and those who look like them, who they seem to feel a sort of kinship with. Other non-White individuals seem to have given up on being concerned at the discrimination their fellow ethnic minority members face.

Some New Zealand European individuals seem reasonably committed to challenging this subtle racism for two reasons, a) they feel either pity or even compassion for what non-White individuals face, or b) they put on a show of concern due to their fear of being labeled a racist. Other New Zealand Europeans feel that non-Whites are overreacting and refuse to consider that racism exists in New Zealand, or even talk about it. This is probably due to the fact that they do not know what it is like to be a non-White individual in New Zealand, and perhaps because they are consciously or subconsciously enjoying the superiority that the status quo provides them with.

This study has demonstrated how race is manifested in everyday life in New Zealand and has discussed the significance and implications of these multiple and diverse manifestations for New Zealand society. In general, race is manifested in a subtle and insidious way, accompanied by denial and an unwillingness to consider and acknowledge and thus deal with it. The next and final chapter concludes this thesis by presenting an autoethnographic explorative narrative on how the second research aim of approaching resolution of the New Zealand Asian-New Zealand European dialectic in my own identity was met. It also explores the limitations of this research and offers recommendations as well as suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER 7: CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

MY FINDINGS REVEALED that race is manifested in a variety of subtle ways in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand, and, as many members of New Zealand society are involved in facilitating or performing these manifestations, there is an unwillingness to acknowledge the part that these manifestations might play in the reproduction of a racist ideology. Identifying the ways in which race is manifested in everyday contexts in New Zealand led me to conclude that the significance of race in New Zealand at present is related to how the longstanding New Zealand European dominant majority group is dealing with the cultural power shift that is accompanying the increasing visual, physical, and political presence of non-White ethnic and cultural groups. This final chapter begins with an autoethnographic vignette (mirroring the one offered in the introductory chapter) in order to describe where I am personally at now at the end of my research journey, and with regards to my second research aim of approaching resolution of the New Zealand Asian-New Zealand European dialectic in my own identity. Following this, limitations, recommendations, and suggestions for future research are given.

### RESOLVING MY MIXED-RACE DIALECTIC

*I feel as though I have learnt many things in doing this research. I have definitely achieved at least some degree of increased sensitivity to my part in the subtle manifestation of race in everyday life. But it is so easy and tempting to go back into oblivion, where I was to begin with. At the end of the data collection period, for*

several months after I felt as though my 'race antennae' (as Zane put it) would forever be alert. But this enthusiasm for critiquing everyday life with race in mind dulled eventually.

I suspect that what pulls me back into oblivion is a combination of my Whiteness, my privilege, and, of course, simply my thinking habits. They are like the devils on my shoulder, tempting me to continue in tacit support of the status quo. On the other hand, I am much more convinced now of the imperative to figure out a way to tactfully challenge subtle conscious and unconscious acts of racial reproduction, and feel more guilt-ridden when I do not than I did prior to this investigation.

Mizzi (2010) talks about multivocality, tensions and contradicting voices within the individual. I still have these tensions. As I did on the cusp of this research, in many ways I still stand between majority and minority perspectives and cannot pick a side. I expected that I would come out the other side of this research having chosen and resolved the contradictory lines of reasoning that battle within me. But perhaps the fact that I do not feel as though I have achieved the outcome I expected to may be a good thing. Instead, I have arrived at a point from which I can see myself and my flaws more clearly, a point at which I feel more confident of what I think, but also a point that I feel (perhaps naively) is in some ways more humble and accepting than before.

I still fluctuate as I did between my sense of indignation on behalf of minority non-White groups and feeling Whitely sheepish at what I have written in this thesis. I wonder whether it is a load of dramatised whining written under the delusion of heroism (emancipating the racially inferior), or whether my stories will have value for someone, whether it is in them finding that someone else has had similar experiences to them, or learning a bit about what it is like to be someone other than themselves. I feel, like Natalie, that I have only brushed the surface of what racially lies beneath the ordinariness of life.

I will keep questioning these everyday encounters that make me feel uncomfortable because of my understanding of race. An acquaintance said something a bit 'off' the other day that I did not challenge for one of the following excuses: I was too afraid/could not be bothered/I wanted to try out what it felt like to not care about it so much, not get so emotionally involved/felt that it would be pointless because she would not understand me. As I thought through what she had said later on I felt that though it did not personally affect me, it was derogatory towards others and I should have said something. But still, she wouldn't have understood and it might have caused an awkward, uncomfortable situation. We get taught at school to stick up for others but how can you when the other person just doesn't understand the pain they inflict on others and the cumulative effect of such 'off-hand' comments? Looking at the transformation in myself and my co-participants over the space of a month, it seems that it takes a really intensive self-reflective process combined with

*intercultural discussion for a person to reach this point of empathetic comprehension, and even then they might not get there.*

*I guess this newfound awareness of not understanding the experience of others and frustration at not being understood can go right across the board of experience. I have to turn the gaze back in on myself and ask how I can better put myself in the shoes of those around me, who identify with and – as a result – experience different things to me. One of the things I can consider is the criticism of over-attribution that I have had leveled at me a number of times as I have shared my emergent research findings with others. I think I do sometimes over-attribute things to racism, get on my high horse, and feel angry at people, but this is a waste of energy. If a White New Zealander makes me feel less secure that I am a New Zealander, I need first to ask why I am choosing to feel this way.*

*Earlier this very month, I was tagging along on a friend's shopping trip. We were in the clothing department of a budget department store and I was waiting outside the changing rooms while she tried on an item of clothing. A young, European boy of about three years of age was mumbling something at me. I regarded him quizzically trying to make out his words. When I realised I was completely stunned. He was smiling at me and saying 'Go back to China'. My reactions were complex. I was thinking, 'What an apt experience for me to have as I write the conclusion of my research.' I was thinking, 'This has never happened to me before. This is what it feels like.' I was wondering what to say to a child who seemed to be simply parroting the words of (perhaps) his parents, to explain the awfulness of this phrase before he began to understand and believe the assumptions behind it, even if he eventually learned not to say it out loud anymore, except, maybe, amongst other non-Asians. His mother was in the changing room trying something on. I wondered if I should say something to her and what the appropriate thing would be to say so as not to cause a fight, because I assumed that if her child was saying these sorts of things, she would be the sort of woman that would pick a fight with an Asian, and accuse others of judging her and telling her what she should and should not teach her own child. Moreover, I was feeling so emotionally fragile that I knew I might start crying if such a response were evoked, which would place me and all other Asians in the 'weaker' box. I just did not know what to do, so in the end I smiled at him and at his mother, as confidently as I could (which was not very confidently as I had just been invalidated in my own country by a three year old) and hoped that my smile would help in undoing the prejudices and negative sentiments I assumed they had towards Asians. The boy shifted around nervously when I smiled at him and seemed to become less sure of his statement, and his mother smiled back at me. I don't think she had heard what he had said.*

*To compound this subtle act of violence, the actions of a further two individuals seemed to consolidate his sentiments. As he was speaking to me, I looked up to see a European mother and her teenage son walking past and taking the situation in. What*

surprised me, and took me several perplexed minutes to unpack the meaning of, was that they were looking at him, registering his comments toward me, and having a wee laugh. I interpreted this response as part amusement, part embarrassment as they, as I, did not know how to respond to such overt racism. Perhaps they were glad it was happening to me, not them. Perhaps they agreed with the statement and were glad that someone could have the guts to say it, get the message through, and be excused for it. But as the only other witnesses to the scene of the crime, I was gutted by the fact that they found it funny, rather than shocking, and that they did not spring to my defense or smile at me in sympathetic apologetic co-recognition of the kid's transgression. It made me feel as though all three of them were complicit in this act of exclusion, invalidation, and devaluation.

For the next few hours my feeling of disbelief and general sense of insecurity was heightened. It still feels like a dream as I write about it now, an out-of-the-blue fraction of my experience, and certainly not coherent with the rest of it. As per usual, despite feeling weak, I made myself speak loudly with my New Zealand accent for the rest of our public shopping outing, and was self-conscious of the Asian-ness of my appearance, especially as I was wearing my tramping boots with an otherwise respectable 'European outfit', because the rest of my wardrobe was in a suitcase stuck at Sydney airport. My accent is the most effective identity-conveying symbol that I can exercise in a first and fleeting impression.

Can I take this encounter to reflect the racial climate of New Zealand? I do not think I would be speaking rationally if I let this single interaction cloud an overall judgment on my experiences over my entire lifetime. I am still plagued with doubt: perhaps there are only a few true racists out there, a very small and insignificant number of our population. But, having thought about this topic for over a year, and despite my reservations about doing so and lack of security in my final evaluation (I would be lying if I said that I was certain my conclusion represented the last word I would have to say and last thought I would ever think on this topic), I would disappoint myself if I did not end this thesis with a humble suggestion that everyone in New Zealand, and perhaps outside of New Zealand, carefully consider, maybe even by keeping a diary, their experiences of race in their everyday lives. If my predictions are correct, they might pick up something less than savoury about their own instinctual attitudes. If they don't, that is fantastic. But I know that in my case, I am, and most likely will always be a racist, and I believe that I need to challenge my actions, counter my conscious performances and seek out my subconscious performances of racism in my everyday life as my small contribution to the eradication of the malevolent misuse of the concept of race. If my admission of my own guilt evokes a reaction of judgment in the reader, that I must be an evil and morally imbalanced person, I challenge them to seek out their own log before judging me for mine.

*Yet this suggestion is tentatively offered. There are plenty of moments when I contradict these, my final ideas, reprimanding myself for being insecure and one of those irrationally emotional people who point the racism finger at everything. And every time I think I am being over-sensitive, I reason with myself, using one of Sue's (2010) categories of racial microaggression: 'microinvalidation'. A 'microinvalidation' is where a majority individual invalidates the experiences and emotions of a minority individual. Though I still flicker between: wondering whether this whole thesis is a load of bollocks and that I am being hypersensitive, and seeing things that are not really there; and really believing that what I have to say on this topic is important, I have to take into account that the first resolution may be the voice of my majority identity, invalidating the experiences of my minority identity. This gives me a little more confidence in offering the suggestions above in my finishing thoughts.*

*Inequality continues to plague humankind – my frustration at the injustice of it, my suspicion towards its framers, and my comparatively pitiful but real experience of being discriminated against being unashamedly my motivation for choosing this research topic. I have identified and framed a portion of my complicity/participation in reproducing the system of inequality as my racist beliefs. I am aware that there are numerous other conceptual microscopes under which I can examine the production and reproduction of inequality (that even interact with the one I have chosen), but the ideology of race is my selection du jour and "du age": having only twenty-four years of experience and knowledge, it is currently my preferred lens, and of the most immediate emotional significance to me.*

*As a researcher, I am only one individual, and I am young. In ten years time, or even five, I may see things differently. But I consider that this exposition is still valid and meaningful, as a challengeable perspective, as a relevant and interesting social critique, and as an assemblage of qualitative (albeit incomplete (unrepresentative)) data, pieced together by an admittedly biased individual with political motives, on how race matters on an everyday basis, in the early twenty-first century, in New Zealand.*

## LIMITATIONS

Although the findings of this thesis are significant and make some inroads into how race is a part of our everyday lives in New Zealand, there are several limitations to this study that are acknowledged here.

The most obvious limitation is the small participant sample size. Although it was alleged that in doing collaborative rather than non-collaborative autoethnography, access to the performances and experiences of many more people in New Zealand would be facilitated, having the perspectives of only

ten participants with which to ascertain how race is manifested in everyday communication interactions *in New Zealand* was limiting. However, having a small number of voices was necessary for the type of in-depth research the topic needed, and could not have been carried out with a larger one.

Due to the convenience sampling approach taken in sourcing my co-participants, they were all within a particular age and socio-economic bracket. They were also all living in Auckland. None of them were non-White immigrants, who may have some very interesting stories of subtle and even overt racism to tell. However, having participants with such similarities in their backgrounds was also an advantage as were able to begin with a great deal in common and engage more fruitfully in conversation, rather than having to build relationships with each other not only from scratch, but across multiple intersecting differences, whilst simultaneously discussing a sensitive topic.

While I was not lying when I claimed to speak from both the majority and minority positions, having been raised amongst members of the dominant group in New Zealand meant that it was likely that I was subconsciously influenced from this perspective. However, it is contended that because the researcher has experienced what it is like to have minority as well as majority status externally ascribed to her in interaction, the position she holds is still an interesting and unusual one that has been a valuable asset in executing research on this topic.

The researcher would have liked to carry out further collaborative inquiry with the same group of participants. However, due to time constraints for all involved, she was not able to. It would have been beneficial to have had the co-participants collaborate to a greater extent in analysing the data and producing the findings too. However, it is acknowledged that co-participants' commitment to the project went beyond the commitment the average research project of this size and scope usually expects of participants. The researcher is extremely grateful for their input.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion presented in this study, the following recommendations can be suggested.

The autoethnographic collaborative reflexive approach employed in this research has been both enjoyable and fruitful, and I would recommend it not only to any researcher investigating any sort of prejudice in New Zealand, but also as an exercise by which increased social cohesion can be achieved at a community level. It has been particularly useful in helping members of New

Zealand's dominant community realise how they subconsciously view non-White non-Western ethnic groups with disdain and in some cases disgust, and how they practice subtle unwitting exclusion of these groups.

New Zealanders' awareness of what constitutes subtle racism needs to be increased. An awareness that the question "Where are you from?" can be exclusionary needs to be fostered. An awareness needs to be promoted that choosing to be silent in the face of both overt and subtle racism can be perceived as an act of tacit agreement and may be a collaborative racist act in itself.

Because, as my research found, individuals in New Zealand are unwilling and have little incentive to build relationships across ethnic boundaries, social change initiatives are needed to increase interethnic contact with the aim of altering people's attitudes to other ethnic groups. It is also recommended that New Zealanders pay more attention to how it is advertising and defining New Zealand national identity. The inclusion of individuals from non-White ethnicities in media and communications roles in particular could assist with this, as they would, assumedly, produce representations of New Zealand that were more in keeping with the respectful, ethnically integrated, and collaborative society that New Zealand will hopefully become.

Most importantly, more research into the reasons for (and what sort of strategies would be best to dismantle) pervasive and wide-ranging institutional racism that has resulted in a number of scales of wellbeing being racially and ethnically stratified. One participant suggested that, New Zealand's education system in particular needs to consider how educational standards and teaching pedagogies put some ethnic groups, particularly Māori and Pacific Island groups, at a constant disadvantage that begins on day one of their schooling.

Individuals from the dominant ethnic group need to be encouraged to realise that affirmative action is not a zero-sum game in which they lose out. Mutually beneficial outcomes can be – and need to be – created through intercultural collaboration on projects envisaging New Zealand's future, in order to make the transition from a White-dominant, to a truly multicultural and progressive society, smooth. New Zealand, as an internationally recognised leader in instigating indigenous rights, and as a supposedly 'non-racist' country, has an opportunity to be a leader in making multiculturalism work. It is suggested that resources allocated to projects promoting interethnic cohesion are increased.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Various suggestions for future research have emerged from this exploratory project. First, it is suggested that researchers carry out similar collaborative autoethnographic methodologies in other parts of the country. Because this project was carried out in Auckland, it pertained particularly to the Auckland context. Auckland is home to a comparatively large number of non-White individuals when compared to the rest of New Zealand, which may be significant in terms of the everyday manifestation of race, particularly with regards to feelings of (in)security around increasing multiculturalism.

It is also suggested that internalised racism is more closely looked at as a phenomenon in New Zealand. The researcher identified several non-White individuals who seemed to subconsciously believe in White superiority in New Zealand and would alter their everyday behaviours to gain acceptance in this group.

The extent of 'informal segregation' in public spaces, institutions, and industries needs more investigation. It seems that at present, informal segregation has only been investigated in terms of suburban ethnic enclaves. Informal segregation was observed in the rental market, shopping malls, schools, and social and community groups in New Zealand by participants. Research into how separately our ethnic communities are functioning, and whether separation is increasing or decreasing is imperative.

Exploring the experiences of non-White New Zealand-born New Zealanders in particular using a similar sort of collaborative autoethnographic exercise as my research used might be interesting. I found that they had particularly interesting perspectives as they were often trying to balance two conflicting identities. Moreover, it is contended that the potential for non-White New Zealand born New Zealanders to facilitate cross-ethnic ties and relationships should be investigated.

My findings suggest that individual hidden negative feelings towards particular ethnic/racial groups are prevalent in those who may see themselves as non-ethnically and racially prejudiced. This finding warrants further investigation. A diary methodology could assist with this. The extent to which a backlash towards political correctness exists and what it looks like might be worth investigating.

The finding that there are different levels of sensitivity to everyday racism needs clarification in terms of what factors contribute to increased or decreased sensitivity. A detailed investigation into how ethnic jokes reproduce race in an everyday New Zealand context could produce some interesting results.

Additionally, more detailed research into how individuals challenge or do not challenge subtle racism in New Zealand would be of benefit to the project of eradicating racism. Perhaps recommendations could be made as to the most effective methods.

It would be interesting to know more about romantic repulsion, indifference, and attraction in New Zealand and what race/ethnicity has to do with it. Since my research revealed the perception of some interesting racial dynamics in participants' parents' relationships, the role of race in interracial marriages and partnerships in New Zealand would be a fascinating topic. Interracial platonic relationships deserve study too. Is it necessary for one individual to have internalised the racism of the other for the relationship to flourish?

The finding that in New Zealand, unlike in the US, we can talk about diversity and inequality in the same conversation warrants investigation to see why this is. Is a simultaneous love of diversity and awareness of the problem of ethnically stratified inequality a resource New Zealand can draw on in planning an approach to dismantle the system of ethnic privilege we have in New Zealand?

Theories of new racism developed in the US do not seem to apply in the context of New Zealand in any standard way, but elements of them inconsistently do. A context-specific theory of new racism in New Zealand is needed. A researcher might take theories developed in the US as a starting point.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM



#### PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

My name is Elizabeth Revell. I am currently enrolled in the *Master of International Communication* degree in the Department of Communication Studies at Unitec New Zealand and I seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The aim of my project is to produce quality research on the manifestation of “race” in everyday communication interactions in New Zealand. Here is a bit of an explanation of what I mean:

*Race is an uncomfortable subject to talk about. Even though we don't often talk about it, we all develop our own ideas, beliefs, and attitudes around race. Scholars suggest that unspoken ideas about race can mean unfair social advantage/disadvantage for some. I aim to break down how we come up with these ideas through interactions in our social environments so that we might better understand how unjust ideas are formed and normalised. In my research I aim to find out how we experience, understand, and perform race through everyday communication interactions in New Zealand.*

I request your participation in the following way:

- Attending a one hour **briefing session** with me and the other participants at the beginning of November,
- Keeping a **diary** for four weeks during November that explores how who you are affects how you experience the world (your positionality) and recording things that happen that make you think about race in your day-to-day lives and reflecting on your

experience of them (minimum of 2x20min written entries a week, however it is up to you how much/often you want to write),

- Participating in an audio-recorded one hour **one-on-one interview** with me about how you found the experience when you hand in the diary at the end of November, the content of which I will personally transcribe,
- And participating in an audio-recorded one hour **debriefing session** with me and the other participants about how you found the experience overall and what you learned about yourself and others at the beginning of December, the content of which I will personally transcribe.

You will not be identified in the Thesis. During the research process, your consent forms and hard copies of the information you give me will be stored in both in a locked safe, and electronically on a password protected computer at Unitec. They will only be accessible to myself and my supervisors. Information and consent forms will be stored both during the research and up until five years after the research is accepted, upon which time they will be destroyed.

You will be given an opportunity to review the transcript of your interview and of the debriefing session for accuracy. You can ask me not to use some or all of the information you have given until one week after transcripts have been offered for checks. You will be given an opportunity to see the Thesis before it is submitted for examination. The results of the research activity will not be seen by any other person without the prior agreement of everyone involved.

To ensure that I do not produce research that is culturally damaging, I will seek advice from cultural advisors if/as cultural issues arise during the research process and in the data, analysis and final report. Your identity will be protected in these consultations. I will gain your consent to this action if it implicates data you have given me in any way.

Once you agree to participate, I will give you my contact details so that you can contact me with any problems, queries, or concerns about the research that may arise. I will contact you via phone twice during the diary phase, at the end of the first and third weeks to see how you are going and if you would like clarification on anything. These calls will not be recorded or transcribed. If anything during the research process raises personal issues that you feel you would like counselling over, the details of professional counsellors employed by Unitec will be made available to you free-of-charge. The details of a Maori counsellor are also available. This too will be entirely confidential.

I hope that you will agree to take part and that you will find your involvement interesting. If you have any queries about the research, you may contact my principal supervisor at Unitec New Zealand.

My supervisor is Dr Elena Kolesova: phone: 815-4321 ext. 6110 or email: [ekolesova@unitec.ac.nz](mailto:ekolesova@unitec.ac.nz)

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (2011-1226)

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from (21 October 2011) to (20 October 2012). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



**PRO-FORMA CONSENT FORM – ADULTS**

TO: Elizabeth Revell

FROM:

DATE:

RE: Participation in “The Manifestation of Race in Everyday Communication Interactions in New Zealand”

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project for the Master of International Communication. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered. I understand that my name will not be used in any public reports, and that I may withdraw myself or any information I have provided for this project without penalty of any sort.

I agree to take part in this project.

Signed: .....

Name: .....

Date: .....

**UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER:**

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from (20 October 2011) to (21 October 2012). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

## APPENDIX C: PROCEDURAL EXPLANATIONS

### Procedural explanations

*The following provides information on how I will execute my chosen methods:*

### Briefing session

In this session I will explain my project to my co-participants and inform them of my methodological strategy and personal interest in the topic, research design, and research question, along with what their part is in the project – keeping a diary, attending a one-on-one interview with me, and attending a final focus group all together. They will be encouraged to ask questions before, as, and after I explain the project. We will swap contact details so that they can contact me if they have any questions following the meeting, and so that I can contact them to see how they are going.

### **Goals:**

- Introduce and familiarise everyone
- Explain what my research is again to my co-participants
- Explain what they have to do and hand out diary instruction sheet
- Keep diaries about their everyday encounters with race: what happened, how it made them feel and why, what it made them think about and why. Explain about positionality: what it is and its importance and ask them to write an entry describing their positionality at the beginning of their diaries. Discuss positionality with reference to the following extracts:
- “In 1997 Gillian Rose established the case for situated knowledges, emphasizing the need for reflexivity on the part of researchers to recognise that the production of knowledge, the results obtained, the type of research embarked on, all in large part reflect the positionality of the researcher, “[...] subjugated and critical knowledges work from their situatedness to produce partial perspectives on the world. They see the world from specific locations, embodied and particular, and never innocent; sitting is intimately involved in sighting”” (Rose, 1997, p.308, in Lau and Pasquini, 2008, p. 554).
- Positionality is “the way in which an organism takes place in the environment.” (Plessner, 1969, p. 75, in Kozin, 2008, p.156)

- “Positionality involves taking into account the factors which contributed to the shaping of a person’s identity, perspectives, worldviews and angles of perception. These factors can include such things as a person’s gender, age, race, nationality, religion, education, training, travels, and experiences. Positionality does not seek a deterministic reduction of a person’s identity or work towards the sum of these influencing factors, Rather, positionality involves acknowledging these powerful influences so that they can be taken into account during the process of research” (Lau, 2004, p. 65, in Lau and Pasquini, 2008, p.554).
- Attend an audio-recorded one-on-one interview with me at the end of the diary period, which I will transcribe
- Attend a debriefing session at the beginning of December so that we can talk about what we learned from our experience and what stood out for us, which I will transcribe
- Reassure them of the confidentiality of their identity and information given
- Give them an opportunity to ask questions in person
- Provide them with physical diaries to write in or folders for printed computer-processed diaries – up to them which they choose

### **Diaries**

My co-participants and I will keep hand-written reflexive observation diaries for four weeks, being sensitive to, recording and reflecting on our conscious experiences of performances of race in our own microspheres. The use of diaries in research allows access to ongoing everyday behaviour in a relatively unobtrusive manner, permitting the immediacy of experience to be captured and providing records of phenomena over time.

I will also ask all participants to explore and admit their positionality in an autoethnographic narrative at the beginning of the diary. As has been discussed in the methodology section, positionality is an important aspect of critical ethnography. As my co-participants and I are each performing our own ethnography through our diaries, it is important that we all describe our positionalities. An instruction sheet for the diaries is attached.

### **Semi-structured interviews**

Once the diaries have been completed and submitted, I plan on interviewing my co-participants in order to provide further insight into and to make sure I understand what has been written in the diaries. Semi-structured interviews

are based on the use of an interview guide: a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order; but retain the freedom to follow new leads. They will occur at the end of the month when co-participants hand in their diaries. I will write a sheet of questions to guide the discussion. These interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and used as data.

**Guiding questions:**

- How did you find the process overall?
- Did anything in particular stick out for you? Why?
- What have you learned about race in New Zealand?
- What do you think you've learned about yourself? About others?

**Debriefing session (focus group)**

I will ask participants to come to a debriefing session after the diaries and interviews have been completed, to openly and informally discuss the how they found the process overall. I will share my experiences with them. It will be run similar to a focus group. This interaction will be recorded, transcribed and used as data.

**Goals:**

- Reassure them of the confidentiality of their identity and information
- Go round the circle and report back on experience (Questions used will be along the lines of interview questions). Discussion should flow and trends may or may not be revealed.
- Thank everyone for being involved and ask them if they'd mind if I called them if I was confused about something they said and would like clarification.

## APPENDIX D: GUIDELINE SHEET FOR DIARIES

### Instruction Sheet for Diaries

In your first entry, write a narrative about your positionality. Try to answer the following questions:

- Describe yourself. Who and what am I? How do I know?
- In what ways does who and what I am influence how I experience the world and how I interpret and evaluate others and their experiences?
- What do I think about race? What experiences have impacted my thinking?

In subsequent entries, try to answer the following questions:

- What happened today/in the last few days that made you think about race? Describe the situation.
- Reflect on your experience. How did it make you feel and why?
- What did it make you think about and why? What do you think about it now?
- Was there anything else you found interesting?

I encourage you to jot down a quick note to yourself on the spot if something happens that you would like to explore in more detail in a diary entry. Try to write at least two diary entries each week. Diaries are to be kept for four weeks.

Researcher's contact details in case you have further questions:

Elizabeth Revell

Ph: 09 5515650

Mob: 021 0721 598

Email: [elizabeth.s.revell@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.s.revell@gmail.com)

## APPENDIX E: EXTRACT FROM A PARTICIPANT'S REFLEXIVE RESEARCH DIARY

(computerised markings represent my analysis)

Question responses.

9/11/11) I am a Christian and I guess this is a fundamental part of where I get my ideas of who I am and my outlook on life. I have been brought up in a Kiwi Christian home and so the Christian message and values have been deeply engrained in me. What this really means is that I am accountable to a higher being who has a purpose for me and everyone on this earth. This gives me a sense of belonging & security. It makes me realise that I am fundamentally flawed but that I am loved (as is everyone else) despite this. I am very aware of these flaws and in particular I feel I am selfish, easily distracted, always seeking the next piece of excitement/adventure in my life and I argue easily. I can also be very judgemental.

Part of what I believe & know is that all races are equal in the sight of God. Although on a shallower level I find it easier to talk to foreigners (non whites) as I find them less ~~threatening~~ threatening. Maybe this is because I subconsciously feel superior because I am white. Although, mostly in fact, entirely all the people I hang out with are white New Zealanders. I am a practical person and I tend to think about things in a practical way - without necessarily paying too much attention to feelings and emotions. I love the outdoors and activities such as snow bunting, kayaking, hunting, swimming. I constantly have the notion in

the back of my mind. That in modern society  
 we have lost the ability to really experience life  
 as it should be. We are removed from  
 physical hardship and most men can't do the  
 most simple/practical tasks. I feel that as  
 a society we have forgotten how to appreciate  
 the simple tasks in life such as preparing food  
 and just generally BEING we want everything  
 instantly and get everything instantly so we don't  
 get the satisfaction of working hard for  
 something. I struggle to think of the last time  
 I had to work hard to achieve something. Life  
 has been served to me on a platter. Although  
 I have never considered this of myself but in  
 reality I am quite spoilt.

I have never really given much thought to race I  
 think of it as a PC topic that is overdone  
 and people are overly sensitive about. I get  
 frustrated at people who get upset by minor things  
 as I feel they over-analyse things and see  
 intents that actually don't exist. I frequently  
 use racially ~~derogatory~~ derogatory references in  
 jest such as 'Nigger!' but they have no  
 meaning behind them. I guess I find it humorous  
 to use these words completely out of context. For  
 example - "Nigger! I forgot my keys!"

## APPENDIX F: DEBRIEFING SESSION MAIN CO-PARTICIPANT SHEET

### Agenda:

- Welcome
- Go over agenda (review of goals, ground rules, housekeeping matters – Introductions – discussion – wrap up)
- Review of goal of meeting

### The major objective of the meeting:

To seek out and discuss the contrasts between different peoples perceptions of the everyday manifestation of race in New Zealand

### Other objectives:

To understand what race means to other people in more depth than is reached in everyday conversation

To consider together ideas of white privilege and crying race

To brainstorm what the actual problem/problems are and solutions to it/them

- Review of ground rules

### Ground rules:

To be honest

To understand each other

To validate each other's responses

To be interested and ask questions respectfully

To challenge gently

Ask not to go on for too long

Listening is important

?

- Housekeeping matters
- Format of the questions

What do you think of race?

How do people reproduce race in social situations in everyday life?

What do you think about white privilege and crying race?

How does talking about race make you feel?

The problems and solutions

Things we've learnt and anything else

- Confidentiality and counseling
- How long it will take (would anyone mind if it went a bit over time?)
- You don't have to answer a question if you don't want to
- Give people paper in case they need to write something down that they want to raise later
- Questions?
- Introductions (What does race mean to you?)
- Questions

Is race an outdated concept? Why or why not?

When you think of race issues in New Zealand, what comes to mind?

In what ways did you find that people communicate their racial attitudes in everyday life? Share a few of your noted performances.

Did you find it hard to pick up on things that made you think about race without initiating conversation on the topic?

What/who (past incidences, people) has influenced your attitudes to race?

Were you surprised or intrigued at anything you encountered during the diary phase?

What do you think of the idea of white privilege? Does it exist? How does it make you feel?

What do you think of the idea of 'crying race'?

How does talking about the subject of race make you feel and why?

What do you make of the paradox between the good and bad outcomes of racial stereotyping?

In what ways is racism a problem? How can we solve it? Is there anything we can personally do?

Has anything about this observation and discussion process made you think differently about race? Have you learned about anything or thought about anything that you hadn't previously encountered?

Is there anything else that you have been thinking about that you would like to add?

What are your overall impressions of this discussion?

- Wrap up

Thank

Tell them what I am going to do with the focus group and that they will be given an opportunity to review it

Tell them they will be able to see a final copy of the report before it is submitted for examination

Ask them if it would be ok if I called them if I was having issues understanding something they said

Questions?

## APPENDIX G: DEBRIEFING SESSION CO-PARTICIPANT SHEET

Agenda:

- Goal of focus group

Major objective:

*To seek out and discuss the contrasts between different people's perceptions of the everyday manifestation of race in New Zealand*

Other objectives:

To understand what race means to other people in more depth than is reached in everyday conversation

To consider together ideas of white privilege and crying race

To brainstorm what the actual problem/problems are and solutions to it/them

- Ground aims

To be honest

To understand each other

To validate each other's responses

To be interested and ask questions respectfully

To challenge gently

To share the stage

To listen carefully

?

- Housekeeping matters

Format of questions

Confidentiality and counseling

How long it will take

You don't have to answer a question if you don't want to

Paper for recording your thoughts if you want to raise points later

- Introductions (What does race mean to you?)
- Questions and answers
- Wrap up