PRECARITY

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PRECARITY

UNCERTAIN, INSECURE AND UNEQUAL LIVES IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

EDITED BY SHILOH GROOT, CLIFFORD VAN OMMEN, BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE AND NATASHA TASSELL-MATAMUA

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INTRODUCTION

CLIFFORD VAN OMMEN, SHILOH GROOT, BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE AND NATASHA TASSELL-MATAMUA

The concept of the precariat links to situations and experiences of uncertainty, dependency, powerlessness, perilousness and insufficiency. In one sense, precarity refers to the negative consequences for the wellbeing and survival of citizens following the gradual dismantling of the welfare state and union representation; in another related sense, it refers to the changing nature of work that becomes intermittent, insecure and insufficient. Precarity emerges within the global context of a neoliberal economic system that demands greater (job, skill, employment, time) flexibility among individuals so as to improve market competition on a global level.[1]

The British economist Guy Standing refers to the precariat as a class-in-the-making:[2] a 'class' typified by various forms of insecurity due to a lack of opportunities to consistently gain income at liveable levels, to retain a position of skill and access career mobility via the development of these skills, to work in physically and psychologically safe circumstances, to avoid being fired at a whim and to have an influence via collective action. Whereas Standing focuses on the world of labour, within this book authors identify and illustrate other forms of precarity, such as the lack of opportunities for cultural expression and embodiment, and the struggle to secure safety in intimate and family relationships.

The commonality between Standing's work and this book is that aspects of precarity are not independent of each other. In this sense,

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then, precarity is a web where narrow and naive solutions merely pluck at a single thread which fails to resonate with the wider circumstance and ultimately leaves those affected only more hopelessly entangled. The American philosopher and gender theorist Judith Butler points out that it is not only economic support that disintegrates under such circumstances but social systems as well, leaving a person more vulnerable to illness, injury, displacement and violence.[3]

Inequalities, in terms of justice for the precariat, are mirrored by the absence of just action with regard to those with wealth in this country. Lisa Marriott, Associate Professor of Taxation at Victoria University, reported the lack of attention to extensive tax evasion when contrasted with the unrelenting effort at prosecuting benefit fraudsters. In 2014, tax evaders cheated the country of $1.24 billion tax dollars, in comparison to $33.5 million benefit-fraud dollars.[4] Yet benefit fraudsters are three times more likely to be imprisoned than tax evaders.

Both these crimes are non-violent and financial in nature; they both have the same victim (government and broader society); reduce government resources; and are deliberate. However, an important distinction is that tax evasion is typically undertaken by wealthy individuals in privileged positions, whereas benefit fraud is typically undertaken by precariat members of society. The issue of vested interest cannot be ignored here given the number of investment properties owned by MPs, particularly National Party MPs.[5] We live in a society skewed in favour of those with extensive wealth, where attention is diverted away from an examination of inequalities by vilifying those who bear the greatest burden of a broken system.

AN UNDER-EXPLORED EXAMPLE: PRECARITY AND DISABILITY

Let us illustrate the points above by considering one particular population in New Zealand whose access to equitable labour conditions has always been denied: those living with disabilities. On 1 September 2013, *The New Zealand Herald* reported that through the organisational restructuring of fast-food company KFC, 17 workers with disabilities had lost their jobs.[6] The restructure, in which all staff were required to prove that they were 'capable' of performing *all* duties (regardless of their actual position), epitomises the narrow flexibility celebrated

in contemporary business and the real consequences of such practices for employees. When the news hit social media, the collective and representational actions taken by the Unite union, Labour MP Jacinda Ardern and deaf Green MP Mojo Mathers led KFC to reverse its decision a short while later.[7]

Those with disabilities are a particularly vulnerable population in the contemporary social context and an easy target for exclusion and marginalisation. In the UK, less than 10 per cent of people with learning difficulties are in paid work and those with disabilities are twice as likely to live in poverty.[8] Austerity policies have led to a loss of £9 billion in welfare support for those with disabilities, with a third losing their Disability Living Allowance.[9] In Aotearoa New Zealand, the 2013 Disability Survey shows that people with disabilities are less likely to be in the labour force, are more likely to be unemployed, and tend to have part-time work and earn lower incomes.[10] The latter is especially true along gender lines; women with disabilities are more likely to work part-time, with 48 per cent earning less than $30,000 per annum compared to 28 per cent of men with disabilities.

The 2012 Disability Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand report describes the ongoing struggle for people with disabilities to be heard when the paternalistic 'we know best' attitude of current political stances marginalises their voices and concerns.[11] Of particular concern is the use of minimum wage exemption permits by businesses when employing people with disabilities. This is shocking considering that the current minimum wage is already 29 per cent less than the recommended living wage.[12]

An existence marked by insecure employment, inadequate income and compromised social, political and economic rights clearly locates many people with disabilities in New Zealand among the precariat. We live in a society that values ability over disability, that glorifies autonomy and competition and then castigates and exploits those who, under such a distorted view of humanity, are positioned as less able both instrumentally and politically. Current laws, policies and practices inhibit the full participation of the precariat who have disabilities in political and public life.[13]

Like the disabled community, there are many other groups whose

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situations are only touched on this book, but whose struggles are nevertheless very real. These include, for example, university graduates who are not employable because they lack experience, sex workers, seasonal workers, low-skilled workers and shift workers.

This collection represents a unique dialogue between and among academics, emerging researchers and advocates. It is an attempt to distil into an approachable narrative the accumulated decades of expertise represented by the authors, and typically disseminated through empirical and conceptual research that can yield technical books, reports and numerous peer-reviewed journal articles (some of which have been cited here). Drawing on their different vantage points to inform their analyses, the authors share their respective experiences of researching, teaching, advocating and/or working with precariat individuals and groups. Each of the contributors does this with the aim of developing a more nuanced understanding of the precariat in Aotearoa New Zealand and to provide pathways forward.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

In this book, we turn our attention to this emerging class, the precariat, not so as to further vilify them, but rather to place their lived experience in plain sight. It is time all New Zealanders understood the reality of what many of our own citizens endure in the struggle to make ends meet and live dignified lives. We have divided the book into three sections; here we provide a brief description of each section, with more details of individual chapters provided in the introduction to each section.

In the first section, 'Selling Snake Oil', we explore the various ways in which precarity is contorted, inverted, perverted and obscured. William Cochrane and colleagues open this section by describing the composition of the New Zealand precariat, which currently includes one in six people in this country. James Arrowsmith and colleagues then define the poverty trap that keeps families stuck in a state of immobility and poverty, identifying what is needed for those affected to lift themselves out of such misery. Wayne Hope and Jane Scott provide us with a description of how inequality, and those most affected by it, are portrayed in the media; portrayals that do little to address the

marginalisation of this class-in-the-making.

Turning the spotlight specifically on the vilification of beneficiaries, Darrin Hodgetts and his team describe penal welfare and criminalisation of citizens in need. Next Kimberly Jackson and Rebekah Graham detail the food insecurity experienced by many, and how the solutions suggested to address this basic need are woefully ignorant of their living circumstances. A further example of the multiple layers to everyday lives are the responses to the blight of domestic violence as described by Neville Robertson and Bridgette Masters-Awatere, who highlight ways in which state structures amplify rather than ameliorate the precarity of abused women and their children. Finally, Mary Breheny focuses on the scapegoating of the elderly as the cause of contemporary youth hardship, drawing our attention back to how taking care of communities is the best way to address individual needs.

In the opening chapter of our second section, 'Native Disruption: Māori and the Precariat', the over-representation of Māori youth among the precariat is made clear by Thomas Stubbs and colleagues. They argue the potential for cultural engagement by formal institutions to offset the current prevailing negative attitude. This attitude is described by Delta King's team through the example of Miriama, who talks about 'getting into character, visualising appropriate appearance level and expected behaviour and attitude' when dealing with social services. Negative interference by the state is affirmed by Felicity Ware and her colleagues, who walk us through the impacts on young Māori mothers of the Young Parent Payment (YPP).

Debunking the perception that all providers are created equal, Bridgette Masters-Awatere explains how resource distribution and accountability by government funders impacts on Māori service providers. Finally, Shiloh Groot and colleagues provide verbatim narratives from homeless Māori youth, who powerfully illustrate their lived experiences of precarity. Rather than maintain a negative lens, these young people explain how through cultural connectedness they transform the streets from a place of despair to one of care and respite. Each of the chapters within this section sets out to place these experiences in (colonial) context and counter various stereotypes and common misconceptions of tangata whenua — the indigenous people

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of this country.

The third section, 'Arrivals Past and Present', addresses the precarity of a number of groups: Pasifika, migrants and refugees. Paul Spoonley opens by providing a history of the various recent arrivals to this country and the conditions these groups are currently experiencing. These broad aspects are brought to life by Byron Seiuli in his telling of the story of Tauivi; and then by Teuila, whose experiences are related by Bridgette Masters-Awatere and Jessica Gosche. In the following chapter Seraphine Williams and Shiloh Groot share the stories of four young Samoan transwomen as they discuss their experiences of gender discrimination in the workplace, ranging from humiliation and denial of access to their basic human needs to unfair dismissal.

These Pasifika voices are followed by that of Abann Yor in conversation with Sarah Hahn as he provides a retelling of his journey from refugee to citizen. Ending this section, Rand Hazou addresses cultural precarity and the establishment of identity and belonging in Aotearoa New Zealand through the participation of young people from refugee backgrounds in the performing arts.

Finding a place in Aotearoa and overcoming precarity, then, is not about obliterating the past or eliminating the cultural traces that make us who we are, and it is not about accepting being coerced into economic and social models that reduce us to cogs in the market. We return to this and other salient points in the 'Discussion' chapter that concludes the book.

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1 Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

2 Ibid.

3 Judith Butler, 'Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics', *AIBR. Revista De Antropología Iberoamericana* 4, no. 3 (2009): i–xiii.

4 Jenée Tibshraeny, 'Tax Professor Calls for Independent Inquiry into How Tax Evaders and Benefit Fraudsters Are Treated by the Justice System', Interest.co.nz, October 13, 2016, retrieved from http://www.interest.co.nz/personal-finance/84038/tax-professor-calls-independent-inquiry-how-tax-evaders-and-benefit

5 Max Rashbrooke, *Wealth and New Zealand* (Wellington: BWB Texts, 2015).

6 Amanda Snow, 'Disabled Staff Forced Out of Job', *New Zealand Herald*, September 1, 2013, retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11117584

7 Amanda Snow, 'KFC Calls Back Disabled Staff', *New Zealand Herald*, September 29, 2013, retrieved from http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11131722

8 Keith Bates, Dan Goodley and Katherine Runswick-Cole, 'Precarious Lives and Resistant Possibilities: The Labour of People with Learning Disabilities in Times of Austerity', *Disability & Society* 32, no. 2 (2017): 160–75.

9 Wood (2012) in D. Goodley, R. Lawthomb and K. Runswick-Coleb, 'Dis/ability and Austerity: Beyond Work and Slow Death', *Disability & Society* 29, no. 6 (2014): 980–84.

10 Statistics New Zealand, 'Disability and the Labour Market: Findings from the 2013 Disability Survey', retrieved from www.stats.govt.nz

11 Article 33 Convention Coalition Monitoring Group, 'Disability Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand 2012: A Systemic Monitoring Report on the Human Rights of Disabled People in Aotearoa New Zealand', retrieved from http://www.dpa.org.nz/resources/sector-resources/the-convention-disability-rights-in-aotearoa-new-zealand

12 Living Wage Aotearoa New Zealand, 'What is the Living Wage?' April 1, 2017, retrieved from http://www.livingwage.org.nz/what_is_the_living_wage

13 Article 33 Convention Coalition Monitoring Group, 'Disability Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand 2012'.

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SECTION ONE:

SELLING SNAKE OIL

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INTRODUCTION

CLIFFORD VAN OMMEN
AND SHILOH GROOT

Many of us would be familiar with the expression 'selling snake oil', which typically refers to a health product of questionable quality or benefit. There is an interesting story about the origin of the term 'snake oil'. According to this tale, snake oil was originally an authentic medication, made from the oil of the Chinese water snake, which was brought into the US by indentured Chinese labourers.[1] The oil proved to be an effective and soothing treatment for inflammation but, since there were no Chinese water snakes in the US, demand quickly exceeded supply. Entrepreneurial locals soon turned to indigenous snakes, but these lacked the medicinal potency of their Asian relative. It wasn't long before alternatives bearing the same name, but not a molecule of oil or remedy, were being traded as cures for all sorts of ills.

There seems something appropriate about this narrative when it comes to considering our current times. Recently, through the Trump-era US political scene, we have been introduced to a new term, 'alternative facts', which most of us would recognise as a synonym for 'lies'. 'Alternative facts' do seem to abound in our times and the tonics that some, both locally and elsewhere, are trying to sell us are so lacking in an ounce of truth or even common logic that many of us are simultaneously struck with the twin emotions of mirth and fear. Unfortunately for many — the precariat — it is very hard, often impossible, to avoid such quack tonics and the need to negotiate such

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dodgy placebos in one's life. This obviously can have destructive effects physically, psychologically, relationally, spiritually and communally.

'Alternative facts' are not some radical new development in the sociopolitical landscape; rather, they represent an intensification of pre-existing practices. Such strategies typically make a lot of sense if you cannot look beyond the current system (that is, if you see the world as it currently is as the only possible world) since their aim is to keep the current system intact. Unfortunately this often leads to an escalation in the dosage of such strategies. If at first you don't succeed, then you just do more of the same, increasing the amount, intensity, focus and frequency.

For example, arguments with partners often take this form; one says something to the other at an everyday volume, subsequently repeating the same message at an ever-escalating volume when it doesn't seem to be making a difference. Eventually the back-and-forth escalation can even be heard by the neighbours and, in some cases, a profound shift in strategy occurs and things turn violent. Or, another example, if unemployment increases, you are encouraged to look at other people on the job market as competitors, possibly singling out those who arrived more recently or who look different to you. Before you know it, you're building walls. As systems break down, the solutions required to keep them intact typically become more and more ludicrous and, at worst, brutal. Ironically, the solutions aimed at sustaining the current system have led to it becoming unrecognisably transformed.

A common reductive explanation for many of the social issues that face our society is to blame the individual. So, the inability to find work, to feed and house one's family, or to successfully manage one's finances become seen as individual deficits and failures. The person is seen as lacking certain skills, whether this is in planning, thinking, regulating emotions, managing interpersonal interactions or presenting themself. Solutions then become matters of further education, training or 'nudging' (the behavioural coercion) of such individuals.[2] Continued failure can then be regarded as a sign of moral failure; an unwillingness to contribute to society, to take responsibility and to toe the line, to pull oneself up by the boot-straps, which inevitably results in rejection from the system in some form or other. Shining the torch on such

individuals is a great way to draw attention away from the system itself and those who benefit from its current organisation. It also obscures and marginalises other more humane and community-building solutions that take time and collective commitment.

To demystify the fraudulent solutions 'snake oil merchants' are tempting us with, or the offered solutions that do not take the complexity of many social issues into account, requires standing back from the current system and questioning the assumptions or rules on which power is enacted. Solutions that emerge from such a stance are often radical in that they seek to change the fundamental procedures and guidelines (values) on which the system is currently organised. Change can be frightening for many; not merely because it is a shift from the familiar (better the devil we know) but because some members of the system have deeply vested interests in keeping it intact — even if this means the suffering and mounting decline of others. Often the suggestion of these types of solutions is rapidly dismissed with a well-rehearsed gesture, sound-bite or self-righteous chuckle rather than allowing for any serious public debate to develop, as is essential in a democracy.

This section of the book explores both current solutions that we are told are 'common sense' and potential alternatives for a healthy and inclusive society. As the title of the section suggests, the first set of solutions will strike many a reader as familiar, but such ready-to-hand solutions almost always obscure other facts and arguments. The authors in each of their chapters render some of our 'common sense' responses and practices odd, filled with non-sense, and even morally dodgy. Many of these authors also argue for different routes — not alternative facts but fact-based alternatives. It is our hope that these chapters will both make current responses less convincing and render other routes more substantial and, more than this, will reignite serious and wide-reaching debate and action among our country's citizenry.

In these chapters we explore the various ways in which precarity is contorted, inverted, perverted and obscured. The first chapter, by William Cochrane, Thomas Stubbs, Mohi Rua and Darrin Hodgetts, describes the demographic composition of the New Zealand precariat, noting that this currently includes about one in six people in this

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country. James Arrowsmith, Stuart Carr, Jarrod Haar, Harvey Jones, Jane Parker and Christian Yao then define the poverty trap that keeps families stuck in a state of immobility, identifying what is needed for those affected to lift themselves out of such misery.

Wayne Hope and Jane Scott explore media representations of inequality and the framing of precarity. This is important since the media can act as a powerful platform for influencing public opinion and connecting us to one another — or pitting us against each other. The less than sympathetic characterisations of people in poverty have important implications for those seeking support and assistance. Darrin Hodgetts, Ottilie Stolte, Kerry Chamberlain and Shiloh Groot describe the criminalisation of families in need. They draw on the term 'penal welfare' to refer to the shift in welfare from a universal system based on citizenship rights to one that is unnecessarily cruel and punitive.

Next Kimberly Jackson and Rebekah Graham detail the food insecurity experienced by many families and how the solutions suggested to address this basic need are woefully ignorant of the living circumstances of those affected. A further example of this lack of understanding can be seen in the responses to the blight of domestic violence, as described by Neville Robertson and Bridgette Masters-Awatere, where state structures actually amplify rather than ameliorate the precarity of women and their children. Finally, Mary Breheny draws our attention to the scapegoating of the elderly as the cause of contemporary youth hardship, drawing out attention back to how taking care of all members of our communities is the best way to address social issues.

1 Lakshmi Gandhi, 'A History of "Snake Oil Salesmen"', August 26, 2013, retrieved from http://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2013/08/26/215761377/a-history-of-snake-oil-salesmen

2 John Cromby and Martin E. H. Willis, 'Nudging Into Subjectification: Governmentality and Psychometrics', *Critical Social Policy* 13, no. 2 (2013): 241–59.

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A STATISTICAL PORTRAIT OF THE NEW ZEALAND PRECARIAT

WILLIAM COCHRANE, THOMAS STUBBS, MOHI RUA AND DARRIN HODGETTS

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Social inequalities have been increasing in New Zealand since the 1980s, widely understood to be a consequence of labour and welfare reforms that increased flexibility in employment, reduced protection for workers, and introduced stricter criteria for unemployment and other benefits. Perhaps the most alarming outcome of these changes has been the growth of low-paid temporary jobs. This has resulted in an increase in households struggling to meet basic food, health and housing needs.

This chapter explores the characteristics of the 'precariat' in New Zealand, shedding light on an emerging yet marginalised group in our society, which — until now — has been neglected in academic and policy circles. We begin by defining the precariat and deploy data from Statistics New Zealand to form an empirical description of the groups that make up this new 'class'. Using data obtained from the 2014 New Zealand General Social Survey, we then outline the prevalence, composition, location and lived experience of the New Zealand precariat.

Overall, we find that the precariat comprises about one in every six New Zealanders. The group is dominated by Europeans, females, younger age groups, those with low or no qualifications, and those with low incomes. As a percentage of their populations, Māori and Pacific peoples have the highest prevalence of precarity, while Northland, Bay of Plenty and Gisborne emerge as regions with the greatest prevalence rates. We also find that people in the precariat are four times as likely

to express complete dissatisfaction with their lives compared to those not in the precariat, and almost one-third of the precariat reported that their income was not enough to secure everyday needs, such as food and accommodation.

DEFINING THE NEW ZEALAND PRECARIAT

As defined elsewhere in this volume, the precariat is a class-in-the-making that can be characterised by three dimensions.[1] First, its members have insecure employment; that is, they are in and out of jobs often, failing to secure long-term contracts. They are, as a result, habituated to a life of unstable labour and unstable living. Second, its members rely on money from wages that are flexible, rather than from wealth or enterprise-based incomes. They thus experience chronic income insecurity on top of their employment insecurity. Third, its members have fewer civil, cultural, social, political and economic rights, which translates into limited access to rights-based state benefits. Accompanying these reduced rights, they must perform a great deal of work outside of their paid jobs, in 'seeking jobs and in appeasing the state, by queuing, form filling, [and] retraining'.[2] This combination tends to induce a sense of relative deprivation and a consciousness of loss.[3]

Using data from the 2014 New Zealand General Social Survey,[4] we measure the New Zealand precariat as comprised of three categories: temporary employees; the jobless, and beneficiaries.[5] Temporary employees are those whose job only lasts for a limited time or until the completion of a project, including casual, agency, fixed-term and seasonal workers.[6] The jobless category is composed of three subgroups of the working-age population (i.e., those aged 15 to 65): the unemployed, defined as those who are without a paid job and are available for and actively seeking work; those outside the labour force who are actively seeking but unavailable for work, and those outside the labour force who are available for but not actively seeking work.[7] Unlike our chapter on the Māori precariat (which uses Statistics New Zealand's Te Kupenga survey of Māori wellbeing), we are unable to distinguish students from the jobless. Lastly, beneficiaries are those not otherwise counted in the aforementioned groupings who received

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a benefit income — including sickness, invalid and domestic purposes beneficiaries — in the previous year and who remain outside the labour force.[8]

We acknowledge that measuring the precariat in this way represents a compromise. On the one hand, due to constraints on the availability of data, we are unable to capture those who are deemed to be permanently employed but have no sureness of job security. This could include an employee on an open-ended contract who is certain to lose their job within the next year, or one who works highly variable hours of permanent employment who may — in practice — experience chronic income insecurity where a minimum number of work hours are not assured each week. On the other hand, we count students who may not be experiencing income insecurity and habitual unstable living. For example, wealthy students who can maintain a decent standard of living without paid work or government benefits would not fall within our definition of the precariat.

Table 1. Composition of the New Zealand precariat and non-precariat by gender.

	Male	Female	Total (male + female)
Precariat	256,000	350,000	606,000
Non-precariat	1,457,000	1,472,000	2,929,000
Total (precariat + non-precariat)	1,713,000	1,823,000	3,535,000

FINDINGS

Of the 3.53 million New Zealanders aged 15 years and over in 2014, a total of 606,000 were in the precariat, or about one in every six (17.1 per cent). In Table 1, we present the composition of the New Zealand precariat by gender. A gendered differential within the precariat is apparent, with 350,000 female (57.8 per cent) and 256,000 (42.2 per cent) male. This differential may in part be explained by the greater prevalence of temporary work among females, especially among those with child-rearing responsibilities.[9]

Figure 1 shows that the New Zealand precariat is largely composed of younger age groups. About 33.7 per cent of New Zealanders in the

precariat are in the 15 to 24 age bracket, and 19.9 per cent in the 25 to 34 age bracket. The concentration of the New Zealand precariat in the younger age groups possibly reflects the difficulties new entrants have in attaching to the labour market.

Figure 1. Composition of the New Zealand precariat by age.

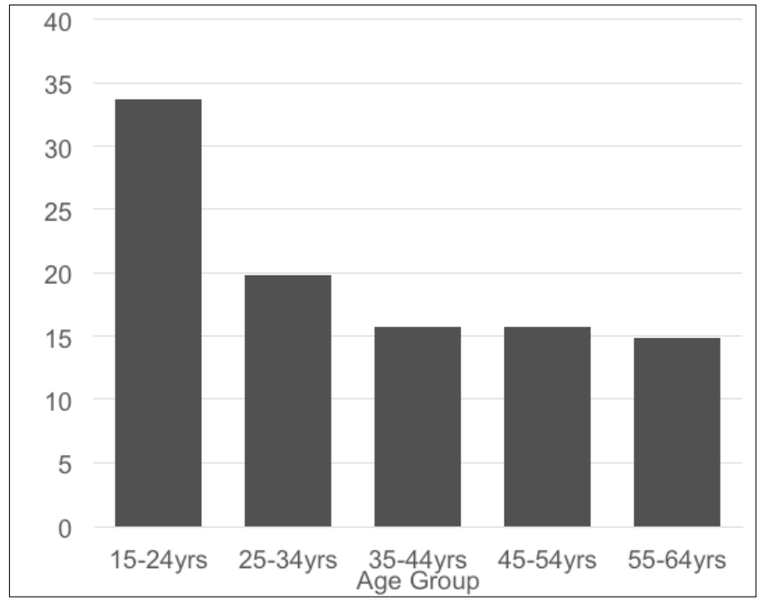

Table 2 presents the ethnic composition of the New Zealand precariat. People who identify as European compose the majority of the precariat, at 63.2 per cent, followed by Māori (21.8 per cent), Asian (12.4 per cent) and Pacific peoples (10.1 per cent). The concentration of the precariat among those who identify as European is largely a reflection of the fact that the highest proportion of New Zealand's total population also identifies as European.

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Table 2. Composition of the New Zealand precariat and non-precariat by ethnicity. Note: ethnic categories are not mutually exclusive.

	European	Māori	Pacific	Asian	Total
Precariat	**383,000**	**132,000**	**61,000**	**75,000**	**606,000**
	63.2%	21.8%	10.1%	12.4%	
Non-precariat	**2,240,000**	**325,000**	**147,000**	**343,000**	**2,929,000**
	76.5%	11.1%	5.0%	11.7%	

In Table 3, we report the prevalence of the precariat within each ethnic group. Europeans have the lowest prevalence of precarity, at 14.6 per cent, even though the New Zealand precariat is predominantly composed of Europeans. Asian prevalence of precarity is similar to the European rate, at 17.9 per cent. However, prevalence rates for Māori and Pacific peoples are almost double those of Europeans, at 28.8 per cent and 29.2 per cent respectively.[10] Thus, while one in every seven Europeans is in the precariat, for Māori and Pacific peoples more than one in every four fall into the precariat. This finding is consistent with other research that reports higher rates of unemployment and poverty among Māori and Pacific peoples.[11]

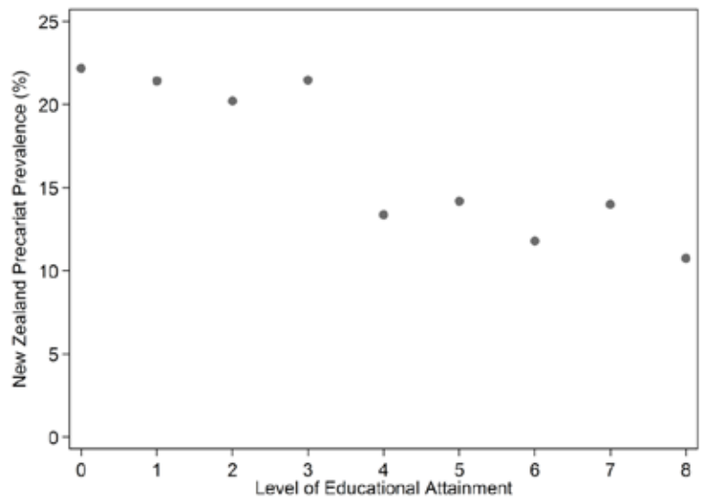
Table 3. Prevalence of the New Zealand precariat by ethnicity. Note: ethnic categories are not mutually exclusive. Reported figures for Māori diverge from those in Chapter 8, 'The Māori Precariat', due to differing data sources.

Ethnic Group	Precariat	Total	Prevalence (precariat as % of total)
European	383,000	2,623,000	14.6%
Māori	132,000	458,000	28.8%
Pacific	61,000	209,000	29.2%
Asian	75,000	418,000	17.9%
Total	606,000	3,535,000	17.1%

In Figure 2, we plot the prevalence of New Zealand precarity for each level of educational attainment and find a clear association between the two. Of New Zealanders who have no qualification, 22.2 per cent

are in the precariat, while 14.0 per cent of New Zealanders who have obtained a Bachelor's degree are in the precariat. This finding is consistent with previous studies that report lower levels of educational attainment among those on social security benefits or in temporary work.[12] While those with higher levels of education are less likely to be in the precariat, there is minimal difference between those with no qualification up to NZQF (New Zealand Qualifications Framework) levels 1–3. Similarly, those with NZQF levels 4–6, a Bachelor's degree and other postgraduate degrees also display minimal differences in prevalence rates. This discontinuity is likely to be due to the decline in demand for unskilled labour, and the greater value attached by employers to post-secondary school training.

Figure 2. Prevalence of the New Zealand precariat by level of educational attainment. Note: level of educational attainment 0 is no qualification; 1 to 6 corresponds with NZQF levels 1 to 6; 7 is Bachelor's degree; 8 is Master's, Doctorate, and other postgraduate degrees.



Looking at the prevalence of the New Zealand precariat for each region in the country, the Northland group — Northland, Bay of Plenty

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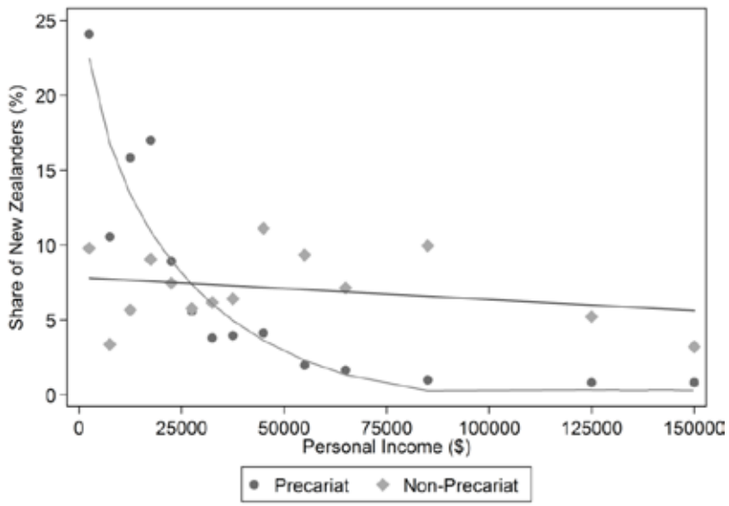
and Gisborne — emerges as the region with the highest prevalence, at 22.2 per cent. This pattern is likely due, in part, to relatively high levels of employment in seasonal industries — such as meat processing or horticulture — that play a central role in these regional economies. Canterbury has the lowest prevalence of precarity, at 11.3 per cent. The reasons for Canterbury's low rate are not well understood. The remaining regions — Auckland, Wellington, a residual group for the rest of the North Island, and a residual group for the rest of the South Island, have comparable prevalence, at about 16–18 per cent.

Figure 3. Composition of the New Zealand precariat and non-precariat by personal income. Note: personal income brackets are plotted at the midpoint.



In Figure 3, we plot the composition of the New Zealand precariat and non-precariat at each personal income bracket. As we might expect, the precariat is overwhelmingly concentrated within the lowest income brackets: 24.1 per cent are in the $0 to $5000 income bracket, and half the population of the New Zealand precariat live on a personal income of less than $15,000 a year.

Turning to the lived experience of the New Zealand precariat,

14.7 per cent indicated they were 'completely satisfied' with their lives, against 18.4 per cent of the non-precariat. However, members of the precariat were four times more likely to report that they were 'completely dissatisfied' with their lives than members of the non-precariat, at 1.2 per cent and 0.3 per cent respectively. Alarmingly, 30.0 per cent of the precariat indicated their income was insufficient to meet everyday needs for such things as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities, compared to 8.4 per cent of the non-precariat.

CONCLUSION

The precariat is an emerging group in New Zealand that is over-represented by females, younger age groups, those with low or no qualifications, and those with low incomes. Another notable feature of this group is the higher rates of prevalence in regions associated with meat processing, horticulture and other seasonal employment. While larger numbers of Europeans are in the precariat, policy responses need to be sensitive to the fact that prevalence rates are highest among Māori and Pacific peoples. With few material resources and little opportunity for upward mobility, for many young New Zealanders the stage has been set for a lifetime of precarity. Government action is therefore essential.

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FROM WORKING POVERTY TO SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD
WHAT CAN APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY OFFER?

JAMES ARROWSMITH, STUART C. CARR, JARROD HAAR, HARVEY JONES, JANE PARKER AND CHRISTIAN YAO[1]

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WHAT'S THE QUESTION?

All countries are 'developing'. None, including New Zealand, is fully 'developed'. At a time of rising inequality,[2] we paraphrase Hamlet: 'to develop or not to develop, that is the question!' This is the core question behind the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to which we refer specifically throughout this chapter. The SDGs have set the bar high not simply in terms of economic development but more fundamentally for human development out of poverty — by eradicating unequal and poor opportunities in health, the environment, education, gender equity and work — for the next 15 years of world history.[3]

How to enable shared prosperity and human flourishing in everyday life is a question for all, and one that researchers should be able to help society answer. Yet this question continues to challenge researchers across a range of social sciences, from economics and development studies through sociology and psychology to employment relations. A key sticking point is whether there is such a thing as a 'poverty trap'.[4] This metaphor is familiar to many who have experienced an increase in individual income that is quickly offset by a consequent loss of social benefits, leaving people worse off and hence preventing them from climbing out of welfare dependency.[5]

Mechanisms for holding people back can include having to rely on money lenders who charge high interest rates; not being able to pay bills early so that they receive a discount, or being penalised for lateness;

and being unable to buy in bulk, which is usually cheaper than single units. Thus, money goes to money, hardship to hardship. On its own, each of these might make escaping from poverty incrementally more difficult. But could they really combine with threats to monitor and potentially withdraw benefits, to make poverty actually *in*escapable — and thus an actual vicious circle?

On one side of the poverty trap debate are social scientists who believe that people will never prosper and flourish unless they get a break of some kind to free them from the vicious cycle — for instance, a welfare payment or a universal basic income, or a fair-trade price for goods, or a living wage for their labour.[6] On this side of the argument, people are seen as inherently hard working, wanting to earn a sustainable living and in general motivated to support themselves and their families and households.[7] Mostly the only thing that holds people back, in precariousness, is the lack of opportunities.

On the other side of the debate are social scientists whose belief is that welfare payments and hardship allowances, or international humanitarian aid, are ultimately counterproductive.[8] Why? Because they supposedly reward and foster dependency and laziness. The idea of a poverty trap is really just escapism from life's winner-take-all 'tournament'.[9] Consequently, the way to enable flourishing and thriving is via competition.

This question of whether poverty traps exist is not just academic jousting. Whoever is right, or for the most part right, matters a great deal for everyone. It matters for social policy (safety nets or no safety nets); for international aid and national welfare (assistance or no assistance); in poverty reduction and shared prosperity (set a minimum wage that is also a living wage, or not), and for human development (the SDGs). After all, the primary goal of these SDGs is to 'eradicate poverty, in all its forms everywhere'.[10] A living wage is thus potentially a 'big idea', a game changer — but only if (and it remains a big 'if') poverty traps exist.

This is the fundamental premise for this chapter. If the poverty trap exists, then poverty will never be 'eradicated' without safety nets like international aid, welfare services, and decent, living wages.

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WHAT'S THE *PROBLEM*?

Throughout decades in New Zealand, the public has been told that the most sustainable way out of poverty and into prosperity is through work. Who would disagree? To many if not most people all over the planet, research has shown, the most direct and obvious way out of poverty and into some form of thriving and flourishing is finding a job.[11] Not just any type of job, but a job with a modicum of security, reliable hours, a decent pay rate (especially in the case of underemployment through irregular hours), and a sustainable livelihood.[12] Thus, job *quality* matters.[13]

Access to jobs is definitely problematic for many. Globally, almost 200 million people are unemployed, meaning wanting but not able to secure any kind of job at all.[14] Granted, many *more* than 200 million — some three billion in fact — are already 'in' a job, though they may be 'underemployed'. Shockingly, an estimated 46 per cent of these are actually classified (by United Nations agencies such as the World Bank and the International Labour Organization [ILO]) as being in jobs that are 'vulnerable' — meaning informal, insecure, often dangerous and poorly paid. In a word: precarious. On these numbers alone, therefore, precarious *work* is the bigger problem!

So too, according to the ILO, is the other end of the work (and pay) spectrum: in many countries, chief executive officers' (CEOs) share of wage budgets (even after any tax may be paid) often draws vital resources away from job creation and, therefore, adds to precariousness for those in work.[15] Indeed, as Martha Crowley and Randy Hodson observe, 'organizational decision-makers increasingly promote neoliberal work practices'.[16] Their research findings show negative ramifications for employee wellbeing, including increases in turnover and quitting, and reductions in informal peer training and effort as well as job quality. Human greed is thus a key driver of the wider problem: working poverty and income inequality (SDGs 8 and 10).

WHERE'S THE PROBLEM?

In one word: everywhere. Statistics for precariousness in working poverty are a shocking indictment. Some 327 million of the world's 700 million people who live in extreme poverty (defined as US$1.25 to $1.90

per day)[17] ironically are also 'working'.[18] Moreover, almost a billion more earn just US$1.90 to $5 a day — wages that are usually woefully inadequate to enjoy any quality of life.

Existing wage policies, including legal safety nets, are incapable of redressing the imbalance.[19] Today, many of the world's 1.5 billion vulnerable workers, in fact, work in the informal sector, where by definition they are not protected by minimum wage or other social protection legislation. Even for those who do have such protection, including those in New Zealand, the legal minimum wage is increasingly insufficient to make ends meet.[20] Precarious and low-paid jobs are found all over the world — from tea pickers in Malawi[21] to blue-collar workers across the United States.[22]

We in New Zealand are part of that problem. New Zealand today is the fifth most unequal economy in the OECD.[23] We have more than one in four children living in poverty,[24] and three out of five of these children live in persistent poverty.[25] Many of these children have carers who have precarious jobs and are reliant on food banks to feed their kids.[26] Similarly, more than half of homeless adults are either working or studying or both.[27]

What such statistics — global and locally in New Zealand — tell us is that unemployment per se is not the major issue in poverty. A major issue for the world, including those of us in 'developed' New Zealand, is access to a *decent* job. This has led to the issue of working poverty. An obvious starting point is access to a living wage, meaning a wage that meets people's aspirations for a decent, inclusive and sustainable quality of life, and of work life (SDGs 1, 8, 9, 10).

WHERE'S THE *GAP*?

When it comes to decent quality of work life, and happiness, we know a lot more about the worried wellness of those in middle-class and upper-class jobs[28] than we know about the precariousness of lowest-income livelihoods.[29]

We also have a dominant macroeconomic mantra — that keeping wages lower will create more efficiency, allowing organisations to hire people and create jobs; and that eventually the benefits of this efficiency will trickle down into higher wages for those on the shop

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floor, the floor cleaners, the domestic workers and the farm labourers. This approach might be referred to as 'grow now, share later'. The biggest argument against this mantra is a widespread sentiment, in New Zealand as elsewhere, that the 'sharing' bit has not yet, after decades, trickled down to workers.[30] Even a report by five economists from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has dismissed 'trickle down' economics, saying that governments should focus on helping the poorest 20 per cent of citizens to increase the pace of growth.[31] In contrast, the argument for living wages is based on 'share now, grow later'. The obstacle for this position is the popular sentiment among employers that living wages would either 'send them broke' or lead to job losses.[32]

The gap in this debate, then, is a dire shortage of systematic evidence from people themselves. What are needed to inform this debate are human accounts about the qualities of life and work life — and work engagement — that lower wages may, or may not, buy.

CLOSING THIS INFORMATION GAP

'There is nothing so practical as a good theory' is a widely quoted maxim in applied psychology.[33] Theories can inform policies, such as wage policy like the living wage, by showing where we need to set the wage, and what exactly it might enable people to do and feel — i.e. to make educated predictions. We can theorise in fact about living wages.[34] Theory 1 is that *if* poverty traps exist, then people will surely report persistent hardship, even with mild increases in wages, up to some critical threshold, or 'pivot range'.[35] This range might or might not be the 'official', econometrically estimated living wage in New Zealand. Beyond that wage range, quality of life and work life should (Theory 1 predicts, at least) start to climb. People may engage more with their work, resulting in 'efficiency gains', that is, shared prosperity for workers and employer alike.

Alternatively, Theory 2 is that *if* the nay-saying on poverty traps is right, then any wage is a good wage, even at the lowest end of the wage spectrum. Indeed, for anyone without any money at all, any wage is a good wage; the same dollar coin means more when we're broke and out of work than when we're in work and flush with money. From this

point of view (Theory 2), any 'growth' in wages will produce less and less benefit, that is, 'diminishing marginal returns' (for labour, at least).

CLOSING THE *TRAP*

Having outlined two competing theories around the idea of poverty trap versus no poverty trap, we can use research to test whether poverty traps exist, in this case in precarious work. We conducted a preliminary study in New Zealand, with lower, middle and higher income occupations.[36] Over a thousand people voluntarily took part in this online mobile-assisted survey, designed with input from a range of stakeholder groups from labour and management to community and civil society sectors. Although we did not reach people who cannot afford computers or mobile phones, these stakeholder groups nonetheless helped us to reach New Zealanders from all over the country, across a range of occupations and differently paid jobs — including many in precarious work and on low pay.

First, we asked people to indicate their annual household income bracket, i.e. the total income coming into their household over a year. We found a transition occurs between NZ$30,000 and $40,000 per annum: most of the participants living in households in the $30,000 range reported not being able to make ends meet; most of those living in the households in the $40,000 range reported that they did manage to make ends meet, suggesting a pivot range. For a single full-time income household, these figures would straddle the legal minimum wage ($30,000 per annum) and the econometrically calculated living wage ($40,000 per annum), giving us a crude estimate of the pivot range.[37]

However, the most frequent number of working incomes in our sample was not one but two; in other words two people per household, on average, had jobs of one kind or another. Next, therefore, we statistically controlled for number of income streams, household size, dependents, full-time and part-time work, and so on. We could then plot work and life 'capabilities' (e.g. sense of wage fairness and life satisfaction) against these household income brackets, after any influence of household size and income streams, etc. had been removed (they turned out to be not very significant for our particular

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sample). When we did this, there was still a significant spike in these capabilities as income traversed from the $30,000s to the $40,000s. Moreover, the quality of life and work life changed from one to the other, from negative below $30,000 (i.e. unfairness and dissatisfaction) to above it in the $40,000 range (i.e. fairness and satisfaction). Again, this suggests a pivotal range, and a poverty (of quality of life and work life) trap.

Third, people answered the question 'How well does your wage work for you?' Interestingly, their individual stories tended to change in tenor and timbre as the reported household income passed from $30,000 to $40,000. Again, this suggests a change in the personal as well as household quality of life from one household income bracket to the next — not a smooth curve with diminishing marginal returns (see Theory 2 above), but a poverty (of opportunity) trap.

Of course, this is a preliminary study. Further investigations are needed to include factors such as time and location. For example, does a current change of income have an effect on individual and family wellbeing in the long term and even over generations? We also need to over — rather than under — include occupations with very low incomes (we did not reach enough of these groups in our online survey). And we need to test these relationships over different cities versus rural areas (where living costs, transportation, etc. may vary greatly) and countries (where inequality may vary greatly).

This is where Project GLOW comes in.[38] GLOW is a multi-generational (50 years, five decades) project. It includes research, teaching and service hubs from over 25 countries, which will work together along global supply chains to help define and study the living wage in diverse sectors, economies and trade routes. Our central question is whether and where there is a living wage level; is there a poverty trap or not?

OPENING THE TRAP

The issue of living wages and decent work is contentious and heated — often by hot air. Ultimately, we want to be able to add some real value to the debate on living wages. This currently seems to be taking place in an evidence vacuum, even though its consequences for poverty eradication are anything but vacuous. Freeing livelihoods from poverty

traps is not just a question of 'knowledge and enlightenment'. Research and theory, on their own, are never enough to change the world. We need a whole range of 'new diplomacies'[39] to make evidence persuasive to policymakers at organisational, governmental and multilateral levels — from the smallest small-to-medium enterprise (SME) to the biggest multinational corporation, to the United Nations chapters like the ILO itself.

This is why we have created a skilled and experienced diplomatic corps within GLOW, which will take its findings and recommendations to a new, applied, everyday level. Translating the SDGs of eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere, through decent work, inclusive (post-) industrialisation and the reduction of income inequality, is achievable. In so doing, we will be tackling the issue of precariousness head-on, with sustainable solutions in decent work and, above all, sustainable livelihood. With more than sixty employers in New Zealand now declaring themselves living-wage employers, including Wellington Regional Council, we are part of that translation into everyday life.[40] Even with such living wage policies, there remain significant challenges, including paying a living wage to subcontractors in sectors like cleaning and security, and ensuring that zero-hour contracts and underemployment are eradicated. Nonetheless, on the case-study evidence we have collected so far,[41] while 'budget' is always going to be important, so too are human factors.

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1 The authors are grateful to the Vice-Chancellor's Discretionary Fund at Massey University for supporting the research reported in this chapter, undertaken as part of the WageingWell NZ study. [Please amend as necessary so that this is correct] We thank all our core stakeholders and participants for their goodwill and valuable time during the consultation and implementation phases of the study. We greatly value the inspiration received from our international colleagues and hubs across GLOW.

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MEDIA DEPICTIONS OF PRECARIOUS WORK WITHIN NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM
THE NEW ZEALAND EXPERIENCE

WAYNE HOPE
AND JANE SCOTT

The idea of *precarity* derives from the Latin *precari,* which means to beg, pray, entreat, to be unstable, dependent on the favour of another, exposed to danger, with uncertain tenure.[1] In early industrial capitalism, waged workers survived by selling their labour, while those without waged income — in households and informal economies — struggled to survive at all. From this observation, one could argue that precarious labour was an original and defining feature of capitalism. Conversely, challenges to capitalism sought to reduce manifestations of precarious work.

In Western countries from the 1940s, the institutionalisation of secure work arose from a general class compromise between capital and labour. Workers agreed not to take collective action against the capitalist class in exchange for regular and adequate wages, legal recognition of union coverage, full employment and welfare entitlements. Meanwhile, under post-colonial Third World regimes, literacy and adult education programmes, the construction of schools, hospitals, roads, sewage facilities, irrigation schemes and land redistribution reflected favourable economic conditions and employment growth. Disparities between rich and poor regions of the world were partly alleviated by Western lending policies, whereby Third World countries obtained bank loans for state-led import-substituting strategies of industrial and agricultural development.[2]

From the late 1970s, neoliberal policy prescriptions became accepted

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as the norm within transnational lending institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Consequently, the Third World developmental state confronted structural adjustment programmes consisting of currency devaluation, privatisation, tariff reduction, public sector contraction and removal of food subsidies. Such measures enriched foreign corporations and national elites at the expense of local populations. In Western societies, strict monetary policies, privatisation, public-sector cutbacks, relocation of industrial production, the subcontracting of entire workforces and the financialisation of business activity facilitated the growth of unemployment and precarious jobs.

Against this background, we argue that the growing social centrality of precarious work in New Zealand has been obscured and under-reported by news media coverage. Three examples are cited to advance our case. They are: the 90-day-trial clause, enabling employers to hire and fire workers on probation; the zero-hour contracts measure, allowing employers to continuously adjust the times and duration of work shifts; and the Dick Smith collapse, exemplifying the destruction of a retail firm and its workforce by private equity speculation. We conclude with the observation that the political-economic causes and social realities of precarious work should be publicised by oppositional groups with their own policy alternatives.

CAPITALIST RESTRUCTURING, NEOLIBERALISM AND THE SILENT SPREAD OF PRECARIOUS WORK IN NEW ZEALAND

After the Labour Party's July 1984 election victory, Finance Minister Roger Douglas devalued the currency, revoked interest-rate controls and deregulated banking. This allowed local corporates such as Fletcher Challenge, Carter Holt Harvey and Brierleys to invest offshore.[3] With the removal of foreign exchange controls in March 1985, the entire corporate sector was caught up in a wave of internationally brokered mergers and takeovers. Corporate raiders borrowed money, bought properties and issued shares with minimal asset backing. When the over-inflated New Zealand sharemarket collapsed in October 1987, those companies dependent on paper profits were left with debt, unsaleable shareholdings and unmanageable interest payments.[4]

This turn of events signalled a long-term shift within New Zealand capitalism that was to adversely affect job security and the stability of employment relationships. The commercial power of finance capital acted parasitically on productive capital. During the late 1980s and 1990s, productive activity in general was depressed by cuts in tariff levels. Local manufacturers, rural holdings, retail businesses and their workforces were exposed to the local uncertainties of the global financial climate.

From 1986 to 1988, the Labour government radically reduced the top rates of income tax.[5] The tax on corporate profit was reduced significantly from 48 to 33 per cent. Also introduced was a means-tested family income scheme aimed at ensuring a significant margin between the incomes of families working and those on benefits. A regressive 10 per cent goods and services consumption tax implemented in 1985 was increased to 12.5 per cent in 1989.[6] These measures undermined the social democratic principles of progressive taxation and universalist welfare provision. In the same year, Labour abandoned its traditional commitment to the maintenance of full employment as a macroeconomic objective. The Reserve Bank Act prioritised the maintenance of low inflation over all other objectives. The increased unemployment that resulted suppressed wages and increased job insecurity.

Similar results occurred after Roger Douglas, with Treasury backing, transformed government departments such as telecommunications, lands and survey, forestry and mining into commercial enterprises. These measures prefigured a full-scale privatisation programme after Labour's re-election in 1987 and during National's term of government from 1990. Major asset sales included New Zealand Steel, Petrocorp, Telecom, Postbank, Air New Zealand, the Bank of New Zealand and local-body utilities.[7] National's introduction of the Employment Contracts Act in May 1991 effectively cancelled New Zealand's social democratic class compromise. A 97-year-old industrial relations system of conciliation and arbitration was overturned. The general purpose was to suppress wages and reduce union bargaining strength.[8]

When the act passed into law, 51.7 per cent of full-time wage and salary earners and 42.3 per cent of the total workforce belonged to

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unions. Ten years later these figures were 22 per cent and 17.7 per cent respectively.[9] The decline in union density also indicated the spread of individual contracting and enterprise bargaining at the expense of collectively negotiated industry and occupation awards.[10] The election of a Labour-Alliance government in 1999 did not reverse this trend. The 2000 Employment Relations Act, which replaced the 1991 legislation, restored the principle of collective bargaining but did not reintroduce national awards or compulsory arbitration. Individual contracts remained central to the industrial relations system.[11]

From July 1984, routine news stories across mainstream media outlets replicated and enhanced the shared neoliberal outlook of bankers, financiers and company executives. Their partisan support of the unfolding policy agenda was translated into the language and imagery of inevitable change. Within this mediated world, business leaders, executive government, Treasury elites and compliant economists were foregrounded as initiators and interpreters of 'reform'. Trade union leaders and their supporters thus confronted distorted patterns of labour relations reportage. The traditional union resource of debating the inconsistencies of government incomes policy was no longer available; they were instead overwhelmed by the rhetorical momentum of labour market 'reform'. Such was evident in the following extract from a TV One *Frontline* special report on the Employment Contracts Act on 5 April 1991:

> **Voiceover**: The rules governing the old world of labour relations have remained largely unchanged since 1890 and in all that time the foundation stone has always been that a relationship between a worker and their employer is unequal. That any boss holds power over any worker. So workers need the protection of laws and unions. The Employment Contracts Bill turns that on its head.
>
> **Voiceover**: Pat Walsh is in Victoria University's Industrial Relations Department . . .
>
> **Interviewer**: The prevailing view seems to be that when employer and employee come to the bargaining table, they come as equals.

The preceding text is accompanied by black-and-white film footage of the old economy at work: car assembly plants, metal engineering shops and wharves. Cinema newsreel music plays in the background.

Here we observe that the unequal relationship between employer and worker is a thing of the past. Since 1890, workers have needed 'the protection of laws and unions', but it appears that this is no longer the case. The accompanying footage and music gives a nostalgic gloss to the very idea of labour relations. The new bill comes across as a radical and necessary break with history, rather than a planned outcome. The interviewer reinforces this impression by asserting that the idea of employer-employee equality is the 'prevailing view'. Consequently, any criticism of the bill on the grounds of workplace inequality was implicitly ruled out. Once the bill was passed, open media debate on New Zealand's changing labour relations system was discontinued. And, thereafter, employer-worker stories were devoid of political resonance. Consequently, the growing precaritisation of occupations and workforces was under-reported. It is to this matter that we now turn.

OBSCURING THE CREATION OF PRECARIOUS JOBS: THE 90-DAY-TRIAL CLAUSE

The introduction of the 90-day-trial clause appeared among a tranche of amendments to the 2000 Employment Relations Act in March 2009, soon after the election of a National government led by John Key. It enabled businesses to dismiss recently employed workers more easily (in tandem with the requirement for trade unions to seek employer approval for access to workplaces). Thus, during the trial period, workers would not be able to claim unjustified dismissal. National's Minister of Labour, Kate Wilkinson, presented the trial period as representing an 'opportunity . . . a real boost for people on the margins of the workforce who simply need an employer to give them a chance'.[12] The legislation initially applied only to firms with fewer than 20 staff, but was rolled out in April 2011 to include all firms.

Subsequently, Treasury-commissioned research evaluating the impact of the probation period found 'no evidence that the policy

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increased the probability that a new hire . . . was a disadvantaged jobseeker . . . beneficiaries, jobseeker beneficiaries, non-workers, recent migrants, youths under 25 years old, Māori or Pasifika under 25 years old, or education leavers.' The research authors concluded that 'the main benefit . . . was a decrease in dismissal costs for firms, while many employees faced increased uncertainty about their job security for three months after being hired'.[13] The Council of Trade Unions (CTU) commented that this showed 'there is no evidence for the Government's promise that this law would give vulnerable workers a better chance of a job. It just makes them more vulnerable.'[14]

By examining the CTU's 2013 report on insecure work, it is possible to identify the key aspects relevant to the 90-day-trial measure. These are: 'uncertainty over how long the job lasts if the job can be terminated with little or no notice, or there is no contract for ongoing work, or there is a high risk of job loss'; and 'lack of rights, such as protection against discrimination and unfair dismissal, and a lack of union representation'.[15]

News media coverage

Amid journalistic editorialising on public policy matters, the traditional news reporting of 'both sides' of an issue is still common. This forms part of the journalistic objectivity principle. However, this pattern of coverage tends to obscure power imbalances between the sides and does not consider how many sides there might be in a given situation. Thus, in employment relations news reporting, there is a metaphorical table whereby the workers and unions are sat on one side, the employers and employer associations on the other, with government 'in the middle' as the neutral arbiter.

This format obscures the lack of bargaining power of the individual worker in relation to the individual firm, and the associated lack of influence of trade unions compared to employer groups in their relations with government.

In the case of the 90-day trial period, the approach of seeking out 'both sides' of an issue ignored the argument that: a) the prior impact

of de-unionisation had further weakened workers and their unions; and b) the policy was one on which employers, employer associations and the National government were in full agreement. While the trade unions emphasised how the policy represented a loss of worker rights, the employer associations and the National government simply promoted the whole policy package as meeting the needs of 'both sides' (on the grounds that it decreased costs for businesses, and increased the likelihood that the workforce's more marginal people would be hired). The employer associations, government and mainstream news media all assumed that the arrangement was voluntary, a matter of agreement between equally empowered employer and employee.[16]

SURFACE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT: THE ZERO-HOUR-CONTRACTS MEASURE

Further amendments to New Zealand's employment legislation came into effect in April 2016 and included those related to hours of work. As early as 2014, trade unions had noted that firms were adding zero hours provisions to employment contracts. For example, in the fast food industry such contracts had become the norm, thus intensifying worker vulnerability.[17] One commentator pointed out that zero-hour contracts were 'just the latest symptom of the rise of insecure work'.[18] Workers would not be guaranteed a minimum number of hours by their employers, yet would be required to be available for work — without compensation — which meant they were barred from accepting work elsewhere.

The National government's response to emerging criticisms of the reality of zero-hour contracts was to recommend that workers get advice before signing contracts. The prime minister simply stated that 'people should be careful to understand what they were signing up for'.[19] Ultimately, however, oppositional campaigns and public debate prompted National to review the proposal. Nevertheless, the final legislation did not outlaw zero-hour contracts as such. Rather, it stipulated a number of prohibitions on employer practices. Thus, employers would need to have a 'genuine reason based on reasonable grounds' for requiring workers to be available.[20] Workers would have the right to receive compensation for availability, as well as protection

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against being treated adversely if they did not accept work offered. However, given that this would be a matter of agreement between the two parties, these measures did not recognise the power imbalance in such situations. How likely are workers to demand compensation or take a personal grievance case when the precarity of their work situation allows such employer behaviour in the first place?[21]

News media coverage

Zero-hour contracts received more publicity than the issue of the 90-day trial period across television, radio and newspapers. A greater range of voices was heard, and the terms 'insecure work' and 'precarious work' were used. However, the National government's subsequent review of zero-hour contracts was overstated. There are a number of aspects unique to this workplace issue and related news media behaviour that together can help explain the coverage.

Firstly, lacking control over one's work situation was understood as not being confined to those in low-pay, low-skill jobs (e.g. cleaning, caregiving, hospitality, retail) in which certain groups of workers are over-represented (e.g. Māori and Pasifika, youth, people with disabilities, migrants). The casualisation of work was spreading into the middle classes and into certain professions. Secondly, this was an issue that did not fit easily into the dominant neoliberal frame of the lazy, 'work-shy' individual, neglectful of family responsibilities. On the contrary, people wanted to work as often as possible in order to meet their families' basic needs. They also wanted scheduled work so that they could ensure children were not home alone.

Thirdly, the extent of the protest and public debate concerning zero-hour contracts could not just be ignored, especially when there was evidence that such contracts were already occurring in a growing number of workplaces. Furthermore, throughout 2015 there had been some local victories in overturning zero-hour contracts. The Unite union's campaigns had partially curtailed the practice at SkyCity, and across the major fast-food, cinema and hotel chains, while the Labour opposition moved to stop the practice in the Parliamentary Service's contracted catering. Fourthly, because not all employers supported zero-hour contracts, divisions within the business community,

together with the unusual prospect of employers and unions criticising the government, were attractive to news organisations.[22]

Finally, it would appear that the news media themselves — responding to various concerns about zero-hour contracts — took a position against the contracts. Otago University politics lecturer Bryce Edwards listed stories on television's *Campbell Live* programme, *New Zealand Herald* and *Dominion Post* editorials, and provincial papers as 'pro-worker'.[23]

However, this was not the end of the story. Past research into mainstream media coverage of protest movements, including employer–worker conflicts, has identified a typical framing device at work. When there is a government policy 'reversal', however insignificant, the mainstream media declare that 'the system worked'. The Fourth Estate, it seems, has successfully carried out its role as a key protector of democracy by keeping the government in check. In the case of zero-hour contracts, once the National government announced that it was responding to criticisms it was applauded by the news media, even though in reality any change of position was minimal.[24]

PRECARITY AS A SIDE EFFECT OF BUSINESS MISMANAGEMENT — THE DICK SMITH COLLAPSE

The Dick Smith electronics firm was sold in 1981 to Woolworths, which oversaw significant expansion of its stores. In 2012 these were sold to Australian-based private equity (PE) firm Anchorage Capital Partners for A$115 million. Anchorage then publicly listed the company at A$520million.[25] Dick Smith was subsequently put into receivership in January 2016. The following month it was announced that all 363 Australian and New Zealand stores would close and nearly 3000 jobs would disappear. In New Zealand, 430 jobs would be lost from the closure of 62 stores.

Private equity is involved in 'buying, restructuring and selling companies', and is 'perhaps the most visible form of financialisation, and certainly the one with which organised labour is most likely to have come into direct contact'.[26] The acquired companies are run for a fairly short period (i.e. three to five years) by the PE firm, with the aim of reselling. There has been a sharp increase in the takeover of companies

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by PE firms over the last decade. This has prompted much debate about the impact of such takeovers (especially institutional buyouts [IBOs]) on employment-relations issues.[27] Researchers have identified a World Economic Forum (WEF) report which showed that leverage buyout activity had a 'negative and substantial' impact on employment.[28]

In the case of Dick Smith, Australian academic John Vaz noted that many commentators explained the collapse in terms of 'poor strategy, circumstances in the retail sector, or poor inventory management'. However, what occurred was quite simply typical of the behaviour of PE firms: 'The long term prospects of the business are only of interest to the private equity firm to the extent that it helps dress the business for the market to help with the private equity firm's exit'.[29] The floating of Dick Smith by the PE firm was described by an Australian investment analyst as 'the greatest private equity heist of all time'.[30]

News media coverage

Dick Smith's collapse received a significant amount of coverage, some of which was rather critical in terms of private equity fund practices. However, the actual impact on New Zealand workers' precarity in relation to PE-initiated collapses generally was ignored. For example, when receivers announced the closure of Dick Smith's Australian and New Zealand stores, TVNZ news items declared that hundreds of Kiwi workers would lose their jobs, but the focus quickly moved to the customers who were taking advantage of slashed prices, feeling sad about losing their local stores, and being advised that they probably would not be able to redeem their gift vouchers. The company's poor business acumen in a highly competitive industry was also given prominence.[31]

The focus on customers is a common theme in news media coverage of labour relations conflicts. News reporting of a transport, health or education sector strike will centre upon 'disruption to services' rather than address the causes of the conflict. The focus on the way a firm is managed enables the cause of a collapse to be attributed to the manifestly poor practices of particular individuals in a particular firm, rather than to the standard speculative strategies of large private equity funds. This in turn suggests that such collapses — with consequent

and significant job losses — are 'one-off' events that are not seen as contributing to the precaritisation of workforces.

At the same time, however, the business media noted growing concern about the Dick Smith collapse on the part of bankers, who were starting to ask questions about the behaviour of directors and auditors, and the Australian Senate, which was launching an enquiry into Anchorage's private equity strategy. Major banks were noted as being unduly affected; HSBC and National Australia Bank, Dick Smith's secured creditors, received only part of the many millions they were owed. The business press also pointed out the dangers to those ordinary investors who bought shares in Dick Smith after the public float.[32] This investigative angle, derived from divisions within the finance sector itself, identified the speculative practices of private equity firms as central to the Dick Smith failure, but neglected the resulting impact on workers' lives. This occurs because the mainstream media routinely treats business news separate from the political economy and social life.

CONCLUSION

The social experience of precarious work is central to capitalist political economies and is generally obscured by mainstream news media depictions of labour relations. The rapid spread of neoliberal policy agendas worldwide from about 1980 exacerbated these tendencies. In New Zealand, the cancelling of legally sanctioned collective bargaining between employers and workforces was normalised by later news coverage of issues pertaining to precarious work. In each of the case studies we have outlined, the relationship between capitalist restructuring and the creation of precarious work was never identified.

To remedy this state of affairs requires progressive policy alternatives, collective action and a sustained oppositional campaign from outside the margins of mainstream media. As Guy Standing has suggested, such a strategy requires the promotion of a universal basic income as part of a charter advancing the rights of waged and wageless precarious workers.[33] On this basis, oppositional groups should seek to establish and mediate their own frames of reference for the social realities of precarious work.

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PENAL WELFARE
WHAT IT DOES AND WHY WE SHOULD CHANGE IT

DARRIN HODGETTS, OTTILIE STOLTE, KERRY CHAMBERLAIN AND SHILOH GROOT

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Inequality in New Zealand is now greater than it was in the 1920s, prior to the socio-economic upheavals of the 1930s. Since the 1970s our current economic system has increasingly benefitted those who already have wealth at the expense of people of more modest means. In this context, the considerable increase in the number of people living precarious lives (the precariat) is primarily the product of dysfunctional intergroup relations where more affluent groups take too much and leave less affluent people with not enough.[1] The most recent statistics available indicate that wealth inequality is rising in New Zealand. In 2015, the top 20 per cent of New Zealand households held 70 per cent of the national wealth.[2]

Throughout history, distributive economic policies have been used to rebalance the interests of elites with those of less affluent citizens. New Zealand has a history of such initiatives, designed to enhance the equitable distribution of economic resources in society in favour of groups of more modest means. The wide range of government housing and welfare programmes implemented in the twentieth century are examples of initiatives that rebalanced interests towards the wider populace.[3] Public housing programmes, for example, were intentionally designed to undercut private landlords and developers, and to thereby curb property speculation and excessive rents.[4] The immense losses and hardship associated with the Great Depression galvanised public support for state-led efforts to rebuild society and to ensure a decent

standard of living for all. This produced a wide societal consensus that the state should take active responsibility for the welfare of all citizens.

Unfortunately, these welfare structures have been undermined in recent decades with a move to an increasingly ruthless free-market approach. The term 'penal welfare' is used to refer to the shift in welfare from a universal system based on citizenship rights to one that is increasingly targeted and punitive.[5] Such an approach involves an increasing convergence between state welfare and correctional systems, whereby those receiving government assistance are managed and controlled in ways that emulate the treatment of criminal offenders.

This chapter explores the consequences of this increasingly penal approach to welfare for the precariat. First, we describe in more detail what we mean by penal welfare, as a system designed to punish people in need for the conditions of their lives. We then consider the consequences of this system through the first-hand accounts of people who rely on welfare. To conclude, we present the need for an anti-oppressive welfare system.

RESURRECTING A 'NEW' PENAL APPROACH TO WELFARE

The resurrection of penal welfare stems from the longstanding and erroneous arguments that people are poor primarily as the result of their own choices, or because of 'immorality' among the lower classes, and the promotion of 'cultures of dependency' on welfare. Those deemed to be promiscuous single mothers or work-shy delinquents are caricatured as defective citizens lacking the motivation and skills to lift themselves out of poverty. Contemporary 'underclass theory' proposes that welfare encourages indolence and breeds dependency, increasing the population of impoverished people and thereby undermining a productive society.[6] Yet there is considerable evidence that government spending in social protection and health not only improves public health, but can also actually benefit the economy. Researchers Ronald Labonté and David Stuckler draw on figures from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to claim that for every $1.00 of public investment in these areas there is a return of $1.60.[7]

Despite such international evidence, poverty and precariousness are widely believed to be due to the choices and the reckless behaviour of

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the 'underclass'.[8] Correspondingly, tough love is championed as a way of saving 'these people' from themselves, and for ensuring the moral and economic fabric of society remains intact. For example, in 2013, Dr David Bratt, the Principal Health Advisor to New Zealand's Ministry of Social Development, warned that, in his view, welfare benefits function as 'an addictive debilitating drug with significant adverse effects to both the patient and their family (whanau) — not dissimilar to smoking'.[9] Dr Bratt advised that case managers needed to adopt a tough-love approach with their clients to curb the perpetuation of a vicious cycle of dysfunction.[10]

The perceived need to 'get tough on the poor' has very serious material implications for how society responds to poverty. Such thinking once contributed to the development of workhouses in the 1800s, and today underpins a range of punitive approaches to poverty relief.[11] We are again seeing harsh forms of 'poor relief' that are run according to a correctional (penal) logic designed to discourage the perceived '[re]offending' of people being dependent on state benefits.[12] This punitive orientation is emerging internationally, and New Zealand is no exception. Across different countries there is now a fairly predictable pattern of penal welfare reforms despite scant evidence to support the assertions that welfare breeds dependency, the existence of a 'work-shy' underclass, or that punitive approaches are effective in addressing hardship.[13]

The rise of penal welfare across many countries has resulted in the increased dehumanising of people seeking welfare assistance, and an increasing propensity towards punishment and paternalistic control over their lives.[14] Three of the authors of this chapter were involved in a research project, known as Family 100, which followed the experiences of 100 families accessing a food bank in central Auckland.[15] The researchers removed food insecurity for the families by providing them with food, in return for which they spoke frankly with social workers every two weeks about their experiences over a one-year period.[16] Tara gave a typical account of being reluctant to seek assistance to meet basic necessities because of the way she is treated by the staff at Work and Income (WINZ), the government social agency. She explained:

> Because if I go to WINZ [and say] 'This is the situation, I need this, I need that.' They said, 'Oh, well, it's your own fault if you struggle more' . . . WINZ expect me to run here and there and yet I told them, 'I just finished giving birth. I can't run here and there. Please, I'm already over my limits.' I had my two girls in the car and I had to sleep at seaside park with a newborn. Then, Child Youth and Family Services might think I'm a bad mum, with a newborn and nine-year-old and take my kids.

The punitive welfare approach has coincided with reductions of government investment in housing, job creation, social services, healthcare, education and public infrastructure. This erosion of the supports and services that underpin people's everyday living situations has occurred alongside the scaling up of the correctional system and the expansion of the prison system, including privately run for-profit prisons. In 2016 the government announced the building of new prisons when New Zealand already has one of the highest imprisonment rates (in 2011, the rate was 199 prisoners per 100,000) in the OECD.[17]

Instead of supporting vulnerable people in times of need, it appears that the main priority of penal welfare services has become restricting access to benefits and making access to entitlements increasingly difficult. The primary function of WINZ is now to survey, manage and recondition 'clients' using various behavioural techniques.[18] Recipients of welfare must meet increasingly stringent demands for compliant behaviours that are enforced through intense supervision and case management.[19] For example, in the United Kingdom people receiving welfare are required to complete online psychometric assessments that are designed to identify 'character flaws' that are preventing them from gaining employment, and must therefore be worked on.[20] Behavioural obligations have replaced citizens' rights to support, and subordination has become mandatory for people to access increasingly meagre welfare provisions. In this way, members of the precariat seeking welfare assistance have been transformed into 'civic felons' who must be treated with suspicion and disciplined.[21] Non-compliance with the conditions of assistance result in sanctions, such as the removal of entitlements, reduced benefit payments, fines, and in some

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cases banishment from the 'system'.

Across countries such as the UK and New Zealand, people who have not met these increasingly stringent behavioural conditions for support are delisted from welfare registers.[22] Such members of the precariat have lost their primary source of income, and those remaining on welfare lists live in constant fear of sanctions and of having their welfare support withdrawn.[23] Exact numbers of beneficiaries who are sanctioned are difficult to ascertain, but such punishments are estimated to affect thousands of people annually, and reflect on-the-ground experiences of beneficiary advocates and social agencies such as food banks in New Zealand. Harsh requirements for accessing government assistance have undermined access to welfare and increased hardship, trapping many people in inadequately resourced lives of deprivation, debt, fear and servitude.[24]

WHAT'S LIFE LIKE FOR THE TARGETS OF 'TOUGH LOVE'?

Through spending time with people engaged with the penal welfare system — as we have, in detailed conversations with 100 impoverished families over a year[25] — we are struck by the ineffectiveness of penal welfare. This system only exacerbates hardship in already stressful lives, deprives people of basic necessities, such as food and shelter, and undermines their dignity and self-respect.[26] Participants in the Family 100 research by Hodgetts and colleagues often spoke with fear about their visits to the WINZ office. As Eva stated, you have to 'just shut up and suffer through it'. Personal criticisms are a common experience and mean that participants only go to WINZ as a last resort. Mavis said: 'I have anxiety when I know I have to go to WINZ so I'd much rather go and find help from another agency. Not be questioned and put down. I'm afraid of the emotional roller-coaster that I'm gonna face having to justify everything.'

Penal welfare interactions are often characterised by coercion, detailed monitoring, denial of resources, blaming, humiliation, threats, and the minimisation of legitimate concerns. Welfare clients are frequently forced to present themselves as compliant subjects who must placate their case managers.[27] For example, Tammy gave an account of the hostility she experiences at the welfare office:

> I find WINZ very judgemental. They look at the computer screen, say you've been in 10 times in the last six months and you're instantly, 'Oh, you've been here too much.' It's, 'Do you think I'd be here if I didn't need help?' The experiences with them — I've cried in front of them. I've lost it in the office more than a couple of times and no-one even gives a tissue. Is there any compassion in this office?

The coercive nature of our welfare system is promoted and made routine through acts such as the detailed scrutiny of people's budgets, a lack of care for people who obviously do not have enough, and an unwillingness to inform applicants fully of their entitlements.

Members of the precariat that we engaged with in the Family 100 research project reported high levels of intrusion when seeking financial assistance for very legitimate reasons, such as feeding their children. Charlotte, for example, recounted how she provided detailed information on her children and the family's financial situation and requested a food grant of $150. The staff member then contemplated the request for a while before offering her $40 with no justification for the lower amount. Charlotte then went back over her budget, proving that she was spending her money morally, 'right down to the petrol receipt'. This did not persuade the WINZ staff member to change the offer. Charlotte described what happened next: 'I said, "I cannot feed my kids." She [the case worker] goes, "Do your kids eat rice? Do they eat soup?" Degrading, it was completely degrading.'

Despite such negative experiences, it is important to note that there are also instances of case managers showing care and concern for their clients. Our concern here is with the overarching objectives driving the delivery of services, which include the need to reduce the taxpayer cost of welfare and to extinguish welfare dependency regardless of whether or not people have alternative sources of income.

In many cases, interactions between welfare agency staff and welfare claimants can be harsh, involving unnecessary personal criticism, judgemental comments and a lack of care. As a result, clients often develop fears about how staff will react to requests for assistance. Tammy, who we quoted above, finds her engagements with WINZ

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'traumatising'. She thinks about it constantly beforehand and 'dreads' having to go to the office. Tammy declared: 'It's humiliating sometimes having to go in there and say, "I have no food, I have no clothes, please can you help me?" In this time, at the moment, asking for help with just the basic everyday things is humiliating.'

Also humiliating is the very architecture of the welfare office, which has security cameras, guards and a lack of private spaces for clients to divulge personal information.[28] The space is physically punitive rather than receptive, and resembles correctional facilities in both form and function.[29] In early 2017, WINZ introduced new security protocols whereby all visitors to a WINZ office need to present personal identification and their appointment letter to a security guard before gaining entry. Union leaders have slammed the policy, stating that it is unworkable, unsafe and acts as a further barrier for people in need, many of whom do not have valid forms of identification.[30] The policy also breaches privacy since WINZ appointment letters often contain confidential information.[31] The screening of people out on the street in full view is dehumanising and exacerbates client frustrations. These everyday interactions in and around welfare offices strip people of their dignity, produce frustration and provoke anxiety, all associated with having to submit oneself to the regulation of penal welfare.

The institutionalisation of suspicion is evident in the way clients are assumed to be trying to 'rip off the system'. Welfare recipients report being treated as criminal suspects who cannot be trusted and whose dependency requires correction by staff 'taking a hard line'. Shelley expressed a very common reaction, saying, 'I hate WINZ. I find them really hard to deal with,' and 'I get quite upset.'

The punitive response to people's efforts to access their welfare entitlements can wear them down over time to the point where they no longer seek support. Such 'self-discharges' contribute to the 'missing' segments of the precariat who are not registered as being in paid work, nor as drawing benefits. Meanwhile, the corresponding drop in the official unemployment rates and benefit claimant numbers is loudly celebrated by the government as a reflection of the effectiveness of its efforts to combat the perceived evils of welfare dependency. The Unite union reported that from 2007 to 2013 the number of people accessing

welfare fell by 5 per cent, however unemployment had only fallen by 2 per cent.[32]

The lack of adequate resourcing from welfare payments has forced many members of the precariat into increased financial precarity.[33] Since 2010, New Zealand welfare reforms have sought to push people off welfare and into work. Yet there is no corresponding commitment to ensuring that former beneficiaries do not end up worse off as a result of being forced into low-paid and insecure work. While no accurate records exist, there are estimates that at least 30 per cent of the workforce is now in insecure work.[34] Taking a low-paid, insecure job often does not resolve poverty. Many of the working poor still rely on welfare when their income from employment is interrupted or insufficient to cover their basic needs.

At the same time, it is becoming much more difficult and stigmatising for people in need to access their welfare entitlements. People denied adequate assistance from government welfare offices often turn to fringe lenders (such as payday lenders and loan sharks)[35] to meet their immediate needs 'when WINZ isn't available', as Helen explained to our researchers. Consequently, many members of the precariat end up indebted to unscrupulous lenders with their exorbitant 'brokerage fees' of up to 10 per cent of the loan amount, establishment fees of up to 5 per cent of the loan amount, and annual interest rates of over 20 per cent.[36] Such loans are often the only way the precariat can escape an abusive relationship with the penal welfare system and the relentless accusations that financial hardship is 'your own fault', as Tara expressed it. Taking on private debt in this way is preferable to having their children go hungry.

People who access fringe lenders know they are being exploited, but consider these exploitative relationships preferable to further engagements with the penal welfare system.[37] This is often because, in their interactions with fringe lenders, they are at least treated with respect and dignity. This is a perverse situation in that the harshness of the penal welfare system creates a demand, and a steady supply of 'customers', for fringe lenders. This demand, in turn, provides opportunities for investors in these private companies to draw profits from the precariat through the very high interest rates paid on loans

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that families struggle to afford. Following international trends in the US, UK and Australia, New Zealand penal welfare reforms have led to poorer people increasingly accessing fringe lenders.[38]

It is clear from the experiences of the precariat that penal welfare is not about alleviating hardship. Instead, the main priority appears to be to discourage 'welfare dependency' by increasing tough love and hardship for people in need. Behind the daily material and psychological suffering experienced by members of the precariat lies a patchwork of adversarial relations between poorer and more affluent groups in society. The public has been told for decades that distributive welfare programmes breed dependency and poverty, and that the 'caring' thing to do is to adopt a stricter approach that rehabilitates the precariat by discouraging dependency. The penal approach to welfare has undermined notions of citizenship and rights that underpin more humane approaches, replacing these with a moralistic caricature of an undeserving, psychologically inferior underclass.[39]

The reappearance of an old-fashioned punitive state and the rise of unemployment, precarity and the working poor are interrelated. As French sociologist Loïc Wacquant notes, 'The invisible hand of the [casualised labour] market and the iron fist of the state combine and complement each other to make the lower classes accept desocialised wage labour and the social instability it brings in its wake.'[40]

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE TO RECTIFY THE SITUATION?

Put simply, penal welfare needs to be abolished. It is an overt indicator of the development of a more adversarial society where human relationships are commodified and increasingly characterised by selfishness, exploitation and punishment. More humane approaches to welfare, based on notions of universality and rights, have proven to be more effective in addressing precariousness and hardship by distributing resources more equitably to less affluent groups in society.[41] In comparing the impact of different welfare systems on poverty rates across the OECD, epidemiologist David Brady notes, 'Where poverty is low, equality has been institutionalised. Where poverty is widespread, as most visibly demonstrated by the United States, there has been a failure to institutionalize equality.'[42]

Rights-based and universal welfare systems have historically gone some way towards protecting people from socio-economic vulnerabilities, including the impacts of job losses, insecure employment, unliveable wages and unaffordable housing.[43] We need to reinvigorate an emphasis on human rights, and to embrace an anti-oppressive orientation that employs welfare initiatives to alleviate hardship.[44]

In redeveloping such a system we should rely less on the assertions of mean-spirited people, and instead include input from client groups so we can respond to the actual needs of members of the precariat. At a base level, an anti-oppressive approach requires that staff of welfare agencies engage with clients with respect and dignity. Such a system may cost a little more in the short term, but will save money in the long term due to cost reductions in areas such as health, education and justice. After all, international research demonstrates a clear relationship between more humane welfare policies and the improved wellbeing of society.[45] As mentioned earlier, it is estimated that for every dollar of government spending to support low-income households there is a $1.60 return in economic growth.[46] In part, this economic return occurs because, when people of modest means have more income, they can take better care of their needs.

An anti-oppressive welfare system also needs to be embedded within broader socio-economic reforms that ensure living wages, quality work conditions, and that wealthy individuals and corporations contribute more equitably to the overall health of society.[47] As many scholars have argued, there is no shortage of wealth in the world, but there is a severe misallocation of resources.[48] Cultivating feelings of responsibility and care towards other people is central to the development of a more humane system. Developing an anti-oppressive orientation also opens up the possibility of considering developments such as Universal Basic Incomes that can be used to institutionalise citizen rights to survival and encourage human flourishing, address precariousness, and remove the stigma currently directed towards people in need. Finally, renewed solidarity and the cultivation of more trusting social relations is central to building a more equitable and inclusive society that promotes human flourishing for all, not just for a select few.

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WHEN DOLLAR LOAVES ARE ALL YOU HAVE EXPERIENCES OF FOOD INSECURITY IN HAMILTON, NEW ZEALAND

KIMBERLY JACKSON
AND REBEKAH GRAHAM

Anna lives in a two-bedroom unit with her young daughter and experiences constant anxiety about stretching her resources.[1] There isn't enough money from her welfare provisions to pay for housing, power and food. Consequently Anna purchases cheap dollar loaves of white bread from the local corner store to stave off her hunger pains. The absence of enough nutritious food means she is unable to produce enough breastmilk to feed her baby, creating a vicious cycle of hunger and sleep deprivation, culminating in an emotional breakdown at the local family support centre. Anna, along with an increasing number of New Zealanders, is experiencing ongoing food insecurity.

Winsome Parnell and Andrew Gray describe food insecurity as a situation where 'the availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire such foods in socially acceptable ways, is limited or uncertain'.[2] The prevalence of food insecurity in New Zealand has increased in the past decade from 28 per cent to 41 per cent,[3] and New Zealand-based research consistently finds that access to an adequate diet is a struggle for low-income families. Louise Signal and her colleagues, for example, identify that the cost of healthy, nutritious food, along with low incomes, are key contributors to food insecurity.[4] Claire Smith and her colleagues, in a comprehensive report on family food environments of New Zealand households, write, 'The factor with the most impact on food security for NZ families included in this survey was economic.'[5]

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Sherry Carne and Alina Mancini, in their research with Whāngarei-based providers, note that 'the most frequently mentioned reason for families having insufficient food was low income'.[6] Timothy Hopgood and colleagues in their Auckland-based study on the affordability of nutritious food concluded that 'New Zealand should consider further strategies to make children's meals more affordable for low-income families.'[7] More recently, Claire Smith and colleagues found that for low-income households 'food expenditure is clearly an economic burden'.[8] In summary, incomes and welfare provision have simply not kept pace with the increased costs of keeping a family housed and fed. This everyday reality is often unacknowledged in conversations regarding food insecurity, particularly where those who are experiencing it are absent from the discussion.

In this chapter we draw on our combined research with 11 low-income families in Hamilton, New Zealand. The families were supported by a variety of income sources, including part-time, casual and full-time paid work, and/or benefits, but all had low food spending through necessity. Over the course of 12 months, research participants shared their stories, opened up their pantries, revealed their income and expenditure, took us along as they went to the supermarket, photographed their 'world of food', and sourced and prepared meals. These successive interactions across multiple locations provided rich detail regarding the everyday realities of living with food insecurity. By taking this ethnographically oriented case-based approach to researching food insecurity we offer depth of insight into the complexities, difficulties and perspectives of families living with poverty. Their experiences exemplify broader aspects of food insecurity that extend beyond their individual lifeworlds and highlight particular assumptions that hinder low-income families who are struggling to keep their households housed and fed.

We found significant shortfalls between the recommended expenditure to achieve a basic healthy diet and the reality of available resources. The University of Otago estimates that families (two adults and two school-aged children) living in Hamilton need to spend a minimum of NZ$260 per week in order to purchase enough food to meet the nutritional requirements of all family members.[9] In contrast, low-income families from our research had a weekly maximum of

NZ$120 for all household expenses after paying for rising housing and energy costs. Their experiences correlate with those described in 2012 data from the Ministry of Health, which indicates that 7.3 per cent of New Zealand households frequently have insufficient food.[10] A further 33.7 per cent of households cannot reliably provide a nutritious diet for all their members, and/or food sometimes runs out before it can be replenished.

Our research highlighted the ways in which cutting back on food expenditure can be the only realistic option for meeting necessary living expenses such as school-related costs, medical prescriptions, transport or unexpected items. As Ginny puts it, 'everything comes out of the food budget'. Therefore Carys, who has two school-aged boys, can only pay for compulsory school stationery items by reducing her already low fruit and vegetable spend. Sophie was faced with urgent dental treatment, necessitating debt that she must now pay off out of her food money each week. When the food money becomes squeezed through routine costs or unexpected events, there can be very little money left to feed the family. In response, purchases of non-food items are routinely delayed. As Anna notes, 'I can buy food but now I've got no toilet paper, gosh I haven't cleaned my teeth in a week! I know they're all luxuries but um yeah . . .' That toilet paper and toothpaste are considered luxuries indicates just how stretched many in Anna's situation have become.

Our research participants experience hunger along with the monotony of a diet predominantly made up of cheap, low-nutrient, carbohydrate-heavy foods such as instant noodles and dollar loaves of bread. The case of Anna, whom we opened with, encapsulates the trap for low-income citizens. There is simply not enough income to meet the recommended nutritional guidelines and so filling hungry stomachs becomes the focus, particularly in families with teenagers. Sophie expresses the tension — and her frustration — in juggling nutritional advice with keeping hunger pangs at bay: 'You can spend forty bucks just on vegetables and stuff . . . and there's just like a few, and if you bought forty bucks' worth of junk food you've got like nearly a whole trolley full, of crap.'

Many families on low incomes are, like Sophie, keenly aware of

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public health messages, and are doing their best to meet them. As noted by Rebekah Graham and her colleagues, 'There is an inherent contradiction between charity dictates that "beggars can't be choosers" and nutritional advice that beggars should make healthy choices.'[11]

In contrast to commonly held stereotypes, New Zealand-based research finds that parents usually know how to budget, meet nutrition ideals, and 'stretch' meals. The Family 100 research project, referred to in the previous chapter, worked with Auckland families who access food banks. The researchers found that, 'Negative media stereotyping and misinformation leads many to assume that people living in poverty do so because they're poor at managing their money, and that they lack the skills needed to balance a weekly budget. The vast majority of Family 100 participants prove this to be largely false and typically demonstrate considerable talent in their ability to budget.'[12]

In terms of types of food purchased, Claire Smith and her colleagues noted that 'Ready-to-eat foods were a small component of overall food expenditure, which is counter to the negative assumptions with respect to eating behaviours in low socioeconomic groups in NZ.'[13] Another research project across 136 households in Dunedin and Wellington found: 'The low-income group did not differ from others in terms of behaviour such as budgeting, planning and eating meals as a family.'[14]

Our participants also show a great deal of working knowledge in stretching food and shopping for bargains. Raewyn mentions 'bulking up the meals with veggies and stuff, pasta'. Julye purchases cheap popcorn as 'it can last two days, that's spread out between [the children] and then for afterschool snacks as well'. Leah talks of how she 'can get four meals out of a couple of bags of pasta with cheese and a couple of cans of tomatoes'. We commonly saw our participants bulking out dishes with beans, oats or frozen vegetables.

Nevertheless, on constrained incomes even these strategies are sometimes not enough. In response, Julye will cook dinner for her children while going without herself. Carys purchases apples for the children's school lunches while she and her partner subsist on toast or coffee throughout the day. In a difficult week, Leah will 'just have noodles'. Such responses are not uncommon. As documented by Presbyterian Support Otago,[15] and the Family 100 research project,

low-income parents routinely go hungry, eat only a piece of toast for tea, water down milk, or subsist on porridge, compromising their own nutritional needs in order to feed their children. Kellie McNeill, in her Hamilton-based PhD research,[16] details even more drastic tactics, with one of her participants saying, 'I have sleeping pills because they help me . . . Sometimes I've taken extra and just gone to bed for the weekend to sleep the weekend off because there's no food.'

The lack of enough food to feed the family is a source of emotional stress, worry and shame. Of all the insecurities associated with poverty, it is the absence of enough food that causes parents the most distress and anxiety. There is a particularly strong sense of stigma and shame at not being able to provide the quality and quantity of foods needed for their children. Anna articulates this when explaining her attempt to hide the severity of her situation: 'I was hiding it from everyone, you know, it's embarrassing.' The absence of enough food to eat makes the impoverishment of families more obvious to outsiders. In order to avoid judgement and humiliation, parents go to great lengths to obscure the absence of sufficient food, which can contribute to social isolation.

Children also feel shame when they cannot participate in what are considered 'normal' childhood experiences. Janine recalls a childhood of not being able to have friends visit because there was no food in the house: 'We didn't even have like oranges . . . I was like, really ashamed. And yeah, I started hiding, like trying to hide the poverty.' The psychological harms from insufficient food have an impact on every family member.

Responses by the food-secure when hearing of experiences of food insecurity are typically steeped in assumptions of the laziness, ineptitude and ignorance of low-income families. Nowhere are these assumptions more evident than in the suggestion that home gardening is the solution to food insecurity. There is a nostalgic appeal to this call for backyard gardens, embedded in notions of the 'Kiwi can-do' attitude and unquestioned beliefs about the hardy previous generation. Asking 'Why don't people simply grow their own food?' assumes that those living with poverty have the time, resources, knowledge, support, space, physical ability and good health to prepare and maintain a

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garden. Like many people living with hunger, Anna has found that gardening is not the panacea:

> I don't have a veggie garden and people are just like, grow food, and I'm like yeah but then you've got to get the plants and then you've got to wait for the food. I need food now. Like that's a long-term solution . . . Even getting seeds, you know, how long does it take for that seed to grow? You can't wait for that seed when you need [food] today.

Anna's meagre budget offers no room for spending extra dollars on the uncertain promise of a future crop. While families struggling to afford food often employ ingenuity to grow a few vegetables at low cost, the restrictions of rental properties, frequent house moves, time, health and equipment mean crops are few and far between. Home-grown produce from urban sections merely supplements families' repetitive diets but can rarely provide the quantities necessary to keep people healthy. When you consider the shortfall in people's food budgets between what they need for a nutritional diet and what is available to spend, it is easy to see that a backyard garden is not enough to ameliorate hunger.

Along with the idealised myth of the plentiful backyard garden is the assumption that the New Zealand welfare sector will provide an adequate safety net for those in need. Such assumptions coalesce in public statements such as, 'Just pop into your local Work and Income office, they'll help you out.' In reality, assistance has become ever more complex and difficult to access. In their paper 'Urban Poverty, Structural Violence and Welfare Provision of 100 Families in Auckland', Darrin Hodgetts and his colleagues outline in detail the demeaning, humiliating and psychologically abusive process of accessing welfare and food grants through Work and Income (WINZ).[17] In this way, New Zealand is following the lead of the UK in steadily eroding our once strong safety net.

Both Guy Standing and Loïc Wacquant note in their respective works that accessing emergency food assistance has become increasingly conditional and punitive in order to restrict people's access to

resources.[18] As Ginny told us, 'they [WINZ] declined me when I was in real need [of food]'. Our research participants describe interactions that left them exhausted and embarrassed when attempting to access emergency food funding. Eventually, Anna simply couldn't take the abuse any more: 'I just gave up in the end going to them, especially after that last lady the way she was, I was just like, I don't want to do this, I'd rather go without than be made to feel that horrible.'

Charities and emergency food sources (such as food banks and community meals) are also typically touted as a solution to food insecurity. In reality, such services are being placed under cumulative strain as the need for them increases. Public calls for additional assistance have become commonplace, such as the Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank's recent plea: 'The food need is greater. In the past we'd provide food help for eight to nine individuals or families a day, now a low day is 20, we've had up to 30.'[19] In addition, such services are precarious and vulnerable to closure. Heavily reliant on the capability and generosity of individual volunteers, the current emphasis on paid work means volunteer initiatives and charity drives can be difficult to sustain amid increasing financial pressure. During our research, one of the charities that provided weekly free community meals folded as the primary organiser became too unwell to continue her service and, without her advocacy, the meal service was unable to continue.

Being forced to access charity in order to adequately feed themselves and their children undermines people's psychological wellbeing. Hodgetts et al. observe that, 'Having to beg for food and charity is a demeaning experience . . . Dignity is undermined by participants having to beg for necessities and in being positioned as objects of scorn in these interactions.'[20] Leah alludes to this when she says, 'Sometimes I go to the free meals in town, it's very embarrassing for me.' Furthermore, the provision of emergency food by charities enables the state to evade its responsibility to ensure that every citizen has adequate access to food. While mobilising compassion through charities is currently crucial to feed hungry citizens who can no longer rely on the welfare state to avert hardship, charity is no substitute for a more equitable distribution of resources.

Where low-income households receive an increase in income, this

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is overwhelmingly spent on more and better quality foods. The myth that children will not benefit from increased income to our poorest households should be challenged. An English study carried out in 2005 suggests that when low-income families receive increased amounts the extra money is mostly spent on items for the children.[21] In Australia, Julie Brimblecombe and her colleagues found that increases in income went towards buying food and, where possible, better quality food.[22] Research with food-insecure households in Dunedin concluded that providing additional funds to food-insecure people resulted in an increase in expenditure on fruit, vegetables and better quality meat.[23] Our research supports these earlier studies, with our participants also spending increases in income on nutritious foods for their children, especially fruit.

Our research findings support the notion that food insecurity is the product of inequities and injustices baked into societal structures, creating traps for low-income families. As Ted Schrecker and Clare Brambra note in their book *Neoliberal Epidemics: How Politics Makes Us Sick*,[24] the idea that such individuals are primarily in need of education regarding their 'lifestyles' reflects a neoliberal world view, which favours a focus on individuals through market-based solutions. A focus on the responsibility of low-income citizens to seek out ad hoc and complicated ways to feed themselves fails to engage with the underlying causes of their austerity.

We argue that being able to access food in socially acceptable ways is a universal human right, one inextricably linked with health. Long-term solutions to food insecurity require progressive social and economic policies that promote equity and improve our social safety net. People and families need to be supported with sufficient income to feed and house themselves. Already proposed economic solutions, such as the Living Wage campaign, which crusades for wages that will meet the basic cost of living, abound. The Universal Basic Income is another well-established concept, and is well argued by Mike Goldsmith and Kellie McNeill who write that, while hunger is often recognised in poorer countries, it is trivialised and hidden in New Zealand, which is perceived as being a land of plenty.[25] Guy Standing addresses the long-term social implications of insecure, precarious work in *A Precariat Charter*, outlining why people need meaningful, consistent forms of employment or income support for caring roles.[26] Similarly, Thomas Piketty in *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* makes a comprehensive and compelling economic case for more equitable wealth distribution.[27]

Implementing any one of these already well-researched solutions would relieve the economic burden faced by those on low incomes. However, so far, the New Zealand government has abdicated its responsibility to ensure that all citizens have food security, instead forcing people to rely on emergency food systems to survive. It is only when we all support the radical notion that every citizen deserves to be fed that we can begin to implement effective, long-term solutions to hunger and food insecurity.

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1 Pseudonyms are used to refer to all the participants in this research. In writing this chapter we have deliberately foregrounded the experiences of participating families and skimmed over the details of our research. For more information please contact the authors directly.

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1:6

OUT OF THE PAN INTO THE FIRE PRECARIOUSNESS AMONG WOMEN AND CHILDREN ESCAPING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

NEVILLE ROBERTSON AND
BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE

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Almost by definition, women and children experiencing domestic violence lead precarious lives.[1] If they are living with the abuser, they may spend time and energy anticipating his violent outbursts, doing their best to placate him, and working out strategies to keep themselves safe. While separation is often held out to be the solution, it may make their lives even more precarious as they face poverty and homelessness. Frequently, they live with the reality that neither a protection order — 'it's only a piece of paper' — nor the police can keep them safe. In the worst cases, they may need to go underground, moving to distant parts of the country or overseas in their attempts to keep themselves safe. Moreover, some of the very services that are meant to help them can further oppress and control them. In this chapter, we describe the nature of violence against women and children, outline some of the ways it makes their lives precarious, and discuss problems in our current methodologies of 'helping' that only serve to make their lives more precarious.

POWER AND CONTROL

Hierarchical gender power relations are at the core of domestic violence and child abuse. While abusive men come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, social classes, religions and occupations, they have one common feature: a strong belief in a 'natural' order in which men are in charge, make the big decisions and exercise power and

control over their partners and children. Although physical violence is the most obvious manifestation, the process can be better thought of as a pattern of coercive control, in which physical violence — actions such as slapping, punching, kicking and strangling — is just one tool among many to achieve dominance. Other tools include isolation, threats, intimidation, withholding resources (especially money) and emotional abuse. By such means, the abusive man enforces obedience and compliance with his rules.

Domestic violence is also about protecting male privilege. Befitting their assumed superior status, many men will feel entitled to certain privileges: domestic and sexual services, obedience, loyalty and freedom from having to be accountable for their behaviour. As Lundy Bancroft points out, not many men are closely attached to the use of violence: they would rather not hit their partners and children.[2] But many will feel justified in using violence to maintain their power and privilege when they come under attack. 'She pushed me too far', 'I had to do something', 'I had to teach them a lesson': these are common tropes heard in stopping-violence programmes up and down the country.

Men's tactics of power and control make women's lives — and the lives of their children — precarious. Typically, abusers closely monitor their partners to ensure compliance. These days, such monitoring is often done electronically (e.g. men who press redial on the phone or check text messages). Women are typically isolated from whānau and community: deprived of support and feedback, they can become entrapped within the world constructed by the abuser. If women are permitted to participate in activities outside the home, they are likely to be closely monitored by the abuser. Victims of domestic violence are typically denied financial autonomy as the abuser controls the money, putting her on an 'allowance'. Women may be prevented from working outside the home or be forced into working (sometimes as prostitutes).

WOMEN'S RESISTANCE

Of course, many women will resist these power and control tactics or find ways of ameliorating their impact. Unfortunately, such actions can rebound on them, making their lives even more precarious. A good

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example of this is seen in women who fight back or defend themselves physically. Over the years, we have heard many accounts of women being told by their partner not to call the police or he will tell them she was the violent one. Regardless of who calls the police — him, her or the neighbours — too often the police arrive to find a calm, rational man and an angry, perhaps 'hysterical', woman. They fail to investigate below the surface and conclude that she is the crazy, aberrant one.[3]

Another example is the use of alcohol and drugs to self-medicate against the physical and psychic pain of the abuse. It is a common belief that alcohol causes violence but a more nuanced view is that, sometimes, the causation may be in the other direction. Women who we have spoken to over the years have candidly admitted to using alcohol or drugs to escape the dreary and painful reality of their lives. But this may further entrap them. This is evident in men who remind their partner of the drugs in the house and threaten that if she calls the police, he will tell them that the drugs are hers. Similarly, as women in our focus groups have told us, having a problem with drugs or alcohol is a huge barrier to reporting the violence: to do so would be to put themselves at risk of being seen as a poor mother and having their children removed from them.

A third example of how precariousness is exacerbated involves women's attempts to parent in the context of domestic violence. Abusive men often have strict rules regarding children: he wants them quiet while he watches television, he wants them in bed by the time he gets home or he wants them dressed in certain ways. Infractions are likely to be punished with physical violence. Domestic violence places major constraints on mothers. These can be resisted: we know of one woman who handled her partner's insistence that she use physical punishment by taking her children to the other end of the house but instead of hitting them, smacked her own hand so that their father would hear and believe that the children were being disciplined as he wished.[4] More commonly, though, women may be tempted to use light physical punishment themselves to get the children to behave, seeing it as preferable to a more severe beating from their father. Unfortunately, such use of physical punishment by the mother may be read by social workers, lawyers or judges as a sign that she is the abusive parent and

should not have unsupervised access to the children.

These are just three examples of how domestic violence and child abuse make the lives of victims precarious. And as evident in these examples, when their lives become entangled in certain institutions, institutions one might expect to be helpful, things can get even worse. Below, we further explore the precariousness of victims' lives and some of the ways in which institutions become part of the problem, rather than part of the solution.

THE LIMITATIONS AND DANGERS OF 'HELP'

Homelessness and poverty are two of the more obvious ways in which domestic violence and child abuse make the lives of women and children precarious. As implied in the oft-asked question, 'Why doesn't she leave?', leaving the abuser is often constructed as 'the' solution. But leave for what? Certainly, refuges provide accommodation — but not for gang-affiliated women, nor for women who wish to bring their adolescent sons with them. Moreover, a refuge is always only a temporary solution: sooner or later, women and children need to find new accommodation. This is not easy.

One barrier to leaving is poverty. Women fleeing domestic violence typically have little money. Usually they have been financially dependent on the abuser. Even women from relatively privileged backgrounds will typically have little money until there is a matrimonial property settlement, something that is likely to take years to achieve. Whatever the background, fleeing domestic violence does not come cheap. There is likely to be bond money to find. There is the expense of replacing clothes and household items left behind and the cost of moving things they can take. There may be new school uniforms to buy and the cost of getting services connected. There are also likely to be legal costs. Some women will qualify for legal aid but that is not a grant but a loan, and the threshold for eligibility rules out many women. Protracted legal proceedings, drawn out by litigious abusers — who essentially use the court system to further harm women — can be eye-wateringly expensive. Even well-off, middle-class women can become impoverished.

A woman who has been a victim of domestic violence can face

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particular challenges in finding rental accommodation. This is especially so if the house she has left was rented in her name. Despite the constraints under which she has been living, she will likely be held responsible for unpaid rent and any damage to the house she has vacated: for many abusive men, smashing walls and doors is a favoured tactic of intimidation. These things, and a stigma against solo mothers, jeopardise battered women's ability to participate in the rental housing market.

THE WELFARE SYSTEM

Many women fleeing domestic violence turn to Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) for financial help. The Domestic Purposes Benefit, established in 1973, made leaving an abusive partner a more realistic option. But the successor of the Domestic Purposes Benefit, Sole Parent Support, has a number of problems. Despite its name, it is not about supporting parents to raise children. As WINZ says, Sole Parent Support 'helps single parents and caregivers of dependent children get ready for future work, [and] supports them to find part-time work'.[5]

Instead of being recognised for her important role as a parent, a woman fleeing domestic violence becomes a problematic non-worker. She is expected to be available for paid work when her youngest child reaches the age of three. That comes even earlier for women who have had a child while on the benefit: they are expected to be available for work as soon as that child is one year old. Such a differential can only be understood as a punishment for the pregnancy: as the state becoming part of the abusive apparatus. Problematic as this is of itself, it is doubly problematic when one considers that sexual violence and control over contraception are common tactics in the abuser's armoury.

More generally, reconstructing mothers as out-of-work workers has significant implications for their welfare and the welfare of their children, the more so when domestic violence is part of the picture. Domestic violence has well-documented impacts on women and children. In data we collected in 2004, over half the women we interviewed in women's refuges met the threshold for post-traumatic stress disorder. Other common mental health impacts include depression, anxiety and addiction. Equally common are a wide range

of physical health problems, such as gynaecological problems, chronic pain, cardiovascular disorders and respiratory problems.

Children who are exposed to domestic violence are frequently traumatised. Whether they have been direct victims or witnesses to the violence against their mother, the effects are much the same and include fearfulness, depression, anxiety, aggression and self-blame for the violence. Welfare policies that focus on getting women into paid employment serve neither mothers nor their children well. Both mothers and children need time to recover. Significantly, one of the key factors in helping children recover is a solid, close and warm relationship with the non-abusive parent. That the primary aim of Sole Parent Support is to get parents into work means the state is undermining the conditions that would help children recover from violence.

THE FAMILY COURT

The Family Court is one of the most powerful institutions dealing with domestic violence. When it was established in 1981, it represented a major paradigm shift. Until that time, getting a divorce required going to an open court which would establish who was at fault. Under the Family Proceedings Act 1980, irreconcilable differences became the sole ground for dissolution of a marriage. The role of the Family Court was not to find blame but to provide a private venue in which couples were helped to reach agreements about ending the relationship, sorting out what was to become of any children and resolving disputes about matrimonial property. While this model is a great way to resolve differences between parties of equal power, it is ill-suited when there are significant power disparities, as is inevitably the case in the presence of domestic violence.

The Family Court's emphasis on negotiation and mediation has served battered women poorly. Court-ordered counselling or mediation has exposed women to further abuse. Face-to-face mediation and court hearings become venues for abusive men to further intimidate their partners. This can be subtle. By using what women often refer to as 'the look' — a certain narrowing of the eyes, a particular angle of the head —abusive men can clearly communicate, 'Watch what you

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say. You remember what happened last time you wronged me.' Such subtleties are easily missed by mediators or judges, but can terrify and further traumatise victims of domestic violence.

Because the Family Court prioritises cooperative problem-solving and the maintenance of family ties, women who are assertive in expressing their fears about their abuser having unsupervised access to their children can be viewed as uncooperative, even as vindictive bitches denying the father's presumed right to his children. Some family-law practitioners report that the best strategy is for their women clients not to mention the violence at all and to be as accommodating as possible.

Determinations that involve swapping the children between parents can provide opportunities for abusive men to further abuse their ex-partners. Parenting orders can make battered women's lives more precarious. For example, it is not uncommon for such orders to require women to remain in the area in which the family lived. This has a certain logic to it: the courts tend to want to minimise disruption to the children. Unfortunately, as part of their isolation tactics, some abusive men will have deliberately set up the nuclear family in a region far removed from the maternal family. Orders requiring the woman to stay put serve to cut her off from family support, support that may be vital as she recovers from trauma herself and supports her children's recovery. In these ways, the Family Court is heavily implicated in the continued oppression of battered women and in making their lives precarious.

THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Perhaps the system that most oppresses women experiencing domestic violence is the child protection system. Here, the key agency has in recent years been Child, Youth and Family (CYF), but various non-government organisations can also be implicated.[6] Almost by definition, the children of battered women are themselves being abused, and they have frequently come to the attention of CYF. Too often, investigations are so tightly focused on harm to the children that the wider context is ignored. This can mean that the presence of domestic violence is overlooked. Instead, many of the common consequences of being a

victim of such violence — depression, lack of energy, limited emotional availability to children, chaotic households, messy homes — are read as evidence of women's failings as parents. Alternatively, the domestic violence is detected, but rather than challenging the abuser, social workers sometimes hold the mother responsible for protecting the children. In some of the worst cases, women are given an ultimatum: 'Leave the father or we will take the children into care.'

In a 2015 focus group of women who had escaped domestic violence, CYF was described in the following terms: 'abusive', 'scary', 'power hungry', 'rude', 'stupid' and 'patronising'. The anger in the room was palpable as women described the hoops they were being forced to jump through by the agencies that were supposed to help them. It became apparent that being a mother entangled in the child protection system is a full-time job: you are expected to attend parenting programmes, get budgeting advice, go to counselling, take your children to play therapy and psychologists' appointments, get a protection order, attend lawyers' appointments, participate in family group conferences (often with your abuser), attend Family Court hearings and mediation sessions, be assessed by court-appointed psychologists, attend WINZ appointments and have regular meetings with the children's social worker.

It is ironic that as a society, we tell women that they need to escape the power and control tactics of their abuser only then to subject them to the power and control tactics of so-called helping agencies.

CONCLUSION

We have painted a depressing picture. Arguably it is an unbalanced one. It would be disingenuous of us not to acknowledge that along with the tales of tragedy, despair and misery we have heard over the years, there are also stories of survival, resistance, resilience, growth and triumph. Nevertheless, success stories notwithstanding, living with violence makes the lives of women and children precarious. Sometimes this is visceral: New Zealand is distinguished by having some of the highest rates of death resulting from family violence. But as we have shown, sub-lethal violence also serves to make the lives of victims precarious: it undermines their mental and physical wellbeing, it constrains their

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ability to live autonomous lives, it challenges their ability to reach their potential, and it reduces their ability to participate in community life.

Moreover, when women escape domestic violence, taking their children with them, too often the systems that are supposed to help them serve only to further control and oppress them. Too often for such women and children it is a case of jumping out of the frying pan and into the fire.

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1 Our focus on women and children should not be read as suggesting that domestic violence occurs only in heterosexual relationships. Neither should it be read as denying the fact that men can also be victims of domestic violence. However, it is an acknowledgement that the vast bulk of domestic violence is perpetrated by men and that women and children are the primary victims. Moreover, some claims of women's violence against men are overstated as they fail to distinguish violence used in self-defence or in resisting dominating and controlling men from violence that results in domination, control and fear.

2 L. Bancroft, *Why Does He Do That? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men* (London: Penguin, 2002).

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4 Claire Troon, 'The Gap: Women's and Men's Perspectives on Parenting in the Context of Domestic Violence' (Master's thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton, 2014).

5 Work and Income, 'Sole Parent Support', http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-z-benefits/sole-parent-support.html

6 In April 2017 the roles and functions of CYFS were incorporated into the newly established Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki.

1:7

OLDER PEOPLE, INEQUALITIES AND THE LESSONS OF UNIVERSALITY

MARY BREHENY

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We are living in uncertain times. Increases in casual and contract employment have produced increased poverty and insecurity. This section of the book explores the various ways in which precarity is obscured. One of these ways is through reframing poverty and inequality as issues of generational inequity. In this context, the latest New Zealander to be characterised by uncertainty, insecurity and precariousness is also represented as young. Through discussions of child poverty and youth unemployment, insecurity of housing tenure and homelessness, casual employment and low wages, young people are cast as victims of social change and losers in a battle for scarce resources.

Against this background of youth struggle and exclusion, older people are cast as the villains. The dominant storyline played out in popular media is that baby boomers, the cohort born after the Second World War, have benefitted from social and economic conditions at every life stage and dismantled these advantages behind them. These are important turns of talk in a national conversation on inequality, setting young people against older people, and framing baby boomers as socially destructive and selfish.[1]

This argument starts benignly by comparing poverty rates among young people to poverty rates among older people. The Child Poverty Monitor, a project to track rates of child poverty in New Zealand, frames rates of poverty in terms of age comparisons: 'Children are more than

twice as likely to be in poverty than those aged 65+.'[2] Such comparisons lead to judgements such as: 'Our society takes better care of our elderly than we do of our young.'[3] Following this, a key shift occurs from a society with questionable priorities to a cohort strategically manipulating the policy environment. In describing the difficulties young people face today, Rob Stock, a reporter for Fairfax Media, claims: 'All the basic building blocks of a prosperous, stable money life have been stripped from [young people] by the political policies of the generation that was the last to benefit from free education, cheap housing, standard work contracts, and the certainty of NZ Super.'[4]

Similarly, popular New Zealand YouTube political commentator 'White Man Behind A Desk' claims that assertive baby boomers are not to be trusted: 'if the council raises rates, baby boomers aren't just going to take it on the chin, they're baby boomers. These are the people that tried to get rid of public healthcare, you better know they are raising your rent.'[5] This is played out particularly in media discussion of the housing crisis. Young couples, excluded from the housing market, are described as unable to contemplate home ownership during their parents' lifetimes. As a discouraged first home buyer bemoans in one online article: 'We would love to own a home . . . But unless all our parents die, which I hate thinking about, we won't be able to afford a deposit.'[6] This argument is used to suggest all that is required to fix insecurity is redistribution from wealthy older people to the disenfranchised young and poor.

Framing inequality as an issue of intergenerational inequity simplifies the conversation to trade-offs between generational cohorts. Economist Susan St John, who is director of the Retirement Policy and Research Centre, argues: 'When working-age families are taxed to pay universal pensions to many who are still working in well-paid jobs and appear much better off than they are, intergenerational equity and fairness may be questioned.'[7]

Rather than recognising rising inequalities as a social and historical change that has swept older and younger people along with it, the inequalities are framed as resulting from the actions of strategic and manipulative older people. Accounting for increased inequalities in this way makes universal superannuation a target for change, and this

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is debated prominently in the media. This in turn leads to business articles in the media being structured to question generational fairness: 'why should [older people] get what is essentially a guaranteed income on top of [their] wages each week when others probably have a much better case?'[8]

Through this generational lens, costs incurred at one end of the age spectrum need to be balanced by savings at the other end. According to this logic, addressing child poverty requires making older people poorer. This argument for a simple trade-off between generations rests on the assumption that no substantial structural changes are possible.[9] Proposed changes typically focus on increasing the age of eligibility for New Zealand Superannuation (NZ Super),[10] reducing the rate of payment,[11] or introducing a two-tier system with a lower universal superannuation rate and targeted additional payments to older people in need.[12]

INEQUALITIES BETWEEN OLDER PEOPLE

Focusing on the financial security of older people as a group obscures the considerable disparities in income, wealth and assets among them, particularly in terms of ethnicity.[13] Opportunities to reach older age in good health and with significant financial resources depend upon earlier life circumstances.[14] Although there have been increases in employment and income among those aged 65–75 over the last 15 years, this has occurred unevenly. Baby boomers reaching retirement with high incomes and significant assets are joined by increasing numbers of their cohort with periods of lifetime unemployment, low-wage employment, and lifetime rental tenure.

The dominant argument of intergenerational competition is that proposed by Gareth Morgan, a prominent political campaigner, that NZ Super 'diverts money from truly needy citizens' and that many over-65s have significant additional income.[15] However, there is no evidence for this. Few older New Zealanders have significant other income, and as Bryan Perry from the Ministry of Social Development reports, the 'great majority of those aged 65+ are very dependent on NZS for their survival'.[16] In addition, the percentage of NZ Super recipients who are under housing stress has increased over the last decade alongside

increases among other age groups. As financial security in later life and sufficiency of NZ Super is built on mortgage-free home ownership, declining rates of home ownership in future cohorts means that poverty and hardship are likely to rise.[17]

PRECARITY AS CONTAGION

The security of older people is built on universal superannuation. Dismantling the security of older people is portrayed as equitable in the context of increasing insecurity among other age groups. Altering universal superannuation becomes not about alleviating poverty among younger people but about an equitable distribution of instability; uncertainty becomes contagious. Precarity is shaped as an intergenerational competition and Gareth Morgan, among others, highlights older people as a waste of 'precious taxpayer funds'.[18]

Part of this destabilisation is designed to reduce expectations among younger cohorts that the security of universal superannuation will be available to them when they age. To hammer home this message, a Fairfax business headline shouts: 'In your 50s? Don't expect a pension waiting when you turn 65'.[19] Young people, unable to count on economic security now, 'believe that when they get old, there will be no such thing as NZ Super'.[20] Even while arguing the value of universal provision of income support and acknowledging the success of NZ Super, Gareth Morgan describes it as doomed: 'people can't expect to rely on NZ Super continuing in its current form'.[21]

The image of greedy baby boomers dictating public spending is used to argue the redistribution of financial support from older to younger people. This framing narrows the possible solutions to inequality that are explored. But inequalities are not about older people taking what belongs to young people, they are about redistribution more generally. There has been intensification of wealth into ever smaller proportions of the population over recent decades. Research examining intergenerational mobility shows that this intensification of wealth produces elites insulated from insecurity generation after generation.[22] Remedying this is not achieved by casting inequalities as intergenerational competition; rather it is addressed by redistributive policies that insulate all citizens from insecurity and uncertainty. Baby

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boomers have benefitted from such policies over their life course, and this generational difference is an argument, not for conditionality, but for universality.

ADVOCATING UNIVERSALITY

The answer is not conditional superannuation, targeted to those disadvantaged by a lifetime of marginalised attachment to the labour force, but universal provision at a level sufficient to maintain adequate living standards. Universal, non-contributory pensions such as NZ Super are effective in alleviating poverty and reducing health inequalities in old age.[23] Removing the principle of universality would undermine the simple, effective and honourable system of NZ Super. Unlike income support at every other age, recipients do not suffer stigma for receiving NZ Super due to the universality of the system. Blaming people for lives of poverty has fuelled increasingly conditional welfare provision for younger people.[24] Conditional superannuation would lead to similar stigma, whereby older people requiring support are viewed as ill-prepared for later life.

The drive towards contributory superannuation schemes such as KiwiSaver rewards long-serving workers, but greatly disadvantages those who have irregular work, unpaid work, or are unable to work. Increasing inequalities raises key concerns applicable to all New Zealanders in terms of requirements to meet basic housing, health, income and food security needs. Instead of dismantling NZ Super, the success of this universal scheme should be extended to other age cohorts. Rather than it being used as an illustration of inequity in New Zealand, the principles upon which NZ Super is based provide a model for extending the security older people enjoy to all New Zealanders. The lessons of NZ Super are these: security, sufficiency, and entitlement.

SECURITY

Over the last four decades, the welfare state in New Zealand has contracted significantly and the security of the state has been replaced with the precarity of individual responsibility. Although older people are regularly exhorted to prepare for their retirement, such preparations are fraught. The experience of ageing is that of declining

health and social networks and increased support needs. A large interview study of the living standards of older New Zealanders found that older people experience uncertainty regarding how long they will live and what needs they may have.[25] This uncertainty is shaped by the social and political context, which includes fears regarding eligibility for publicly funded health and social services.

As people age they become more reliant on support from younger people such as family members and carers to meet their everyday needs. All the while the media undermine intergenerational solidarity by attributing the precarious position of younger people to the security enjoyed by older people. Older people are portrayed as greedy and grasping as they attempt to maintain security as they age. This gives rise to intergenerational tensions that are reproduced in financial and interpersonal exploitation.

In the current economic climate, careful calculation of risk and personal responsibility for outcomes is viewed as paramount. For those with a history of high income and regular employment, these may not be worrying calculations, but for the majority, they lead to uncertainty and fear. The key to security for older people is through an annuity, a payment that lasts as long as they live. It has been argued that NZ Super will be redundant in the future, as it is replaced by KiwiSaver for the hard-working and well-prepared older New Zealander. However, KiwiSaver does not pay an annuity, it provides a saving scheme, whereby people must calculate how long they will live and what supports they will need.

These are relatively benign calculations for those with high incomes, significant employer contributions, and the opportunity to amass those assets that are crucial for later life wellbeing: a freehold house, a reliable method of transportation, and a house lot of good quality chattels. For those with low incomes and insecure attachment to the paid labour force, these calculations are far from benign. They require people to forgo resources in earlier life to amass retirement savings sufficient for a future of an unknown length.

When individuals are responsible for managing risk and uncertainty, it leads to fear. An opinion piece in the business section of a popular media outlet provided advice on ways to ensure that you don't suffer

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'a long life that ends after your money has run out'.[26] In the context of individual responsibility, longevity is devolved from a demographic concern for governments to manage to an individual fear; people become afraid of having a long life. NZ Super alleviates this by guaranteeing income in retirement for as long as one lives, a necessary foundation for security.

SUFFICIENCY

The second lesson of NZ Super is that it provides a level of payment that is generally sufficient to avoid hardship, particularly for older people with low housing costs.[27] Although it is framed as unnecessarily generous, research in New Zealand on the minimum requirement for healthy living for older people found that NZ Super does not meet this threshold.[28] Still NZ Super, along with an accommodation supplement for older people with significant housing costs, succeeds in lifting most older people out of poverty. Suggestions for revising NZ Super often refer to its relative generosity in comparison to means-tested income payments. This is used to argue for a reduction in NZ Super to the level of income support for other age groups. Yet, a key lesson of NZ Super is that it is sufficient; it does not require older people to resort to strategies of desperation such as using food banks or unsecured borrowing to meet basic housing, health, income and food security needs.

EMBRACING ENTITLEMENT

Entitlement to NZ Super is often justified in terms of older people having earned security in later life through paid employment, caring obligations, military service, or community contributions. Although this is how entitlement is justified, NZ Super is based on residency status. Recipients are rewarded for a life of citizenship, not a life of attachment to a labour market.

In our current economic climate, individual responsibility is exalted and entitlement is viewed as abhorrent; being 'owed' is framed as incomprehensible. Commenting on an opinion piece on retirement incomes, a member of the public puzzled: 'I find it hard to comprehend why people expect taxpayers to support them for 10–30 years in their old age.'[29] In this context, a sense of entitlement is viewed as immoral

and expectations of being owed as outdated and unrealistic. Gareth Morgan argues that this sense of entitlement is obsolete: 'According to the Retirement Commissioner the ageing members of society have not got their heads around this, with a survey showing they feel the government owes them a pension. However, the younger generation sees the writing on the wall, realising they will have to pay for their own retirement.'[30]

Within the rhetoric of individual responsibility, entitlement can only be earned through attachment to the labour market. The basis of universality is that people are owed support by virtue of their citizenship, their humanity, their place within an economy and a society. People are entitled to be supported by their communities. They are subject to the rules, taxes and priorities of their communities, and this subjectivity means they are entitled to all the benefits of community membership. To learn the lesson of NZ Super in New Zealand, we need to view entitlement not as a vice, but as a virtue. Entitlement is not damaging, it is productive. Entitlement encourages relationships of mutual interdependence. It strengthens social cohesion and supports strong communities.

CONCLUSION

The precariat is often conceptualised as a distinct group of people: young, underemployed, underpaid, living lives characterised by insecurity and uncertainty. Their unstable lives on the margins of the labour market exclude them from respect and societal recognition. But the values that underpin the precariousness of their lives do not make them unstable alone; they destabilise everyone.

Precarity is shaped as an intergenerational competition, and equity becomes about making everyone equally insecure. Everyone becomes responsible for securing a healthy and financially stable future, and everyone is reproached for failing to manage the inherent risks and uncertainties of life. In this context, older people are not best served by individual responsibility to amass vast reserves of wealth to guard against an uncertain future. They are best served by a secure annuity, sufficient to meet their basic needs, and entitlement to all the rights of care and protection of a valued community member. The current

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NZ Super meets that need. This standard of security, sufficiency and entitlement is a basic right that should be extended to all.

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SECTION TWO: NATIVE DISRUPTION: MĀORI AND THE PRECARIAT

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INTRODUCTION

BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE
AND NATASHA TASSELL-MATAMUA

Titiro whakamua kia anga whakamuri

To know where you're going, you must first know where you've been; to know where you've been, you must look to your past. Māori often refer to these words as a way of providing advice to those seeking solutions and guidance amid dilemmas.

Within this section, the authors encourage the reader to look back into history and then consider the future. We are invited to re-examine deeds from this country's past. To immerse ourselves in a narrative that may be different to the one we have been taught in school, or heard among our friends and family. Through their stories we can see multiple narratives. Readers are invited to understand, embrace and own the past. By recognising and accepting the past — our collective histories — we can determine our collective present and future.

This section of the book provides descriptions of the lived experiences of some who fit within Guy Standing's description of precariat[1] — who also identify as Māori. Māori living with insecure housing, employment, education and/or access to health services are described throughout as the 'Māori precariat'. What binds the following chapters together is a focus on how social, economic, political and cultural structures contribute to the maintenance of precariousness for Māori. However, rather than be bogged down into perpetuating a negative rhetoric about Māori, these chapters do more than look at

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'what is broken'; they provide inspiration in the face of adversity. In this way, the authors speak to a 'native disruption' of the dominant hegemony.

The first chapter in this section is by Thomas Stubbs, William Cochrane, Lynley Uerata, Darrin Hodgetts and Mohi Rua. Using data obtained from Statistics New Zealand's Te Kupenga survey of Māori welbeing, this team provide what they call a 'demographic silhouette' of the Māori precariat, which outlines numerical evidence of the number of Māori living in precarious circumstances in this country. It also speaks to the variety of ways precarity manifests for Māori, including through experiences of discrimination and stigma, as well as cultural isolation and disengagement. This chapter serves an essential function by helping readers to get an idea of what precarity for Māori living in present-day Aotearoa New Zealand looks like and how it is experienced.

Many of these experiences can be directly attributed to intergenerational trauma, inequity and the appropriation of native resources (such as land, minerals and water) that have so unfortunately defined much of the Māori experience for nearly two centuries. Some argue that the historical context that led to such experiences is also guilty of shaping present-day policies and social norms that have instigated and even 'legitimised' the disproportionate number of Māori accessing social services.

In their chapter, Delta King, Mohi Rua and Darrin Hodgetts discuss how the social structures generated as a result of the historical and ongoing colonisation of Aotearoa New Zealand have created a perceived 'dependency' of Māori on social services. But this so-called dependency is by no means as easy as common perceptions (or, more accurately, misperceptions) would have many believe, and navigating these often punitive services can foster a sense of hopelessness that leads to further 'dependency' on the system. The authors speak of the real-life case of Miriama, whose experiences with a variety of services highlight how arduous the journey of access can be, both for those requiring the services and for those advocating on their behalf.

The theme of adversity associated with accessing social services is continued in the chapter by Felicity Ware, Mary Breheny and Margaret

Forster, which focuses on the Young Parent Payment (YPP) for young mothers. Given the disproportionate number of teenaged mothers who are Māori, the YPP has particular implications for child-rearing practices. The authors discuss how the YPP feeds into and reinforces common stereotypes about having a child at a young age — many of which are based on white, middle-class values — and implicitly disregards the value placed on women (of any age) as the whare tāngata, the bearers of new life.

While Felicity and her team issue a clear challenge to services that target Māori, Bridgette Masters-Awatere forces us to take a look at the inequity of resources distributed to government health providers in comparison to Māori health providers. The ongoing government bail-out of district health boards (DHBs) has implications for Māori service providers who are not afforded the same latitude. While the uneven playing field is presented as a modified child's game of Slides and Ladders to lighten the seriousness of the situation, Bridgette's understanding of the tools that feed the inequity has ongoing implications for government purchasing of services. The discriminatory practices thrust upon Māori take centre stage in this chapter.

The last chapter within this section, by Shiloh Groot, Tycho Vandenburg and Darrin Hodgetts, highlights some key issues related to Māori youth homelessness. The authors speak to how historical factors have influenced the present-day circumstances of Māori youth, which in turn have served as catalysts for homelessness. Verbatim narratives from homeless Māori youth powerfully illustrate their lived experiences of precarity. The authors highlight how being homeless for Māori young can fuel the desire for cultural connection to resist being lost to the streets, and conclude that any nationally coordinated response to Māori youth homelessness must of necessity be culturally informed.

The chapters within this section emphasise the importance of understanding the diverse present-day experiences of Māori. New Zealand's past is characterised by disruption to native places and spaces — both physical and non-physical. It is also characterised by disruption to native ways of being, through the process of colonisation — the impact of which is continually evidenced through the Māori precariat.

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Each of the authors is implicitly stating, 'This is not OK.' Within their chapters, they point to ways in which we can all make a difference — from the everyday act of recognising the challenges associated with being a Māori teenage mother, while also acknowledging the inherent sacredness of motherhood from a Māori perspective, through to a strategic change at policy level, such as ensuring the incorporation of a Te Ao Māori (Māori world) perspective into local and national responses to Māori youth homelessness — we can contribute to the native disruption of the precariat.

1 Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London & New York: Bloomsbury, 2011).

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THE MĀORI PRECARIAT
A SILHOUETTE

THOMAS STUBBS, WILLIAM COCHRANE, LYNLEY UERATA, DARRIN HODGETTS AND MOHI RUA

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Recent financial crises and a host of punitive labour and welfare reforms have intensified socio-economic divisions across advanced nations. In Aotearoa New Zealand, the indigenous Māori peoples are subject to systemic labour market disadvantages, and are thus more likely to be affected by increased inequalities in times of economic downturn. Despite the legacies of systematic economic exclusion and discrimination in the economy, the majority of Māori demonstrate a resounding level of social resilience in the face of this hostile context. Even so, there is evidence to suggest that an unacceptable number of Māori still struggle to overcome these challenges. For instance, 13.0 per cent of Māori are in temporary work compared to 8.2 per cent of Pākehā,[1] and 12.4 per cent of Māori are experiencing unemployment against 4.4 per cent of Pākehā.[2] These trends contribute to a range of socio-economic challenges, to which mainstream and Māori service providers are struggling to respond.

In this chapter, we develop a demographic silhouette to seek an understanding of socio-economically marginalised — or 'precariat' — Māori. Although we are wary of portraying Māori in an unduly negative light, we also submit that an appreciation of the extent of the issues faced by this group is necessary if our analysis is to be useful in the development of an effective response. We begin by defining the precariat. Using data obtained from Statistics New Zealand's Te Kupenga survey of Māori wellbeing, we then outline the prevalence and

composition of the Māori precariat in Aotearoa New Zealand. Overall, we find that the Māori precariat comprises a substantial portion of the Māori population, particularly among females, younger age groups, and those with low or no qualifications. They are predominantly located in regions that have high levels of seasonal employment, and in more deprived areas. We also find the value attached to Māori culture and experiences of stigma for this group are, for the most, similar to those among the Māori non-precariat.

DEFINING THE MĀORI PRECARIAT

In his seminal text The Precariat, Guy Standing defines the precariat as a class-in-the-making that can be characterised by three dimensions. First, its members have insecure employment; that is, they are in and out of jobs often, failing to secure long-term contracts. They are, as a result, habituated to a life of unstable labour and unstable living. Second, its members rely on money income from wages that are flexible, rather than from wealth or enterprise-based incomes. They thus experience chronic income insecurity on top of their employment insecurity. Third, its members have fewer civil, cultural, social, political and economic rights, which translates into limited access to rights-based state benefits. Accompanying these reduced rights, they must perform a great deal of work outside of their paid jobs, in 'seeking jobs and in appeasing the state, by queuing, form filling, [and] retraining'. This combination tends to induce a sense of relative deprivation and a consciousness of loss.

Using data from Te Kupenga, we measure the Māori precariat on the basis of three categories: temporary employees; the jobless, and beneficiaries. Temporary employees are those whose job only lasts for a limited time or until the completion of a project, including casual, agency, fixed-term and seasonal workers. The jobless category is composed of three subgroups of the working-age population (i.e., those aged 15 to 65): the unemployed, defined as those who are without a paid job and are available for and actively seeking work; those outside the labour force who are actively seeking but unavailable for work; and those outside the labour force who are available for but not actively seeking work. We exclude full-time students from the

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jobless category. Lastly, beneficiaries are those not otherwise counted in the aforementioned groupings who received a benefit income — including sickness, invalid and domestic purposes beneficiaries — in the previous year and who remain outside the labour force.

As in Chapter 1, we acknowledge that measuring the precariat in this way represents a compromise. First, due to constraints on the availability of data, we are unable to capture those who are deemed to be permanently employed but have no sureness of job security. This could include an employee who is on a long-term contract but is certain to lose their job within the next year, or an employee who works highly variable hours of permanent employment and may — in practice — experience chronic income insecurity where a minimum of work hours are not assured each week. Second, we do not count full-time students who may still be experiencing income insecurity and habitual unstable living. For instance, those Māori who become students due to the unavailability of suitable employment, or are sent on a course by government agencies as a requirement to obtain future benefits, would still fall within the definition of the precariat. Given these shortcomings, our analysis is likely to underestimate the extent of the Māori precariat.

FINDINGS

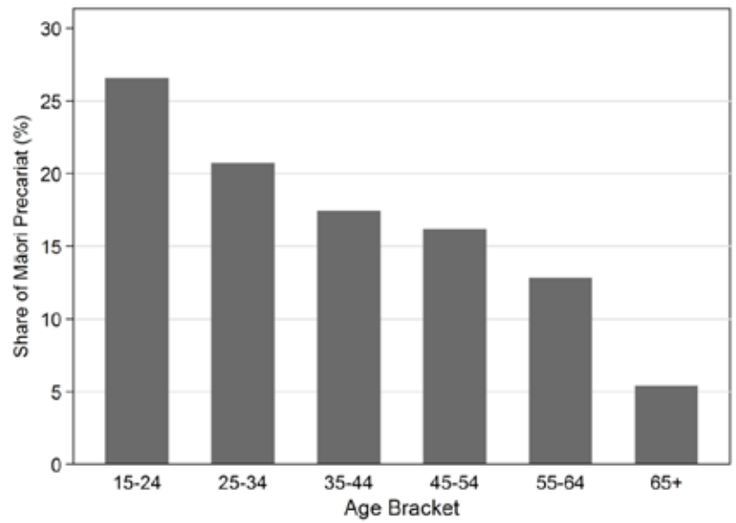
In 2013, of the estimated 529,500 Māori aged 15 years and over, 120,500 were in the precariat. This corresponds to a scenario where almost one in every four Māori were in the precariat (22.8 per cent), compared to almost one in every six non-Māori (15.4 per cent). Table 1 illustrates a gender division within the Māori precariat, with 69,500 (57.7 per cent) female and 51,000 (42.3 per cent) male. This gendered differential is likely to arise from the higher prevalence of temporary work — such as casual employment in retail and services — among female, especially those navigating child-rearing burdens.[12]

Table 1. Composition of Māori precariat and non-precariat by gender.

	Male	Female	Total (Male + Female)
Māori Precariat	51,000	69,500	120,500
Māori Non-Precariat	202,000	207,000	409,000
Total (Precariat + Non-Precariat)	253,000	276,500	529,500

As shown in Figure 1, the Māori precariat is concentrated in younger age brackets. About 26.6 per cent of Māori in the 15 to 24 age group are in the precariat, and 20.7 per cent in the 25 to 34 age group. The distribution of the Māori precariat is lower across older age groups — 12.9 per cent in the 55 to 64 bracket and 5.4 per cent in the 65-plus bracket — because, in general, people in older age groups are more likely to have established careers in permanent employment, and because there are more Māori in youthful population brackets overall.

Figure 1. Composition of the Māori precariat by age.



In Figure 2, we plot the prevalence of Māori precarity for each level of educational attainment and find a clear association between the

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two: those with higher levels of education are less likely to be in the precariat. For instance, 30.9 per cent of Māori who have no qualification are in the precariat,[13] while only 13.4 per cent of Māori who obtained a Bachelor's degree are in the precariat. This finding is consistent with previous studies that report lower levels of educational attainment among those on social security benefits or in temporary work.[14]

Figure 2. Prevalence of the Māori precariat by level of educational attainment. Level of educational attainment 0 is no qualification; 1 to 6 corresponds with NCEA Levels 1 to 6; 7 is Bachelor's degree; 8 is Masters, Doctorate, and other postgraduate degrees.

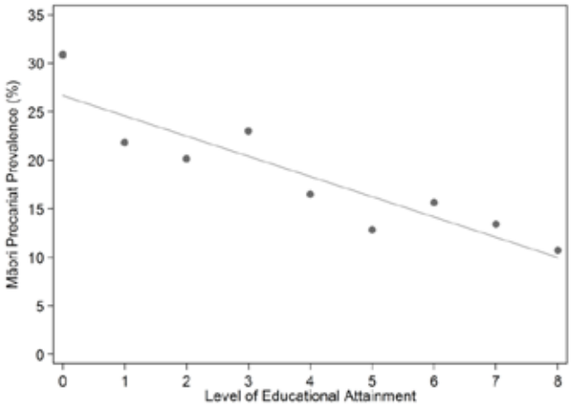
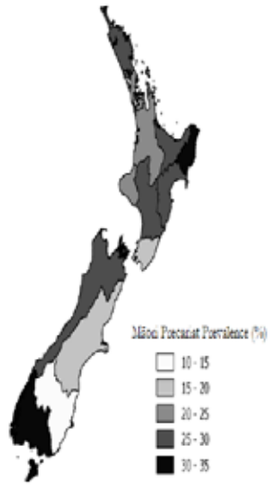


Figure 3 maps the prevalence of the Māori precariat for each region in Aotearoa. At one pole, Gisborne and Southland emerge as regions with the highest prevalence of Māori precarity, both at 31 per cent, followed by Northland, Bay of Plenty and a residual category of South Island regions, all at 28 per cent. This pattern is likely due, in part, to relatively high levels of Māori employment in seasonal industries — such as meat processing or horticulture — that play a central role in these regional economies. At the other pole, Otago, Canterbury and Wellington all have less than 20 per cent of their Māori populations in the precariat. Again, we suggest that this is largely a product of Aotearoa's regional industry structure. For example, Wellington is specialised in the provision of services to government, which offers

relatively stable employment.

Figure 3. Prevalence of the Māori precariat by region.Notes: Regions include Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Manawatū, Wellington, Canterbury, Otago, Southland, and a residual South Island group (Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough, and the West Coast).



In Figure 4, we plot the composition of the Māori precariat and non-precariat at each level of the New Zealand Deprivation Index.[15] This shows that the precariat is overwhelmingly concentrated within the most deprived neighbourhoods of Aotearoa: 28.9 per cent are in the poorest deprivation areas, followed by 18.7 per cent in the next poorest, and half the population of the Māori precariat is positioned in deprivation areas eight or greater (where 10 is the most deprived).[16] Only 1.7 per cent fall within the least deprived areas. For the Māori non-precariat, 14.7 per cent are in the poorest deprivation areas and 6.2 per cent are in the least deprived areas.

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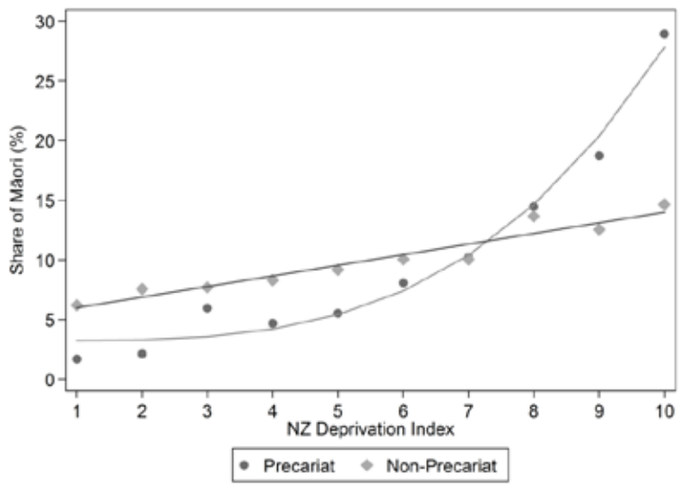
Figure 4. Composition of the Māori precariat and non-precariat by New Zealand Deprivation Index. The index is on a scale from 1 (least deprived) to 10 (most deprived).



Notably, there were very few differences between Māori precariat and non-precariat in terms of their cultural knowledge and participation on the metrics available to us. For instance, 51 per cent of the precariat knew their iwi (tribe), compared to 55 per cent for the Māori non-precariat. Questioned on the importance of involvement with Māori culture, 50 per cent of the precariat indicated it was either very or quite important, compared to 45 per cent for the non-precariat; for both groups, only 10 per cent indicated that Māori culture was not at all important to them.

The Māori precariat and non-precariat both indicated they had experienced discrimination and stigma, and at broadly similar levels. For instance, 18.7 per cent of the Māori precariat said they were discriminated against while trying to get service in a shop or restaurant, compared to 15.2 per cent of the Māori non-precariat. At work, 20.7 per cent and 17.0 per cent respectively indicated they had experienced discrimination. Experiences diverged more for discrimination while trying to get a job: 22.8 per cent of the Māori precariat compared to 13.4

per cent of the Māori non-precariat.

CONCLUSION

At 22.8 per cent of the Māori population, the Māori precariat is a sociological category that is worthy of investigation — particularly as we likely undercount their extent. This emerging group is disproportionately female, young, and has low educational attainment. Another notable feature of the group is the higher rates of prevalence in regions associated with meat processing, horticulture and other seasonal employment. The Māori precariat is also overwhelmingly concentrated within the most deprived neighbourhoods of Aotearoa. However, the value attached to Māori culture and experiences of stigma for the Māori precariat are largely equivalent to the Māori non-precariat.

The fact that the Māori precariat is concentrated among youth poses a pressing socio-political issue. On the one hand, if little action is taken to address this cohort of young Māori who are largely detached from the labour market, we can expect a growth in anomie and resentment towards the formal institutions of our society.[17] On the other hand, since Māori culture is valued by this group, there is an opportunity for cultural engagement to offset some of the negative experiences of precarity — though culture alone is unlikely to resolve all the difficulties of precarity.

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2 Statistics New Zealand, 'Household Labour Force Survey' (June 2015), available at: http://www.stats.govt.nz/infoshare/ [Accessed September 19, 2015].

3 Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011).

4 Guy Standing, 'Why the Precariat is Not a "Bogus Concept"', *openDemocracy*, 2014, available at: https://www.opendemocracy.net/guy-standing/why-precariat-is-not-"bogus-concept" [Accessed October 14, 2016].

5 Guy Standing, 'Understanding the Precariat Through Labour and Work', *Development and Change* 45, no. 5 (2014): 963–80.

6 Statistics New Zealand, *Te Kupenga 2013: A Survey of Māori Well-being* (Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

7 Access to the data used in this study was provided by Statistics New Zealand

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under conditions designed to give effect to the security and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act 1975. The results presented in this study are the work of the authors, not that of Statistics New Zealand.

8 Statistics New Zealand, *Flexibility and Security in Employment*.

9 Statistics New Zealand, *Household Labour Force Survey Sources and Methods: 2015* (Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2015).

10 Excluding full-time students from the jobless category is a conservative approach to ensure we do not over-count the Māori precariat.

11 Christina Beatty, Stephen Fothergill and Rob Macmillan, 'A Theory of Employment, Unemployment and Sickness', Regional Studies 34, no. 7 (2000): 617–30.

12 Statistics New Zealand, *Flexibility and Security in Employment*.

13 For all Māori aged 15 and over, an estimated 26.9 per cent have no qualification.

14 Sarah Crichton, *The Impact of Further Education on the Employment Outcomes of Beneficiaries* (Wellington: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, 2013); Sylvia Dixon, 'Temporary Employment and the Quality of Temporary Jobs', *New Zealand Journal of Employment Relations* 36 (2011): 1–20.

15 The New Zealand Deprivation Index estimates the relative socio-economic deprivation of census meshblock areas on an ordinal scale ranging from one (least deprived) to ten (most deprived). The index reflects eight dimensions of social and material deprivation: income, employment, communication, transport, support, qualifications, owned home, and living space.

16 Neighbourhoods in the most deprived group include, *inter alia*, Mangere Central, Otahuhu West and Otara North (South Auckland); Crawshaw and Insoll (Hamilton); Porirua Central and Cannons Creek (Wellington); and Aranui (Christchurch).

17 Darrin Hodgetts, Kerry Chamberlain, Shiloh Groot and Yardena Tankel, 'Urban Poverty, Structural Violence and Welfare Provision for 100 Families in Auckland', *Urban Studies* 51, no. 10 (2014): 2036–51; É. Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (London: Routledge Classics, 2005).

2:9

HOW MĀORI PRECARIAT FAMILIES NAVIGATE SOCIAL SERVICES

DELTA KING, MOHI RUA AND DARRIN HODGETTS

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We are living in a period in which the increasingly precarious nature of employment and welfare support systems has dramatically increased the hardships faced by many people.[1] Correspondingly, much still needs to be written about the rise of the precariat.[2] International literature asserts that post World War II paid employment was commonly full-time and secure up until the 1970s, when the rise of more insecure work increased as neoliberal policies and globalisation began dominating public deliberations regarding work and social life.[3] Subsequent recessions across many OECD countries contributed to labour market transformations back towards increased 'flexibility' and the casualisation of employment. These labour market shifts have resulted in insecure work and income situations for many households, which for some means frequent cycles of paid employment and welfare dependency. People experiencing such insecure employment face insecure and unliveable incomes while grappling with inadequate state support — these are the people increasingly known as 'the precariat'.

In the previous chapter, Thomas Stubbs and his colleagues provided information on the size (one in four) and composition of the contemporary Māori precariat. Although the notion of the precariat is quite recent, Māori experiences of precarity extend back well before the 1970s changes in the labour market. Māori have experienced precariousness since at least the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in

1840, when increased European settlement and eventual confiscation of Māori lands resulted in an oppressed and marginalised people come the beginning of the twentieth century. For almost two centuries now, colonisation has created what we now term the Māori precariat, populated by whānau who not only live with the loss of traditional lands, resources and social structures, but also suffer from insecure work and unemployment, as well as housing and food insecurities. For many Māori, this has required them to engage with welfare and social services to survive.

This chapter derives from an investigation of precarious Māori households that was funded by Ngā Pae of te Māramatanga (New Zealand's centre of excellence for Māori focused research, http://www.maramatanga.co.nz/). The focus of the chapter is on how a Māori Women's Refuge worker assists a single Māori mother in navigating an increasingly uncaring and punitive welfare system.[4] To contextualise the experiences of these participants in our research, we first consider the historical rise of the Māori precariat, including changes to Māori trade and labour that accompanied colonisation.

INITIAL EMERGENCE OF THE MĀORI PRECARIAT

Any history of the Māori precariat will be incomplete. The historical developments that shaped the emergence of the Māori precariat are nuanced and often specific to particular iwi and hapū. Here, we focus on some of the general historical developments, and the sources we cite offer lengthier accounts of Māori histories of precarity. Historical developments associated with colonisation made Māori dependent on the monetary system of the settler society. This posed a major threat to Māori ways of life and sovereignty. With the loss of land via events such as the New Zealand Wars, many Māori were increasingly forced to participate in the emerging settler economy as labourers.

Initial contact between Māori, European whalers and the colonial British offered opportunities for trade and the acquisition of various technologies. Many chiefs encouraged participation in trade with Pākehā to provide subsistence, wealth and security for their collectives.[5] In the decades that followed the initial contact, many Māori acquired new technologies and opportunities within the emerging capitalist

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economy through extractive industries such as sealing, whaling and enhanced agriculture, as well as in the shipping and milling industries.[6] In Northland, for example, Māori engaged in sealing and whaling with Pākehā, were cultivating and producing settler-introduced potatoes and pigs, and in the early 1800s went on to produce flax and timber.[7] As other hapū and iwi learned of such ventures, they too engaged in larger scale cultivation and trade. Examples of this expansion include the production of flax, taken up in the Waikato and the Bay of Plenty, timber in the Coromandel, and potatoes and greenstone in the South Island.

Māori collectives involved in trade not only provided for their own people, but also played a large role in the trade and provision of goods for British settlers and other colonies. Māori success and growth in early trade added to the mana (authority), resources and political power of many tribal groups, which allowed Māori to be leaders in the early capitalist economy.[8] Growing Māori economic success was met with a mixture of encouragement and discontent from different settler groups and officials. Although Governor Grey proposed the use of parliamentary funds to support Māori agricultural and commercial expansion in the late 1840s, by the 1850s settler self-interest sought the removal of Māori from the economic market as, 'there is little chance of [wheat growing] remaining profitable. The Natives . . . must necessarily undersell us'.[9] Māori economic trade, production and profit were also resented by settler officials as they reduced Māori appetite for selling land. The ability of Māori to understand the dynamics of supply and demand, adapt to the ebbs and flows of the market, and continued control over land and related resources was perceived by many newcomers as a threat to the political and economic dominance of the colonists.[10]

With the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 came new Eurocentric governance structures that offered more security to members of the settler society than to Māori.[11] Trade initiatives that had proved highly successful in generating resources and offering some security in the new economy for Māori were subsequently disrupted by the colonial government, military incursions and legislation. For example, the 1862 Native Land Act individualised land titles, which

allowed for easier purchase of Māori land by settlers. The 1863 New Zealand Settlement Act legalised confiscations, and the 1866 Oyster Fisheries Act prohibited Māori from using their own resources for trade.

These are just three examples of government attempts to assert economic authority over Māori. These acts also contributed to the replacement of a previous bartering system with a monetary system that necessitated Māori access to capital to pay the rates and taxes being levied on them by the settler society. Māori who did not have access to money often lost their land as payment of debts.[12] This period also saw a dramatic increase in the number of settlers who desired Māori land. Māori resistance to selling land also sparked armed conflicts such as the Taranaki and Waikato land wars of the 1860s. These conflicts were followed by substantial land confiscations.[13]

The legacy of land and resource loss in the growth of precariousness among Māori cannot be underestimated. As well as affording Māori strong spiritual, cosmological and cultural links to place, land comprised a key resource that allowed whānau to hunt, gather, cultivate and trade food independently. The loss of land resulted in the loss of traditional food sources, including harvesting and fishing rights,[14] as well as social upheavals and cultural precarity.[15] With the tightening grip of the new colonial government and the reduction of Māori sovereignty over land and other resources, the nature of Māori trade, labour and everyday cultural life was changing. Cultural precarity or systematic dislocation from collective traditions also came with these social upheavals.

A development in terms of the cultural precariousness was the Tohunga Suppression Act of 1907. Tohunga were spiritual and cultural leaders, experts in the Māori world who were afforded responsibility for maintaining and continuing tikanga Māori (cultural knowledge and practices). Such developments had a negative impact on the continuance of Māori culture and undermined the whole cultural structure from which Māori drew strength and security. Subsequently, links to tūrangawaewae (traditional and ancient homelands) and the social and political structures of their ancestors were forever disrupted.[16]

In order to adapt further to the new economy and reap benefits

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from it, from the mid 1800s onwards Māori increasingly moved into different industries such as kauri gum, forestry and road construction.[17] Increasing numbers of Māori came to rely on casual, seasonal and precarious work in the settler economy. As European settlement increased so did precariousness for many Māori, and Māori access to natural resources was severely diminished over time. Consequently, many Māori gravitated to urban centres where they experienced decreased self-reliance on collective crops and increased dependence on paid labour in the settler society.[18]

This shift from rural to urban settings became particularly pronounced again in the mid 1900s, which further intensified Māori reliance on income from casual and insecure labour.[19] Over generations, insecure paid employment has shaped the lives of Māori workers who today we refer to as the Māori precariat. Due to the precarious nature of our work and loss of contact with tūrangawaewae and associated economic and social supports, Māori have become the economic shock absorbers for society in austere times. Māori are often the first to be laid off from low-skilled and casual employment or to have employment hours cut back.[20] The neoliberal economic reforms of the 1980s and 1990s have had an additional detrimental impact on Māori health and life expectancy by removing or degrading key aspects of the social safety net.[21]

NAVIGATING THE CONTEMPORARY WELFARE SYSTEM

Māori have long been skilled navigators. Early Māori explorers successfully navigated Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean) to Aotearoa, Māori then navigated processes of colonisation, and we continue to navigate the tides and intricacies of the Māori world and settler society. Māori navigational skills are again being tested in the form of whānau efforts to access resources for survival and participation in contemporary society. This section briefly foregrounds some of the navigational dilemmas faced by precariat Māori households in accessing resources to simply survive day-to-day and the support provided by Māori service workers in this process. This material needs to be read in the context of the historical upheavals Māori people have faced during colonialism and more recent economic reforms in the

1980s and 1990s that saw increased unemployment among Māori, the retrenchment of the welfare state and development of a less caring approach to families in need.[22]

Today, there is no longer a coherent or responsive 'welfare system' orientated to meeting the needs of Māori and other citizens.[23] Instead, whānau are faced with a chaotic and uncoordinated cluster of public and private services. Precariat whānau must respond to an 'obstacle course' that requires well-honed skills to navigate such services.[24] The development of less caring and more punitive welfare systems is not unique to Aotearoa.[25] For example, reflecting on the consequences of a move to punitive welfare provisions for people of colour in the USA, researchers such as Vicki Lens and Colleen Cary raise several issues that are relevant to the situations whānau face in Aotearoa: 'For welfare participants, welfare means the web of relationships, rules and bureaucratic pathways they must navigate to secure its benefits and avoid its penalties. That pathway is often strewn with hurdles.'[26] In their attempts to navigate the contemporary service landscape in Aotearoa, Māori whānau effectively have to piece together their own welfare systems with the help of various organisations, including Māori Women's Refuge.

We will now ground our account of Māori navigating the welfare system in the experiences of one whānau and an advocate from Māori Women's Refuge who helps this whānau. The whānau and the advocate took part in the first author's thesis research in which whānau experiencing precarity were asked to map their engagements with agencies that make up the welfare landscape over a two-week period. In the case of Miriama, this involved her interacting with 19 separate services (see Figure 1).[27] Miriama distinguished these services in terms of those they '*have to go to*', those they '*need to go to*', and those they '*choose to go to*'. Those services they '*have to go to*' (coloured red in Figure 1), include Work and Income (WINZ). These agencies were identified as being less caring, more punitive, and to be avoided if possible. As Miriama states: 'I try to avoid getting any sort of extra assistance from Work and Income (WINZ) because I suppose the pressure or the strain that you feel when you have to go through their processes. So I [try] to avoid that service all together. I [try] to use other

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services if I can.'

Those they '*need to go to*' (coloured orange in Figure 1) include budgeting services, and were identified as treating whānau with more dignity and care. Those they '*choose to go to*' (coloured green in Figure 1) are more supportive and holistic in orientation and in contrast to services they '*have to go to*' like WINZ. Services they '*choose to go to*' treat whānau with more respect and care. Whānau often choose to go to these more supportive services because staff understand what they are going through and take their lived situations into consideration in deciding what assistance is warranted. Many of the services identified by Miriama are also Māori-focused agencies that engage whānau in culturally informed ways.

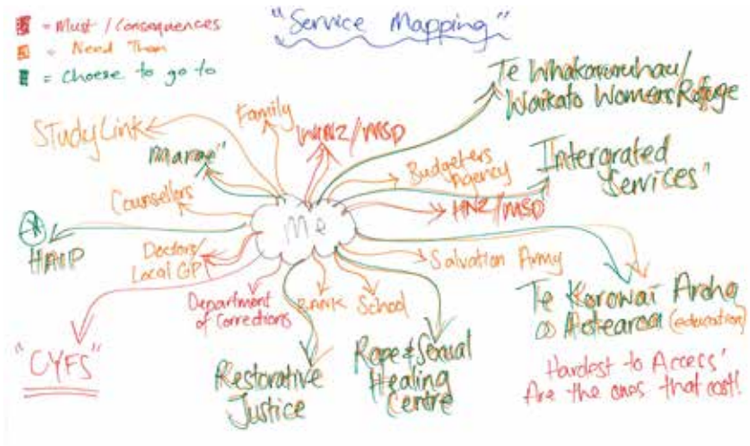

Figure 1: Miriama's service map.

When engaging with services, people in Miriama's situation talk about having to pretend to be someone they are not, in order to be acceptable to agencies they '*have to go to*' and in order to access their entitlements. As Miriama states this involves preparing oneself by 'getting into character, visualising appropriate appearance level and expected behaviour and attitude'. Such statements reflect how whānau

navigate the landscape of 'services' by learning how to 'play the game'. Playing the game means people like Miriama learn how to behave in a manner that enhances their chances of getting their entitlements without penalties or sanctions from agency staff.

Despite many people developing specific strategies for accessing resources from agencies they '*have to go to*', whānau regularly need to access advocates from agencies they '*choose to go to*' in order to ensure they are treated humanely and gain access to their entitlements. Tahu, an advocate from Māori Women's Refuge who supports Miriama, stated that if whānau 'haven't got some really good people around to support them, it's hard out there'. Tahu also indicated that the general life situations of whānau are getting a lot more desperate, and at the same time agencies that people like Miriama '*have to go to*' are becoming a lot less supportive. As Tahu states:

> It's definitely gotten worse over the last five years in terms of our whānau navigating the Social Services. A lot of red tape, you know, a lot of penalising. It's gone real punitive in terms of, if you don't have the form by this time then we're going to take 25 per cent off or nothing . . . High, high stats on whānau that are homeless. That are living in, you know, sharing houses and garages and how living standards, all of those things are raised, you know, gone dearer. The income, the benefits that aren't meeting that. Just all over the place. More numbers of families that are worse off. Things are harder. And we've seen the effects of that in our mahi [work] every day. It's the same stuff, not enough kai in the cupboards, incurring more debt . . . Families are just on their bones. Just surviving. So the system, it's just getting harder and harder for them. It can get really deflating when you've been declined or rejected or judged or looked at a certain way when you've walked in there.

For advocates in this area, the work they do in supporting and advocating on behalf of struggling whānau appears to be situated within a cultural continuation of traditional roles among Māori collectives to manaaki or care for people. As Tahu says: 'The mahi that my mum was

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involved with and with the communities around Hamilton, Huntly, Ngāruawāhia, come quite naturally in terms of how we manaaki [care for] and how we awhi [help] people. It [the work] didn't feel foreign because it was just something we were always brought up doing. It was just a part of who we are.'

Advocacy work is often associated with Māori activist movements that have responded throughout history to, as Tahu says, 'injustices and the rights and needs of our people'. In these accounts we can see how Māori resistance to punitive control by agencies of the settler society is alive today in efforts to assist others in navigating the welfare system.

CONCLUSION

Although the contemporary Māori precariat shares many socio-economic similarities with the emerging global class, Māori also have a unique history in terms of economic exclusion, inequalities and experiences of precariousness since the early contact period. Māori have experienced precariousness in economic, cultural, social and political aspects of life since early colonial governments worked to strip Māori of land and resources and to decimate Māori traditions and collective support systems. With the rise of urban living, particularly in the mid twentieth century, came disconnections from traditionally sovereign ways of being and living. Many Māori continue to struggle with the everyday consequences of colonisation and the more recent welfare system that is increasingly designed to punish people in need, rather than support precariat whānau. As noted by Darrin Hodgetts and his colleagues in Chapter 4, we need to move back from a penal welfare system to an anti-oppressive welfare system that is more responsive to the needs of precariat whānau.

Finally, with the contemporary regrowth of precarious living in Aotearoa and with Māori forming a significant population of the precariat, it is important to understand how precariat whānau attempt to survive and navigate the provision of services. This chapter has scratched the surface of this topic by focusing on how one member of the Māori precariat and her advocate attempt to navigate the welfare service landscape. More work needs to be done in this area if we are to target and support initiatives for change to address the needs of

precariat whānau.

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19 Coleman et al., 'Māori Economic Development'; Linda W. Nikora, Bernard Guerin, Mohi Rua and Ngahuia Te Awekotuku, 'Moving Away from Home: Some Social Consequences for Tuhoe Migrating to the Waikato', *New Zealand Population Review* 30, nos. 1 & 2 (2004): 95–112.

20 Shilpi Ajwani, Tony Blakely, Bridget Robson, Martin Tobias and M. Bonne, *Decades of Disparity: Ethnic Mortality Trends in New Zealand 1980–1999* (Wellington: Ministry of Health Otago, 2003).

21 Ibid.

22 See Chapter 4, 'Penal Welfare'.

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23 Hodgetts et al., 'Urban Poverty'; see also Chapter 4.

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25 Darrin Hodgetts and Ottilie Stolte, *Urban Poverty, Penal Welfare and Health Inequalities* (London: Routledge, 2017).

26 Vicki A. Lens and Colleen Cary, 'Negotiating the Discourse of Race within the United States Welfare System', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33, no. 6 (2010): 1032–48.

27 Pseudonyms are used here to protect the privacy of the participants in this study.

2:10

REPRODUCING THE PRECARIOUS POSITION OF YOUNG MĀORI MOTHERS IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

FELICITY WARE, MARY BREHENY AND MARGARET FORSTER

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Welfare policies in Aotearoa New Zealand stigmatise and regulate people for receiving government support.[1] This chapter focuses specifically on young Māori mothers accessing the Young Parent Payment (YPP), which was introduced in 2012. Young Māori mothers are more likely than non-Māori to need financial assistance to complete their education and gain secure employment, making government financial assistance critical. Despite only accounting for approximately 15 per cent of the total population in Aotearoa New Zealand, Māori account for around half of all teenage pregnancies.[2] This high teenage pregnancy rate has been linked to the high rates of social disadvantage experienced by Māori.[3] Consequently, young Māori are disproportionately represented in the welfare system, and in 2009 accounted for around 50 per cent of teenagers who received the Domestic Purposes Benefit.[4] Māori cultural acceptance of early motherhood, cultural support systems for young mothers and their children, and the ways that motherhood represents a valued identity for Māori women may conflict with the wider societal condemnation of early childbearing.[5]

Recent welfare reforms specifically target young parents and Māori as 'at risk' of long-term welfare dependence and negative social outcomes. New compulsory social obligations have been introduced to limit welfare dependence and address the supposed negative outcomes of welfare receipt. Examining these obligations reveals the

misconceptions about young people as risky, teenage parenting as reproducing disadvantage, and welfare receipt as a marker of social exclusion.[6] Instead of developing culturally appropriate responses to address inequalities that structure young Māori parenting, government welfare further reinforces the precarious position of young Māori mothers.

2012 WELFARE REFORMS: SOCIAL INVESTMENT

Aotearoa New Zealand has embraced a neoliberal economic model for social policy, which emphasises attachment to the labour market and economic independence.[7] Early childbearing challenges neoliberal priorities by delaying education and economic productivity.[8] Consequently, early childbearing is linked with financial instability and social exclusion.[9] In 2009, the government reviewed Aotearoa New Zealand's social security system. The Welfare Working Group (WWG) was tasked with providing recommendations on how to reduce long-term welfare dependency in this country.[10] Sole parents, teenage parents and at-risk families were targeted.

The group's recommendations included requiring education to be undertaken to encourage participation in paid employment, enforcing parental obligations, and budgeting and income management.[11] The 2012 National Government-led welfare reforms used the recommendations as a basis to address long-term welfare dependency. The new social 'investment' approach to social security extended the previous welfare-to-work approach of prioritising education and employment over caregiving responsibilities. This approach assumes that any education and paid employment improves outcomes for families.

THE YOUNG PARENT PAYMENT: A NEOLIBERAL WELFARE APPROACH TO TEENAGE PARENTING

The new welfare payment for teenage parents that was introduced in 2012, the Young Parent Payment (YPP), was the first of the recent welfare reforms. The YPP was promoted as addressing concern regarding the welfare costs associated with early parenting.[12] The payment is available for parents aged between 16 and 18 years who

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have a dependent child or children.[13] An amendment introduced in 2015 extended the age of parents to include 19-year-olds.[14] The YPP is administered through the Youth Service, which focuses on education as a pathway to employment for young people. In addition, new parental obligations are used to leverage better outcomes in other sectors such as health and education for the children of welfare recipients.

The YPP treats young parents differently from older beneficiaries with children, with additional compulsory social obligations. Young parents must be enrolled in full-time education, training or work-based learning (from when their child is six months old if a secondary school specifically for teenage parents — Teen Parent Unit (TPU) — is available, or from 12 months if there is no TPU). Older parents on welfare must be available for part-time work when their youngest child is three years old. Those receiving the YPP also have intensive money management obligations and restrictions. Their welfare is paid directly to accommodation, phone and power providers, and they receive a payment card for groceries.

YPP recipients receive financial incentives of up to $50 cash per week based on upholding all of their social obligations. These include consistent engagement with their Youth Service provider, consistent attendance at an education or training course, completion of a budgeting and parenting course, their child being enrolled in early childcare, enrolled with a health provider, and up to date with child health checks.[15] If a young parent does not uphold their obligations, financial incentives can be withheld.

The YPP acknowledges the needs of young parents by providing some financial assistance and social support. However, the way it is implemented may undermine the development and wellbeing of young parents and their children. The social obligations and early interventions required to qualify for the YPP reinforce stigma associated with needing financial assistance,[16] being young and a parent.

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE VULNERABLE AND AT RISK

The Youth Service positions young people as vulnerable to negative outcomes such as pregnancy and welfare dependency.[17] The deficit positioning of young people as potentially precarious or 'at risk' justifies

increased surveillance, intervention and control.[18] The highly intensive money management system of the Youth Service emphasises young people's incapacity to make responsible financial decisions. However, there is little evidence that removing young people's autonomy over finances increases their financial skills. Providing advice on how to budget insufficient income is unlikely to help young people to improve their situation significantly, or to exit welfare dependency.[19]

The compulsory nature of the social obligations on these young people points to a punitive function as opposed to a 'wrap-around' support. This approach is not compatible with a positive youth development approach that recognises strengths, resilience, innovation and resourcefulness. In addition, the social obligations are not responsive to the young person's or their child's specific needs, but enforce the value of education and employment as universally appropriate.

YOUNG PARENTS AS A THREAT TO THEIR OWN CHILDREN

Under the requirements of the YPP, young parents must be in full-time education, training or employment from when their child is still a baby. Unlike older mothers on welfare, young mothers are not able to stay at home and look after their children. Instead, the government subsidises formal early childcare for the children of young parents to remove them from the full-time care and 'negative' influence of young mothers.

To insist that young mothers on welfare return to education or enter the workforce while their child is very young undermines full-time parenting as a valid choice and important social role.[20] There is no recognition of the rights of children to the full-time care of a parent regardless of the parent's age or socio-economic status. This is despite a growing body of research that emphasises the importance of positive attachments with primary caregivers in the first 1000 days of life, and the lack of evidence of the benefits of early childcare for children under three years old.[21] Instead, the expectations of 'good' mothering associated with older (white, middle-class and married) mothers are normalised,[22] positioning young Māori mothers as unsuitable parents. The undesirability of young mothers (who are disproportionately

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Māori) justifies a range of additional compulsory interventions for both parent and child, not required for older beneficiary parents or parents not reliant on welfare.

A key requirement of the YPP is parenting education, justified by the poor outcomes for children of young parents and welfare-dependent parents.[23] Young parents are taught 'good' parenting skills — based on middle-class parenting values. The 'inadequacies' of young parents are addressed by early childhood education and healthcare for the child and parent education for the young parent. However, parenting ability is not necessarily related to age, ethnicity or socio-economic status.[24] Viewing poor outcomes as caused by poor parenting choices dismisses the social and cultural context of parenting in poverty and amid racism and discrimination. The compulsory social obligations of the YPP demonstrate the government's preoccupation with manipulating mothers' behaviour, rather than addressing structural inequalities and inadequate resources. Explanations for negative outcomes such as hostile social circumstances, entrenched inequalities, racism or the ongoing effects of colonisation are ignored.

The YPP assumes that young mothers are unsuitable parents because they have had children before completing education and becoming financially independent. As such, they are viewed as reproducing welfare dependency and putting their children at risk. By introducing conditional welfare, the YPP reinforces the precarious position of young Māori mothers. They are viewed as both victims of social disadvantage and perpetrators contributing to the negative outcomes experienced by their children.

DESTABILISING THE PRECARIOUS POSITIONING OF YOUNG MĀORI MOTHERS

Lack of evidence

The social obligations of the YPP are based on the unsubstantiated assumption that participation in health, education, parenting and budgeting services will improve outcomes,[25] particularly for Māori. However, after more than four years, an evaluation in June 2014, and an extension to the new Youth Service in 2015 to include 19-year-olds, improved outcomes still cannot be determined for young parents or Māori. The Net Present Value (NPV) evaluation, which measures

the predicted change in lifetime costs to the welfare system, has not demonstrated 'investment returns' for the YPP. There is no evidence that the YPP reduces the number of years on welfare or reduces long-term financial or material hardship.[26] There is no evidence that the YPP significantly improves outcomes, particularly for young Māori mothers and their children in education, health, financial literacy and parenting.

Lack of cultural responsiveness

The YPP is a policy that disproportionately affects young Māori mothers and their children, but completely lacks any cultural awareness.[27] Young Māori parents are positioned as part of the problem as consumers of welfare, but Māori are not considered as part of the solution in developing policy that significantly affects them.[28] The ongoing effects of colonisation and racism in mainstream institutions have not been addressed in the development or implementation of the YPP.[29] There is little regard to whether early childbearing is an issue for Māori, what support would be culturally appropriate, and how support could be implemented in policy.

The disproportionate representation in negative outcomes for Māori in key social development areas suggests that the current systems are not working favourably to reduce disparities. Imposing Western models on young Māori parents and their children continues the marginalisation of Māori culture and obstructs the intergenerational transmission of Māori knowledge and language. The health and social inequities produced by culturally insensitive institutions will only worsen.

The relevance to young parents of Whānau Ora, a Māori policy approach introduced in [year?], has not been considered. Whānau Ora is a strengths-based, culturally appropriate, collective approach to accessing health and social services to support whānau to meet their needs and aspirations. Common whānau goals include health, education, employment, life skills, whakapapa (lineage) and cultural skills,[30] similar to the desired outcomes of the YPP. In spite of these shared goals, there is little recognition of a Māori perspective of youth development in the YPP.

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Māori youth development situates young people as the embodiment of their ancestors, producers of the next generation, providers for the collective, and potential leaders,[31] which could provide the foundation for appropriate support for young parents. Instead, the principles and associated practices of the YPP undermine Māori rights. Through compulsory education and employment, the YPP devalues and dismantles cultural support systems for young mothers and their children.

Early childbearing as a positive experience

The YPP dismisses early motherhood as an appropriate life choice. Yet research in Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally challenges the construction of teenage pregnancy as a problem.[32] Instead, poor outcomes for young parents reflect structural inequalities such as discrimination and sexism,[33] and colonialism and racism.[34] Teenage mothers often report having a child as a positive experience, which contributes to social inclusion, improved priorities, and a sense of purpose.[35] These findings are reflected in the research undertaken with young Māori parents.[36] These accounts of the transformative potential of early childbearing are routinely excluded from evidence review and policy development. As a result, most policy views teenage pregnancy as universally and consistently detrimental to women, children and society. Welfare policy that perpetuates the negative outcomes of early childbearing and welfare dependence is unable to substantially improve the precarious conditions in which young Māori are parenting.

CONCLUSION

The YPP reproduces the stigma of being young, a parent and requiring financial assistance. The YPP's compulsory parenting, education and income management obligations frame young mothers as unreliable parents who pose a risk to their children. This framing is used to justify early government intervention and punitive social obligations for young mothers and their children.

Punitive welfare conditions are aimed at controlling the behaviour of individuals rather than addressing the broader determinants of poverty and improving social conditions. Consequently, the existing

health and social inequalities that affect young Māori parents are reproduced. In this sense, the YPP continues the efforts of colonisation, marginalisation and social exclusion of the most disadvantaged. As such, it continues to unfairly target and disproportionately discriminate against young Māori parents.

Government 'support' can do more than just focus on economic self-sufficiency via education. Instead, government policy can acknowledge Māori rights as indigenous peoples to self-determination and involvement in culturally responsive policies, and uphold the right to be Māori without being defined as a risk or a problem. Young parents have a right to social justice and to receive adequate economic and material resources when necessary. In addition, young Māori parents have a right to reproductive justice, to parent without state surveillance and forced intervention. Instead of mandated parenting courses and early return to education, policy could focus attention on the social and cultural challenges of parenting in poverty and among racism and discrimination. Such a policy could impact positively on the trajectories of young Māori mothers and their children and enable them to move from precarity to security.

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A GAME OF SLIDES AND LADDERS
MĀORI HEALTH PROVIDERS AND FUNDERS

BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SHARRON MASTERS-DREAVER

Prior to the economic reforms of the 1980s, New Zealand followed a Keynesian interventionism model that fostered government responsibility to look after its citizens.[1] The government took responsibility for affecting employment and unemployment rates and acknowledged when and where there were housing needs before being charged to take action to do something to address them. Deregulation in the 1980s meant the government was able to contract out services that they had earlier taken responsibility for, which gave Māori opportunities to develop culturally centred service provision. An overview of the challenges afforded by these opportunities is presented throughout this chapter.

In 1986, the World Health Organization (WHO) published the Ottawa Charter.[2] With the New Zealand government's adoption of this charter, a reorientation of health services towards public health took shape. This new approach was radically different from the sickness and individually focused treatment services that previously dominated. The shift in health service orientation and the introduction of other neoliberal reforms created an opportunity for Māori to take more control of their own health outcomes through the delivery of culturally relevant and appropriate services.[3]

Both the Ministry of Health (then the Department of Health)[4] and the Ministry of Māori Development (Te Puni Kōkiri)[5] provided advice as to how well, or not, the new process fitted with the elected government's

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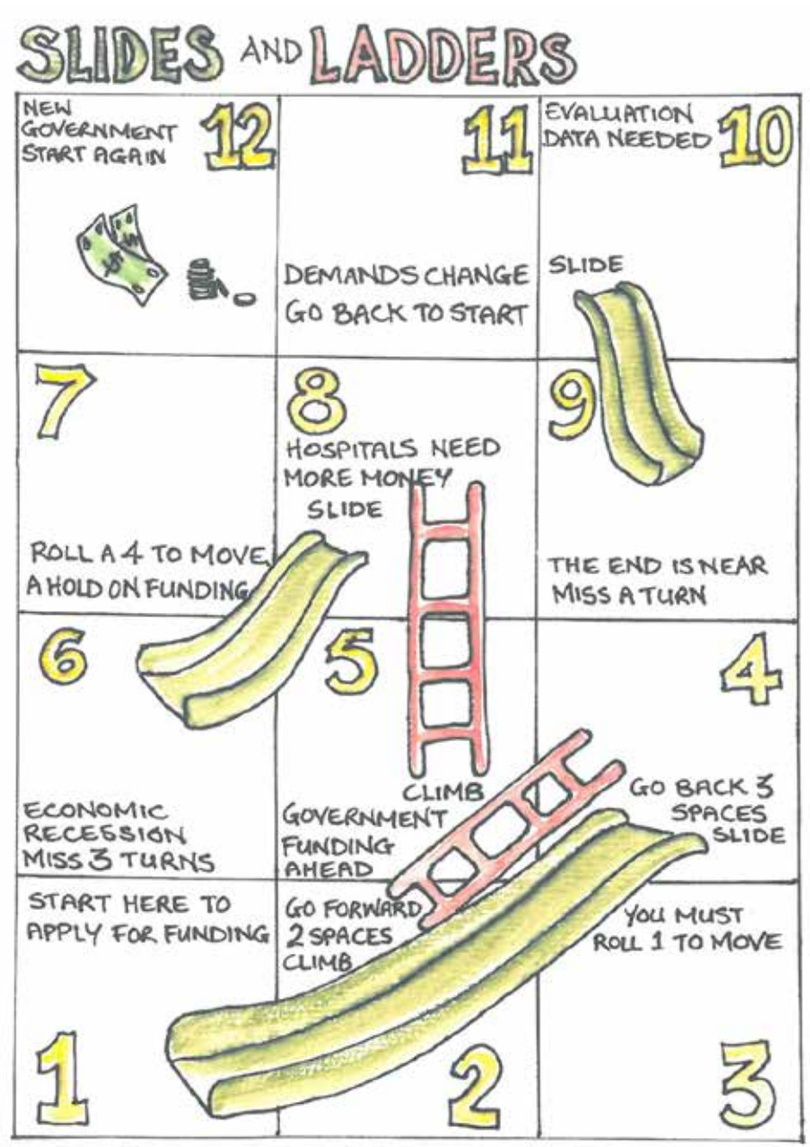
directive towards Māori health policy. Among Māori communities, this opportunity was grasped eagerly as a means to take control of health delivery to their members, because these changes were seen as the answer to calls for more autonomy when it came to improving outcomes in Māori health, education, justice and employment.[6]

Jump forward to 2017, and the shift to neoliberal economics and the virtual hegemony enjoyed among economic commentators, policymakers and business leaders has left no room for the 'social welfare' system of earlier times.[7] The National Government's neoliberal economic reforms of the 1990s carried forward the 'New Right' ideology by: 1, the continued corporatisation and privatisation of many government enterprises; 2, stripping back and restructuring the welfare state; 3, increasing user charges for health and education; and 4, devolving responsibility for the provision of health and social services to Māori communities.

This chapter focuses on the last point, and explains how the pressure to produce improved health, without the commitment of sufficient and continued resources, places Māori providers, and whānau by virtue of a flow-on effect, in a position of precariousness. Rather than describe in detail the level of inequity that abounds within health-service funding and provision, I attempt to take a humorous approach, by touching on the issues and making connection to a game of Slides and Ladders (renamed from Snakes and Ladders, as snakes don't fit with the health theme of the chapter). At the end of each paragraph below I have inserted a comment, for example [*Go forward*] or [*Slide backwards*] — these little asides serve as a reminder about the Slides and Ladders game.

HEALTH SERVICE PROVISION FOR MĀORI

While the devolution of state responsibility had a huge economic impact on Māori, it also allowed for local indigenous control over the design and delivery of community-based and culturally sensitive services.[8] Such was the desire to fill an unmet need, the ability to access funding that would enable the provision of appropriate services to Māori offered an opportunity that could not be ignored. Aotearoa New



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Zealand's commitment to the World Health Organization's agenda by ensuring that everyone had access to an acceptable level of health services on fair terms gave New Zealanders the freedom to choose where to go for services that suited their individual and collective needs. This came alongside the opportunity for Māori service provision, which meant that 'By Māori/For Māori' programmes and services seemingly appeared overnight. [*Start game*]

The New Zealand health system went through a series of changes during the 1990s, but has always retained a significant public provision of health services.[9] Among the changes that took place was a split of the purchasing role from a providing role, which was premised on the perceived efficiencies that would eventuate from introduced competition[10] — the idea that the inherent superiority of the market would deliver better health outcomes by forcing providers to become more accountable to both purchasers and their patients. [*Go forward*]

Successive governments during the 1990s pushed for 'local solutions to local problems'. This suited the 'new' initiatives, such as Māori providers,[11] because it allowed them greater autonomy from government and increased their sense of control over their own destinies. 'Autonomy' was perceived as economic control — with a growth in economic control came a sense of autonomy. Goodwill grew between Māori and the government during this period.[12] [*Go forward*]

While the promise of autonomy was held out to Māori in one hand, the other hand held funding constraints and inequitable contracts between Regional Health Authorities (purchasers of health services — also known as the 'Funder') and Māori providers around the country, which hampered the promised health autonomy. [*Slide backwards*]

The ability to use Māori cultural constructs in the development and delivery of health programmes was seen as an acknowledgement of the government's willingness to recognise the place of Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand. Through development of a suitably acceptable proposal for service provision, Māori providers (and communities) believed that the government would give them access to the previously untapped Bank of Continued Funding, which had been continually available to mainstream service providers. [*Go forward — climb the ladder*]



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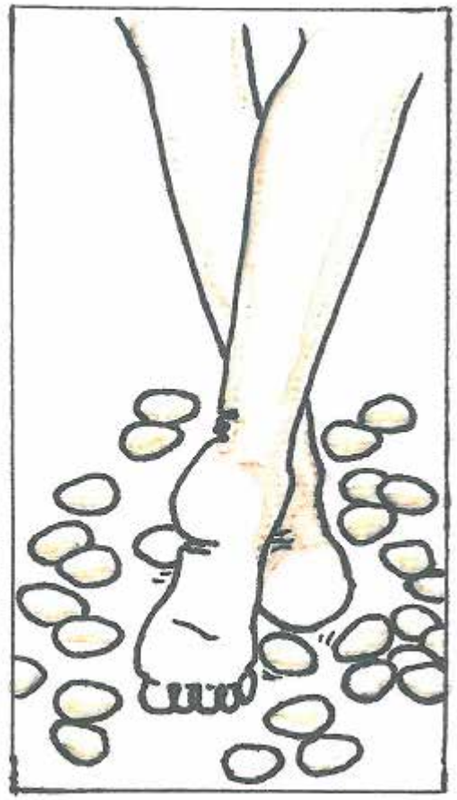
Since the establishment of the first hospitals in the 1880s, and the introduction of the Public Health Act in 1872, the provision of health services has been seen as paramount in this country.[13] New Zealand citizens have had continual access to mainstream health and social services that have been funded to reduce negative health impacts. However, government reports over the decades (both before and since the health reforms) clearly show that negative health impacts have increased, rather than decreased, for Māori in mainstream health services. Yet the provision of funding has continued, if not increased. [*Lose a turn*]

Māori providers (and service users) believed that while they might make a few mistakes in the delivery of culturally centred services to their communities, they would be afforded the opportunity to learn from these mistakes and amend their service delivery appropriately until the desired health changes were achieved. Such had been their observations of mainstream service providers. [*Go forward*]

However, before Māori realised what had happened, their Māori service providers had entered a game of Slides and Ladders that involved a requirement to walk down the 'yellow brick road', which was made of eggs. The pathways in the service provider system required Māori providers to learn the skill of walking on eggs. As with any new skill, Māori providers being new to the game had to learn the art quickly, without any resources or tools to help them, and with the constant sound of a ticking clock reminding them that there was only so much time left before they lost their funding. [*Slide backwards*]

As with all health services, the provision, activities, outputs and outcomes of the provider's work must be reported to the Funder. All expenditure must be financially accounted for and tangible health gains must be achieved with every step (these translate as a measurable reduction in a negative health occurrence — such as fewer people dying of lung cancer as a result of smoking). Each of these demands on service providers can be equated to the 'eggs' that must be walked over in order to access the fabled Bank of Continued Funding. The ability to travel along this roadway without cracking (any) egg shells involves having absolutely robust mechanisms that meet the cultural norms of a health system set up to serve the dominant beliefs and values that



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fiscal worth equates to tangible benefits that can be physically counted and seen. [*You must roll 4 to move*]

Let's face it, Māori are aware that the (health funding) system is not fair because the system was not set up to serve Māori needs in the first instance. (If Māori controlled the distribution of health resources to everyone in the country, would the health system look the same as it does now? What would it look like?) What has become more evident as government election cycles continue, with their promises of better healthcare services while at the same time injecting less money than needed into the sector — particularly less than needed in some parts of the system where Māori needs are greatest — is the unequal treatment of service providers.[14] Despite an increase in dollars towards health services, inequity is demonstrable when resources are given to mainstream providers (such as District Health Boards — DHBs) who continue to control regional service delivery that does not meet the needs of Māori communities in their regions.

DHBs are more likely to access continued funding despite some major failures to achieve large health gains for Māori. Māori providers are more likely to be severely penalised (by being denied access to further funding) if they fail to meet one of the numerous demands to eliminate poor Māori health within their time-limited and resource-limited contracts. I liken the privilege afforded to DHBs in this instance (and other mainstream government-funded providers) to being given support by way of 'hover shoes'. Such support enables mainstream services to easily travel the pathway of continued funding without ever breaking any eggs along the way.

Government agencies (as funders, providers and auditors) are the tools of a system that was created by a privileged group with a specific set of values that reflect what is desired for those who look, think, believe and act like them.[15] Because the system was created by those in power to serve those in power, government agencies have a smooth road when it comes to accessing funding. For Māori providers, who are trying to access that same funding, the health system was not created by them or for them; nor does the health system have the same values and priorities that Māori do. As a result, even though the intended outcomes may be the same (that we live longer and in better health)



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what that picture of health looks like and the ways of measuring the successful provision of services for Māori within the health system are less valued.

For Māori providers (and whānau), navigating the health system is like an uneven race. Some are given a clear pathway with no obstacles, and with helpful supports along the way, which enable them to access continued funding (as a provider) or (as individuals) have a long and healthy life with minimal disruptions to their everyday life. [*Slide backwards*]

When it comes to accessing resources, the uneven pathways for mainstream and Māori health providers are shown in the following examples, which have been taken from a range of research outputs.[16]

Māori providers can often be left feeling squeezed between 'a rock and a hard place' when it comes to meeting the demands of government funders and Māori communities whose demands for a culturally appropriate health service prioritise spiritual and cultural health over the absence of physical disease.

It is in these types of scenario that Māori providers can expend resources over and above what they have been funded to deliver in order to support whānau in ways that are more culturally familiar to them. Sadly, such additional activities are either not counted or are given less importance within the current reporting structures. Juggling the demands of both the funders and the service users is a difficult place for Māori providers to navigate — with the constant threat of losing their service contracts, Māori providers are in an under-recognised precarious position. [*Go back to the start*]

CLOSING COMMENTS

New Zealand's history is full of examples of well-meaning policies with the best intentions failing to achieve positive gains for those most in need. Long gone are the days of positive social welfare reforms. Instead, the New Zealand government has regularly been below the OECD average when it comes to social spending as a percentage of GDP. Money that could buffer low-income families and support them in ways that would enable them to be well is much harder to access. The health system is an example where the majority of its most vulnerable and



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Example of a funder requirement	Impact of failure to deliver for Māori service providers (likely discontinued funding)	Impact of failure to deliver for mainstream service providers (given access to continued funding)
Meet reporting current deadlines.	Unexpected loss of key staff means a new person must be hired to provide such information.	Unexpected loss of key staff means a new person must be hired to provide such information. Expectation that such information will be provided in the next cycle.
Report deadlines need to be adjusted (for whatever reason).	Lacking infrastructure, resources need to be redirected from delivery. Negotiation for a 'grace period' not approved.	Infrastructure in place to manage this but more time needed. Negotiate a 'period of grace' whereby the information will be provided in the next cycle.
Demonstration of fiscal accountability.	Transfer of funds to meet other identified areas of need is insufficient. Without additional resources further detail cannot be produced.	Transfer of funds to meet other identified areas of need is accepted. Further details can be produced on request, with additional resources.
A new requirement for an evaluation of services provided.	New skilled staff must be contracted to complete this task; more time required.	Other programmes of a similar nature were evaluated; here are those results instead.
Negative health impact factor reduced by 15%.	Community circumstances meant this was not achieved. Will keep trying.	Community circumstances meant this was not achieved. Will keep trying.

in need of government resources are Māori. Māori (and other NGO) providers are trying hard to meet contracts that are administratively demanding and difficult to interpret, and which threaten their ability to provide culturally and socially relevant services.

Although New Zealanders have seen the closure of small (rural) hospitals and some major commercial providers have lost their contracts (e.g. laboratory services), the history of government bail-outs for DHBs does not allow them to fail. The same is not true for Māori



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providers. Despite increasing demand and decreasing funding, Māori providers and whānau (service users, family members and extended family) continue to find creative and meaningful ways to continue support. The continued existence of Māori providers suggests that some have 'cracked the code' and are able to keep playing the game of Slides and Ladders. I hope that my analogy of this situation, likened to a child's game, has helped to prevent people from getting bogged down in the negativity of the whole situation.

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1 Keynesian economics is based on a model that holds the central belief that government intervention can stabilise the economy.

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3 J. Kelsey, *Rolling Back the State: Privatisation of Power in Aotearoa/New Zealand* (Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 1993).

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8 A. Fleras and P. Spoonley, *Recalling Aotearoa: Indigenous Politics and Ethnic Relations in New Zealand* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1999).

9 The New Zealand health system initially developed in the nineteenth century in response to the threat of infectious disease and early public health concerns with sanitation and water supply, alongside quarantine and vaccination practices.

10 J. Kelsey, *The New Zealand Experiment* (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1994).

11 B. English and T. Delamere, *Māori Provider Development Scheme* (Wellington: Minister of Health, 1997).

12 There were other contributing factors to the growth in goodwill. For example, the first Treaty settlements, between the Crown and Tainui and the Crown and Ngāi Tahu, were reached — these engagements fostered a positive relationship between Māori and the Crown (through its representative, the government).

13 *The Napier Hospital Services Claim — WAI 692. The Napier Hospital and Health Services Report* (2001), https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/WT/reports/reportSummary.html?reportId=wt_DOC_68596252

14 The exact number of Māori providers is not easily calculated. Databases that record the type of organisation do not record the type of contract. Databases about health contracts are kept confidential to protect the nature of contracts. For example, the Ministry of Health provider records do not reveal whether providers are iwi or Māori services, but instead report on the size of the organisation and the types of services offered. My current research project on hospital transfers has found that there is only limited routinely published information that provides detail on patterns of transfer between hospitals or receipt of hospital care outside one's usual place of residence. Such information tends not to be discernible by ethnicity. There is some data on inter-district flows; that is, payments from one DHB to another due to a patient moving between their DHB of usual residence to another to receive a health service, and hospital 'through-put' (see National Health Board, 'IDF Methodology Notes 2015/16' [2014], available online at: http://nsfl.health.govt.nz/finances/financial-standards-and-guidelines/inter-district-flows; and Ministry of Health, *Hospital Throughput 2003/04 for DHBs and their Hospitals* (Wellington: Ministry of Health, 2006).

15 E. T. A. Poata-Smith, 'The Political Economy of Inequality Between Maori and Pakeha', in C. Rudd and B. Roper (eds.), *The Political Economy of New Zealand* (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1997), 160–79.

16 Ministry of Health, *Hospital Throughput 2003/04 for DHBs and their Hospitals*; National Health Board, 'IDF methodology notes 2015/16'; F. Cram and K. Pipi, *Iwi/Māori Provider Success: Pilot Project* (Auckland: International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, University of Auckland, 2001); F.Cram and V. Kennedy, 'Researching with Whanau Collectives', *Mai Review* 3 (2010), retrieved from http://www.review.mai.ac.nz/index.php/MR/article/view/382/561; Families Commission, *Partnerships with Māori: He Waka Whānui*, Research Report No 1/12 (Wellington: Families Commission: Kōmihana ā Whānau, 2012); P. Howden-Chapman and F. Cram, *Social, Economic and Cultural Determinants of Health*, Health Determinants Programme Background Paper 1 (Wellington: National Health Committee, 1998); Manatu Maori, *Maori and the Reformed Health System* (Wellington: Manatu Maori, 1992); B. Masters-Awatere, S. Awatere, L. W. Nikora and N. Robertson, *Indigenous Service Programs Plus Indigenous Evaluator Equals Whitestream Evaluation: What's Wrong with This Picture? (Reflections from my PhD)*, Presented at the 50th APS Annual Conference: Celebrating the Past, Looking Toward to the Future, held at the Gold Coast, Queensland, Australia, September 29 to October 2, 2015, http://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/9827; K. Pipi, F. Cram, R. Hawke, S. Hawke, T. M. Huriwai, et al., 'A Research Ethic for Studying Māori and Iwi Provider Success', Social Policy Journal of New Zealand 23 (2004): 141–53; Te Puni Kōkiri, *Māori Provider Views of Government Funding* (Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri, 2000); Te Puni Kōkiri, *Iwi and Māori Provider Success: A Research Report of Interviews with Successful Iwi and Māori Providers and Government Agencies* (Wellington: Te Puni Kōkiri, 2002).

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I'M TANGATA WHENUA, AND I'M STILL HERE
MĀORI YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

SHILOH GROOT, TYCHO VANDENBURG AND DARRIN HODGETTS

Homelessness is not a neutral state, but rather one that is intimately interwoven with other experiences of being on the margins of society. To fully understand the complexities of Māori youth homelessness, it is crucial that we look beyond narratives of individual trauma and acknowledge that homelessness is rooted in historical experiences of colonisation. With colonialism came urbanisation, displacement, disease, war and death, resulting in the degradation of Māori kinship systems, economic capacity, culture and spiritual connectedness. In contemporary Aotearoa New Zealand, such histories carry grave consequences for health and identity. As such, homelessness for Māori has occurred at national, iwi, hapū, whānau and personal levels through the machinery of colonisation that continues to impact on lives today.

Over the past decade, several key UN monitoring bodies have expressed concern about ethnic inequalities in Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly within the health, education, justice, economic and public service systems. Māori are more likely to grow up in poverty, face interpersonal and institutional discrimination, and experience disadvantage and marginalisation.[1] Consequently, there have been calls for the promotion of a greater understanding of the causes of inequalities, and for ongoing focus, increased efforts and action to overcome these.

A University of Otago report using 2013 census figures suggests that

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as many as 41,705 people — close to one in every one hundred New Zealanders — are affected by homelessness.[2] The report also indicates that 51 per cent are thought to be under 25 years old, and 52 per cent are working, studying or both. In Aotearoa New Zealand, many Māori live in impoverished and overcrowded conditions and, as such, are over-represented in the homeless population. Most homeless people originate from precariat households, and homelessness can be seen as the hard edge of inequality in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Despite the persistent presence of homeless people there is no nationally coordinated response to homelessness or nationally resourced programme of research and action. While many New Zealanders may support the abstract principle of all citizens being entitled to decent housing, unfortunately, their comprehension of the nature and extent of homelessness in their own country is lacking. Of further concern, no single government department has a statutory responsibility for homeless people or for coordinating services. As a result, service provisions have developed in a fragmentary manner. Alongside private charities and faith-based social services, government agencies such as the Department of Corrections; Oranga Tamariki, the Ministry for Vulnerable Children (which incorporates the former Child, Youth & Family Services [CYFS]) and District Health Boards (DHBs) are involved in addressing the complex needs of homeless people.

To illustrate the intersections of these issues, this chapter draws on the accounts of 24 Māori homeless people and the physicians, nurses, counsellors and allied professionals working in Tauranga, Hamilton and Auckland over a three-year period. We engaged in this research through a multi-method approach that included intensive volunteer work, direct observations, and biographical interviews. The study included photographic projects where homeless people were given disposable cameras with which to take pictures of aspects of their everyday lives that were important to them. Through their stories, we consider the hardships that haunt them, and the strengths that restore them.

REMOVAL, DISPLACEMENT AND LOSS

Pathways into and out of homelessness are complex. These often

stem from socio-economic and intergroup inequalities that manifest in the everyday lives of marginalised groups. Specific pathways include growing up in low-income households, experiencing racism in the rental market that can impact on the length of time spent in any one house, and poor quality, overcrowded and unaffordable housing. Frequent upheaval and movement between communities and schools can further disrupt children's educational performance and community support networks in ways that exacerbate experiences of precarity. For many of the Māori we engaged with, life on the street in some ways offered a greater sense of stability and control than domestic alternatives ever had. The cumulative influences of poverty, racism, stigma and social exclusion experienced in housed situations led them to street life.

For many Māori young people experiencing homelessness, being forcibly removed through state intervention can be a pervasive and frequent feature of their lives with the potential to contribute to later, ongoing experiences of homelessness. Accounts of Māori children and adolescents in the child welfare system are saturated with troubling stories of sexual and physical abuse, violence, poverty, racism, neglect and struggles with identity. Indeed, Māori adults often attributed their earliest entrance into homelessness to their removal from whānau by social services in childhood, and the abuse, neglect and discrimination endured while in state care.

Even when no 'direct' abuse has occurred, young people face psychological, emotional and spiritual harm in the hands of state care, distanced from their identity and community, and denied access to cultural practices, language and spirituality. Often, it is the overwhelming need to escape these painful and oppressive situations that drives young people to leave state care for life on the street. The link between experiences in state care and homelessness is concerning given the large number of Māori children who are in state care in Aotearoa New Zealand; in 2016 over 60 per cent of children in the care of CYFS were Māori.[3] Further, over 60 per cent of children in out-of-home placements were Māori.

Twins Charlotte and Rachel were removed from their whānau as infants and placed in state care.[4] They spent most of their lives

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separated from each other as they were moved from foster home to foster home, but were reunited at 17 years old when CYFS' guardianship ended. At 17 they could not vote, sign a tenancy agreement or be financially responsible for bills. They knew nothing of the family they had been removed from and even lacked the skills to cook a nourishing meal for themselves. After many years of criticism of its organisational practices CYFS announced in 2016 that it would seek to extend the age of guardianship to 21, in some cases.

When we met Charlotte and Rachel they had been living on the streets of Auckland for two months and were engaging in sex work illegally as minors to earn money and food. These activities were bringing them into conflict with the judicial system as well as with established street sex workers. When we initially engaged with the twins they were uncertain about what they could contribute to the project, but they were excited to take part. Cameras in hand, they returned with a set of images of looming city buildings, selfies (like any other teenager), and a series of photographs of a souvenir shop filled with objects rich with meaning for Māori (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. One of Charlotte and Rachel's souvenir shop photographs.

The souvenir shop was a place the two young women often returned to, which helped to alleviate feelings of mokemoke (loneliness) for the home and cultural relationships that give life and meaning to Māori. Their profound sense of whakamā (shame and humiliation) is captured in their images; Charlotte and Rachel have few opportunities for cultural connection, and they go to this shop to touch the pounamu (greenstone) and through this act gain some material sense of connection to things Māori. Such objects provide a focal point for the practice of Māori culture in which they can position themselves, despite histories of displacement and removal. The loss of whānaungatanga (interconnectedness) and wairuatanga (spirituality) is keenly felt by the twins as a type of spiritual homelessness.

Broadening our understanding of homelessness to include spiritual dimensions acknowledges that for Māori, precarity includes shared histories of removal from ancestral lands, language, cultural practices, and family and kinship networks. Such concepts are core to a Māori worldview. Without such understandings, we risk depoliticising homelessness and reducing it to poor personal choice. If Māori are over-represented in the homeless population, then we need to ensure Māori perspectives are interwoven into any response strategy, to provide the bridge between past and current contexts of homelessness and a future ideal state where homelessness does not exist.

FRAGMENTARY AND CHAOTIC SERVICE PROVISION

Tens of thousands of children in Aotearoa New Zealand live in at-risk environments, in a country with the fifth highest rate of child homicide of 31 OECD countries. Despite the high number of Māori children and families represented in the media, family and domestic violence happens across *all* sectors of society, and no group is immune. Many precariat families do not abuse their children and those that do invariably contribute to youth homelessness. This is because young members of the precariat faced with family violence and abuse often have fewer options and resources. A common pathway into homelessness is where young people leave home to escape neglect, trauma or physical and/or sexual abuse perpetuated by family members.

Luke, a 36-year-old Māori man, discussed how he escaped his

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childhood home after repeated instances of abuse, and remained homeless for an extended period of time:

> I'm a product of rape and I do believe that's why my mother hates me. I have a clear memory of sitting behind a couch playing, listening to my mother and my father sitting there saying how much they hate me and how they wished I had never been born. That pretty much was the beginning of my life. It also set the tone for how I felt about myself for many years. I was sexually and physically abused for most of my childhood. That's why I walked out of home at 10, because I thought how much worse can it be out on my own? If these two people that are supposed to love, nurture, and look after me can't do it, then why the hell would anybody else out there take care of me?

Luke recounts experiences of abuse in his family as part of an exploration of how he has been denied a home and, as such, became homeless. The whānau is the basic foundation that supports all other aspects of Māori society, and without whānau there could be no hapū or iwi. For Luke the traumatic nature of being forcibly severed from a toxic whānau environment fuelled a desire for connection and a sense of home, which would have to be fostered elsewhere, on the streets. In recounting the example of his parents' contempt, Luke invokes the dilemma faced by many young people who must either suffer in silence or leave the situation of abuse. Lacking resources and facing great hardship, young Māori escaping home to seek a new life may become trapped in a cycle of homelessness that is difficult to overcome.

Childhood trauma from sexual and physical abuse has long-term psychological and emotional effects, such as early-onset mental illness and drug and alcohol addiction. Luke developed a number of mental and physical ailments as well as significant substance misuse issues. Within the larger three-year research project, we explored the experiences of six Māori homeless people who were engaged with mental health services and the efforts of six practitioners to respond to their needs.[5] Ahurewa, a 39-year-old Māori woman, was seven years old

when first diagnosed with a mental illness. She, and other, participants spoke of external conditions such as familial conflict and violence that often emerge before classified symptoms and distorted thoughts:

> Started when I was young; my mum passed away so my dad was left with a lot of children. It was hard with my father — he was an alcoholic. It was rough. I used to hide and try to become invisible because he used to give me a hiding quite a lot. So, I ended up building a wall around me. I became like one of those kids that liked to be by themselves. I used to wrap myself in our old carpet at the back of the house so I could be invisible, so my dad wouldn't find me. How I encountered my first experience of mental health was when I hung my nephew, in the garage. I was about seven. We were playing. I was angry with him because he kept crying and I was afraid I would get a hiding so I hung him in the garage . . . He didn't die. But that was when I found out I had a mental illness. That it wasn't a natural thing for a kid to do. Social welfare came to get me and they locked me up.

In the excerpt above, Ahurewa discusses her initial awareness of mental illness as not merely contained within the individualised body as some sort of malfunction or abnormality, but as placed within the context of, and also as a product of, history and the social realm in which people live. She describes herself as a mental health survivor, alluding to dysfunctional aspects of a social system that removes children without offering suitable alternative environments.

A US study investigating the prevalence and risk factors for homelessness, and the utilisation of mental health services among 10,340 patients with serious mental illness, in a large public mental health system, suggested that between a third and a half of homeless people have severe mental illnesses.[6] In Aotearoa New Zealand, psychiatric admission rates for Māori are approximately 40 per cent higher than for all other ethnic groups combined.[7] The poor living conditions, economic struggles, stress, stigma and social exclusion associated with homelessness inevitably affect a human being's

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physical, psychological, emotional and social wellbeing. The prevalence of mental illness among homeless people is contested, however; is it mental illness or a reasonable reaction to a lifetime of trauma? It is important to realise that these are people first, to understand the context, rather than a disorder, a diagnosis, a 'dysfunction', something to be fixed and readjusted.

Sir Mason Durie, one of Aotearoa New Zealand's most distinguished health scholars, noted that Māori face a number of barriers to accessing mental health services.[8] These include the threat of committal for compulsory treatment, inadequate funding, Māori being dubious about treatment within mainstream services, and associated methods of assessment that are often culturally inappropriate. In our research, the Māori homeless were scared and scarred by behavioural-orientated 'data driven' services, and often unwilling to submit themselves to such technologies of control again. Short-term, technique-dominated, practitioner-centred approaches to mental illness that dominate therapeutic interventions have proved less effective than more long-term humanistic and culturally informed approaches.

The Māori cultural concept of whanaungatanga (interconnectedness) provides a framework for the enactment of respectful relationships between people that engender belonging, respect and wellbeing. Any approach that emphasises the importance of human connection, compassion, imagination and an understanding of the impact of existing societal processes in disabling people is crucial in our responses to homelessness.

RESISTANCE AND RESILIENCE

Despite these extraordinary challenges, young Māori people experiencing homelessness engage in a variety of activities that foster strength and community. Indeed, it is important to emphasise that homeless young people are not just the passive victims of adversity. Many Māori youth have a deep understanding of the structural injustices that have contributed to their situations, and aspire to prevent further generations from experiencing these by way of actively promoting and reconnecting with Te Ao Māori, 'the Maori world'. Te Ao Māori includes te reo (language and dialects), ahunga tikanga

(knowledge, processes and practices), marae (community focal point), waahi tapu (sites of critical importance), and access to whānau, hapū and iwi. Engagement with other street homeless Māori can be a source of restoration and healing for many young people. Anahera, 27 years old, said:

> It was hard coming to the streets and seeing my own people living this way, it was very hard. A lot of them just had a hard life, brought up hard, brought up in different areas like Otara, and Mangere and a lot of them had run away from home. The kids that I met yeah, broken man, they were broken. So, my heart really goes out to them and I can relate to them, I know where they're coming from. We had a lot of young girls on the street, so we started a kapahaka [contemporary Māori performance] group. I was really concerned, just really young girls on the streets and they end up being working girls [sex workers], but like, I couldn't stop them because that's how they survive. So, I said to them, 'Do you know how to do kapahaka?' and they said yeah. Oh well come on, come and practise. We need to do something, kapahaka, and they get to know their culture. We were having a good time and keeping out of trouble. It was good while it lasted.

In the excerpt above, Anahera recounts the ways in which Māori homeless people attempt to reduce an environment such as the streets from one of despair to one of care through Māori ways of being.

In the absence of any nationally coordinated official action, many Māori homeless people must find ways to support each other and enact ways of being Māori to resist forms of spiritual homelessness. These informal peer support networks and spaces of belonging that street youth developed were a common thread in the stories of older Māori homeless people. Intergenerational bonds are also common; young people are often taken in by older streeties who adopt a parental or mentorship role, who endeavour to share cultural knowledge, histories and practices between generations of homeless people.

Engagement with Te Ao Māori and connecting with other Māori

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is often identified as a source of pride, hope and encouragement for homeless young people. Ariā, an older homeless woman in her late fifties, had experienced periods of homelessness since she was 12 years old, to escape abuse at the hands of family members. Three different generations of her whānau would find their way to the streets of Auckland, where Ariā would care for them.[9] When she was a young woman, Ariā's grandmother, who had tried to care for and protect her as a child, visited whānau on the streets to beg them to return:

> I told my grandmother, because she was being very judgemental, 'This is where they run to. They [Ariā's family on the streets] think they're alright here.' When she got to see them all, she got a fright. I said 'See, they're all here.' I said, 'I'm at home, it's our whenua, I'm tangata whenua, and I'm still here.' And then she understood . . . I can talk to them about their family back there [ancestral land] because they miss them and like hearing about them. And because I've been back there they want to go back now. But it's taking time, just talking to them, just like you and I are, and just letting them listen.

In the commentary above, Ariā evokes the tensions between whānau members who want to return to their hau kāinga (ancestral homelands) but cannot because they fear for their safety. She also provides an account of the day-to-day relationships and interactions she has with family members. This is about whanaungatanga, being related, and the obligations of care that whanaungatanga augments. People have to consent to being the recipients of care. Being a consenting recipient of care endorses and affirms the mana (prestige) of the provider, endowing them with the mantle of leadership. Ariā is then able to make expressions of rangatiratanga (leadership), which in turn brings about kotahitanga — unity in balance. These relationships are endorsed through such concrete experiences as Ariā taking photographs of her whānau as ways of recontextualising the streets, as a place where whānau members live, and where she can provide direct support to them, reinforcing familial bonds.

CONCLUSION

There is a tendency to think of Māori as fixed in place, firmly rooted to specific places. To understand Māori homelessness, we need to recognise our history as one of displacement, disruption and cultural, social and economic subordination. It is also a history of resistance, resilience and survival. Māori are a diverse people; the accounts of those who were rendered homeless at a young age speak to the tensions of how displacement from Māori ways of being can work to render certain identities as unrecognisable and unworthy. Simultaneously, the streets offer the opportunity for agency, resistance and disruption in precarity.

It is crucial that Māori cultural perspectives are interwoven through any response strategy, to provide the bridge between past and current contexts of homelessness and a future ideal state where homelessness does not exist. Advocating for ending homelessness may seem paradoxical when we consider stories like those of Ariā and Anahera, who speak of the streets as a place of strength and standing. But when we consider what Charlotte, Rachel, Ariā, Luke, Anahera, Ahurewa and their whānau were seeking refuge from, it is clear that the decision to live on the streets has come about because the alternative has often proven to be abhorrent. They do so because their options are restrained. The reality is that homeless people get sick quicker, and die sooner. So, how then do we meaningfully respond to Māori homelessness?

Many iwi (post-settlement) are setting up initiatives, including health, housing, cultural and social services, that show promise. But they cannot do it alone. At the very least, we need government recognition that homelessness is an issue in Aotearoa New Zealand. We need to resource a coordinated response to homelessness in collaboration with service providers. We know Māori are over-represented in the homeless population, therefore any approach that works with providers to inform services can have a direct bearing on Māori. Addressing Māori homelessness requires structural and interpersonal actions that foster human reconnection and dignity. Such an approach emphasises the restoration of community, self-belief, and communication without judgement.

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1 Human Rights Commission, *A Fair Go for All? Addressing Structural Discrimination in Public Services* (Wellington: Human Rights Commission, 2013).

2 K. Amore, H. Viggers, M. G. Baker and P. Howden-Chapman, *Severe Housing Deprivation: The Problem and its Measurement,* Official Statistics Research Series, 6 (2013), 821–31.

3 Ministry of Social Development, Kids in Care National and Local Level Data December 2016 [Data file], retrieved from http://www.cyf.govt.nz/about-us/key-statistics/kids-in-care.html

4 Pseudonyms are used throughout this discussion of our research.

5 D. Johnson, D. Hodgetts and N. W. Nikora, 'A Humanistic Approach to Addressing the Needs of Maori Homeless People with Mental Health Concerns', *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 53, no. 1 (2012): 94–113.

6 D. P. Folsom, W. Hawthorne, L. Lindamer, T. Gilmer, A. Bailey, et al., 'Prevalence and Risk Factors for Homelessness and Utilization of Mental Health Service Among 10,340 Patients with Serious Mental Illness in a Large Public Mental Health System', *American Journal of Psychiatry* 162 (2005): 370–77.

7 L. Gawith and P. Abrams, 'Long Journey to Recovery for Kiwi Consumers: Recent Developments in Mental Health Policy and Practice in New Zealand', *Australian Psychologist* 41 (2006): 140–48.

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9 S. Groot, D. Hodgetts, L. W. Nikora and C. Leggat-Cook, 'A Maori Homeless Woman', *Ethnography* 12, no. 3 (2011): 375–97.

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SECTION THREE:

ARRIVALS PAST AND PRESENT

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INTRODUCTION

SHILOH GROOT AND
CLIFFORD VAN OMMEN

The world froze in 2015 when the unbearably sad image of three-year-old Aylan Kurdi's tiny body, face down in the sand on a beach in Turkey, made global headlines. Aylan, his mother and his sister had all drowned after having boarded a small rubber inflatable boat, which capsized about five minutes after leaving Bodrum in Turkey. Aylan's father had desperately sought to hold on to each of them but would be the only one to survive. He and his family were Syrian refugees fearfully and urgently trying to reach Europe, with no time to waste and no viable alternative, amid the global refugee crisis.

Even the New Zealand government, which had previously refused to raise the refugee quota (a minuscule 750 annually), folded beneath public outrage following the release of that one photo. After four days of dithering the government announced it would double the refugee quota, hardly a generous response, and even this would be delayed until 2018, giving priority instead to urgently passing laws to keep pubs open during Rugby World Cup matches. Since then the government has reneged on its original offer of doubling the quota, instead dedicating 150 places to Syrian refugees within the annual quota of 750, and a further 500 from 2017/2018. This has set in motion a much-needed, fierce and meaningful debate over what defines us, Aotearoa New Zealand, as a nation. Are we the welcoming, easy-going people we tell ourselves we are? Or do we only care about those who are elite enough to make it into our favourite sports team?

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Aotearoa New Zealand has a long history of accepting refugees. We have been formally involved with refugee resettlement since 1944, when we accepted a group of Polish children during the Second World War. Rural school children lined up to wave and hold out flowers as the train carrying the refugee children made its way from Wellington to Pahiatua. Not that Aotearoa New Zealand's record of accepting diversity is spotless, not by a long shot, but our earlier attitude does make for a shameful contrast to where we are now as a nation.

Of course, narrow views of who qualifies for our acceptance have been around for a very long time; for example, colonial notions of indigenous peoples as primitive, uncivilised and dangerous; paranoid fascist notions of the Jew as deviant, conniving and corrupting; and more recent notions of asylum seekers as opportunists and queue jumpers who steal jobs from 'honest, hard-working Kiwis', or as terrorists in disguise. These are common divisive tactics used against those who are not on our 'team'.

Of course, all this is also occurring in the global present, at a time when the US, the UK and Europe have engaged in actions that have amplified the discourse of difference as unwelcome and dangerous to the harmonious balance of our societies. Obvious recent examples include the Trump administration's Islamophobia, neo-Nazism, sexism, transphobia and homophobia; the Islamophobia and racism of Geert Wilders' Freedom Party in the Netherlands, and Marion Le Pen's National Front in France. Fear-mongering in the mass media may very well provide a context in which these acts and the claims described above are considered legitimate and accurate.

These difficulties are not only limited to aversive reactions but also apply, ironically, to many seemingly welcoming and conciliatory actions. Whether we position ourselves as intolerant of migrants, as promoting total assimilation, or as needing to be good and caring hosts, those seeking a home in Aotearoa New Zealand are still left in a precarious position. Acceptance is highly conditional and fleeting. Under these circumstances, migrants are left feeling as if they have not quite fully arrived on our shores. Also, one never does quite leave one's country of origin; it remains deep in our bones, in our hearts, regardless of borders. The challenge then is twofold: first, to understand what

motivates the discriminatory views described above, and to try and make sense of the tensions that drive them; and second, to create a better understanding of the dynamics and histories of the diverse peoples who arrive on these shores, and how these become part of who we are as a nation.

The chapters that comprise this section tell stories of arriving from elsewhere as the 'other', of being 'othered' in various ways, and the struggle of holding on to one's cultural and historical distinctiveness while searching for belonging in Aotearoa New Zealand. They all ask and answer the question: who is a 'New Zealander'? This section addresses the precarity experienced by diverse groups of people — Pasifika, migrants and refugees. Paul Spoonley's chapter opens the section by providing a history of migrants arriving on our shores, and the precarity of their acceptance or rejection in our country. The search for acceptance and inclusion is brought to life for those who live between two worlds in Byron Seiuli's chapter telling the story of Tauivi, an afakasi (Samoan and palagi, mixed heritage) man grieving the loss of his father. The tensions that arise when attempting to weave together two worlds compel us to extend our understandings of precarity as solely located within a market economy.

Bridgette Masters-Awatere and Jessica Gosche then share the story of Teuila, confronting the translation of Pasifika cultural and economic systems within a Western culture and economy. Specifically, they implore us to understand the horror of domestic violence and the dynamics that normalise violence and sustain a culture of silence. Ultimately, Teuila has to reclaim the cultural notion of fa'asamoa (Samoan ways of being) from its local colonisation, so that she can assert the right for her children and herself to live with dignity and in safety. This is followed by Seraphine Williams and Shiloh Groot who share the experiences of four young Samoan transwomen as they discuss their experiences of precarity through gender discrimination in the workplace, ranging from harassment, humiliation and denial of access to their basic human needs to unfair dismissal.

These voices from the Pacific are followed by that of Abann Yor, from the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC), in conversation with Sarah Hahn as he provides a telling of his journey from refugee

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to New Zealand citizen. This is also about members of the precariat asserting their right to be heard in matters that concern them. Abann's narrative also confronts us with the losses, sorrows and ironies that confront those from refugee backgrounds who seek settlement and acknowledgement in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In the final chapter, Rand Hazou discusses the importance of cultural engagement and expression in establishing a home in a new place. Belonging here and now is not about erasing the past or eradicating the cultural traces that constitute who we are. Hazou uses examples of theatre productions that provide both a sense of community and offer positive counter-narratives to cultural precarity. Amid uncertainty and loss, these performances provide numerous benefits to both the performers and the audience. This chapter, like all the others in this section, compels us as citizens to recognise each other's universal experience and move forward in solidarity to create a more humane society.

3:13

CAN I HAVE A DECENT JOB? THE LABOUR MARKET EXPERIENCES OF NON-EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS

PAUL SPOONLEY

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The signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840 laid the foundation for extensive and more structured immigrant flows to New Zealand. As the colonial power, the United Kingdom gained the 'right' to settle New Zealand. Consequently, immigrant flows were almost exclusively from the UK and Ireland during this period of settler history. This situation only began to change in the 1960s with the arrival of migrants from the Pacific to provide labour for low-paid manual work. These immigrants from the Pacific and their descendants have struggled as de-industrialisation closed the firms and industries that they had sought work in. After changes to immigration policy in 1986–87, the countries of origin and ethnic diversity of immigrants changed dramatically as New Zealand internationalised in new ways.

The immigrants who arrived in the 1970s and 1980s came at a point when the nature of employment had been altered, with the result that many more jobs were casualised and made precarious by political and policy decisions. As a result of both the process of immigration (and the disruption that inevitably occurs as job seekers shift countries) and the nature of the current labour market, there are some immigrants who struggle to gain employment or who occupy positions that are far from secure.

LABOUR MARKET INSECURITY: THE EXPERIENCES OF PASIFIKA IMMIGRANTS

About 98 per cent of those who immigrated to New Zealand from the

signing of the Treaty of Waitangi until the 1960s were from the UK and Ireland. These settlers were part of a plan to populate one of the UK's most farthest-flung colonies as part of a nation-building project that had a strong focus on racial purity.[1] This emphasis on racial purity was underscored by the more than thirty pieces of legislation that were enacted from the 1880s through to the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act in 1920. The legislation sought to make it difficult for certain groups (then defined as 'races'), notably Asians, to enter New Zealand, or to gain rights as settlers or citizens once they were here.

The post-World War II economy of New Zealand was predicated on reducing the reliance on primary production by expanding the urban industrial sectors of the economy. By the late 1950s, there were insufficient local workers or immigrants from traditional source countries to fill the required positions in the expanding industrial and manufacturing sectors and so new labour sources were required. Employers in Auckland and Wellington, in particular, sought immigrants from the Pacific as a new and close-by labour source.

Recruiting agents were paid on a bonus system to recruit desperately needed workers, and two migrant groups began to arrive. The first were already New Zealand citizens since they came from the New Zealand protectorates of the Cook Islands, Tokelau and Niue. The New Zealand government's position at the time was to see little future for these groups in their island states, and so it had developed programmes to relocate many of them to New Zealand. The second group of Pacific migrants came from Samoa, Tonga and Fiji, and they often came as illegal labour in the sense that they did not have New Zealand citizenship and they tended to overstay their visas. Both employers and the government overlooked this, however, at least initially, because their labour was vital.

An economic downturn in the 1970s, which was sparked by the oil crises, meant that for the first time in postwar New Zealand unemployment increased. This situation changed the government's approach, as well as public opinion about the new residents from the Pacific. Public unease over the presence of the cultural or racial 'other' intensified, especially given their concentration in lower socio-economic areas such as Ponsonby, Otara and Porirua. The

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1973–75 Labour Government began what was to become known as the 'overstayers campaign' and Pasifika immigrants were demonised as a threat to New Zealand and 'New Zealanders'. Ironically, many of the migrants from the Pacific were New Zealand citizens, a fact that was not always understood in the public debates or by the authorities charged with identifying overstayers.

The Muldoon-led government that held office from 1975 to 1984 fought hard to retain the industrial sector that had been built up in the decades after World War II, by imposing restrictions on labour costs (wage freezes), by imposing tariffs on imported goods that competed with local manufacturers, and by providing subsidies. Ironically, a subsequent Labour Government dismantled these protectionist policies and introduced radical neoliberal reforms that changed the role of government. The impact on a range of industries and firms was dramatic. The removal of tariffs and subsidies meant firms began to close or downsize, while in some cases entire industries were significantly impacted. One example was the freezing works, the disassembly plants associated with the killing and processing of lamb and beef, which employed significant numbers of Māori and Pasifika. From a pre-1984 high of 32,000, the number of employees rapidly dropped to a third of this size. In Hawke's Bay, for example, Tomoana and Whakatu, the latter being the largest freezing works in the country, both closed in the late 1980s.

The political and economic changes of the 1980s and 1990s had significant impacts on Pasifika people given their concentration in manual and semi-skilled employment. Their labour market participation rates declined, while for those in paid work their employment became more precarious. By 1989, the number of New Zealand-born people of Pasifika descent exceeded those who had migrated to New Zealand. However, both immigrants and their children were struggling to gain adequate work or income. Pasifika people were finding it harder to compete in a labour market where there were fewer entry-level jobs and a greater reliance on tertiary qualifications.

Pasifika peoples, as the first significant wave of non-European immigrants to arrive in New Zealand in the twentieth century, initially operated as a classic reserve army of labour.[2] These workers

from the Pacific were allowed entry in order to meet the very specific demand for labour in postwar manufacturing, typically in the main centres and some regional towns such as Kawerau or Bluff. As large-scale manufacturing either declined or as labour was replaced by new technology, Pasifika were displaced. Many took on new roles, as casualised and low-paid labour in the growing service sector (a role that Pasifika females had some prior experience of, especially in areas such as hospitals). A few of the immigrant generation or their New Zealand-born children experienced upward mobility — including in the increasingly professionalised sports. But for the majority of Pasifika people, the 1980s was to be the decade of their entrenchment in the low-paid and precarious sector of the labour market. The late 1980s also saw a shift in immigration policy that led to a new wave of immigrants from Asia.

NEW IMMIGRANTS, NEW CHALLENGES

In 1986–87, the reforming Labour Government changed the long-standing immigration policy that prioritised 'preferred source countries' and instead the country adopted the points system of Canada and Australia.[3] In essence, the aim was to allocate points to those characteristics that were deemed economically important to New Zealand, especially driven by the needs of employers and sectors. In the points system, the source country was no longer considered important. Instead, the key determinants were selecting migrants based on clearly defined economic criteria in terms of what they would add to the economy and labour market.

In the initial phase during the 1990s, a second wave of non-European arrivals (the first being from the Pacific) came from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea. These migrants encountered a moral panic that racialised and problematised Asian immigrants; for example, in 1993 there was a series of 'Inv-Asian' articles in Auckland community newspapers.[4] These sentiments reached a peak during the 1996 general election, with support rising for the anti-immigrant New Zealand First political party. The numbers from these three Asian countries declined in the late 1990s, partly because of the anti-Asian sentiments expressed and partly because of an economic downturn in Asia.

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A Labour-led government was elected in 1999, and the new Minister of Immigration, Lianne Dalziel, made a number of changes to improve the selection of immigrants and the matching between immigrant labour supply and local employer demand. These changes heralded a new age of immigration for New Zealand, led by migrants coming from China, India and the Philippines. The numbers increased, and then flattened during the Global Financial Crises of 2008–12, but then began to rise again until the numbers reached historic highs in the 2014–16 period. During this period of migration, between 120,000 and 130,000 permanent and long-term arrivals came to New Zealand. However, this figure also included returning New Zealand citizens and international students who might not stay more than the period of their study. Nonetheless, a net gain of 70,000-plus per annum exceeded the long-run average net gain of 12,000 per annum. On top of these historically high immigration numbers, there were also a large number of temporary workers.

By 2016, Auckland was named the fourth most diverse city in the world and more than a quarter of all New Zealanders had been born overseas. The country and its main city were described as super-diverse. Arrivals were now more diverse than ever before in New Zealand's history, and the main arrival groups were nearly all from Asia, contrary to a colonial history that sought to exclude such 'racialised' groups.

The labour market positions of immigrants, especially for those from Asia, indicate that they face significant challenges to achieving successful outcomes. Some of this is understandable. When an immigrant shifts from one society and economy to another, they are going to be challenged because they will be limited knowledge of local labour market conditions and requirements and limited, if any, networks that will help them identify and gain employment. It is surprising how significant these personal and familial networks remain as a source for gaining access to work.

Most immigrants seek economic and social participation in society. Nonetheless, relatively high numbers of immigrants to New Zealand are either unemployed or remain outside the labour force. Labour force non-participation rates for people from North-East Asia are more than 50 per cent, followed by South-East Asia (a third) and then those

from the Pacific (about 30 per cent). In addition, unemployment rates (those out of work but seeking employment) for Asians are double that for New Zealand Europeans/Pākehā, although unemployment rates for Māori and Pasifika are higher still (15 per cent and 14 per cent respectively, compared to 9 per cent for Asians).

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) reports that there are other dimensions to labour market engagement and outcomes. For example, median incomes are lower for both Asian and Pasifika immigrants compared to New Zealand-born, and self-employment rates are considerably higher, at least for Asians, at more than 20 per cent compared to 12 per cent for New Zealand as a whole. The latter suggests that self-employment becomes an alternative for some immigrants when barriers to employment are encountered.

Poor income and labour market outcomes can be accounted for by the lack of local networks and labour market knowledge, compounded in some instances by English language ability. But there is also evidence that these immigrants face barriers from employers, notably various forms and levels of discrimination. Many migrants find that their qualifications are not recognised in the New Zealand labour market, which might be a result of the discounting of those qualifications gained in an Asian source country by employers. There is evidence of surname and accent discrimination towards Asian job-seekers by both employers and employment agencies (sometimes on instructions from their clients). And there is evidence of skill under-utilisation and pay inequity as a result of employer decisions.

Much of the evidence for these outcomes is found in statistical data and in reports from the immigrant job-seekers themselves. It appears that Asian job-seekers are not highly valued by New Zealand employers, except for certain sectors such as retail and hospitality. Once in employment, the immigrants are not given appropriate jobs or rates of pay compared to similarly qualified locally born Pākehā.

Immigrants from Asia and the Pacific struggle to gain satisfactory work that aligns with their prior qualifications and experience especially in their first decade after arrival. Moreover, there are clear gaps in terms of pay between locals and immigrants, there are higher levels of labour market disengagement and unemployment, and a greater level

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of underemployment. The result is often casualised work in low-paid sectors. Some of these differences reduce or disappear over a period of 10 to 12 years and the next generation, one that is born and raised in New Zealand, might not experience these barriers or outcomes to the same extent. However, this assumption has been challenged by activist groups such as Dragonz who claim that a 'bamboo ceiling' operates, even for the New Zealand-born Asian.

As Pasifika immigrants experienced four to five decades earlier, immigrants from Asia serve as a reserve army — this time in a labour market that has many more non-standard jobs (casual and contract, part-time, portfolio and third-party arrangements) and has much higher levels of precariousness because employment protection is limited and pay is relatively low in New Zealand. In the current context of deregulated, casualised and fragmented labour markets, immigrants are at a considerable disadvantage since they typically do not have the knowledge or connections that allow them to compensate for poor labour market outcomes, and they do not have strong unions to advocate on their behalf (with some exceptions).

Yet, at the same time, Asian and Pasifika immigrants have become critical as a vital source of low-cost labour for businesses, including dairy-farm workers in Southland or waitresses along Auckland's Dominion Road. And because of their prior educational qualifications and employment experience, combined with the capital that they bring with them, not all experience these difficulties. However, even compared with earlier non-European immigrants such as Pasifika, the numbers who experience poor labour market outcomes and a degree of precariousness are high. There is evidence of labour market disengagement or poor engagement, downward occupational mobility and often poor returns on labour compared to the pay received by locally born New Zealanders. One of the most significant barriers continues to be the attitudes of employers.

CONCLUSION

Both waves of non-European immigrants have experienced challenges in seeking employment in New Zealand. However, two very different groups, one from the Pacific, the other from Asia, have

arrived into quite different economies and labour markets. As New Zealand has moved into a neoliberal world, labour supply has been internationalised and labour protection provisions have been reduced. Consequently, immigrants have arrived into a much more casualised and individualised labour market. In the case of Pasifika, they came to meet the demand for semi-skilled and unskilled work in the urban manufacturing sector, only for that sector to contract as neoliberalism and de-industrialisation had an impact. After 1987, and especially after 2000, very high Asian immigrant inflows have altered the ethnic composition of the workforce. Many of these new arrivals, especially if they are visible and culturally different, have experienced significant barriers to gaining appropriate (according to their qualifications and experience) or well-paid work. They are now an important part of a casualised and low-paid workforce in New Zealand.

What then are the implications of this for immigrants (and their descent communities) and ethnic minorities, or for New Zealand society? Immigrant experiences tend to be sharply bifurcated between those who settle and integrate economically and those described here who are either marginalised or who do not experience positive labour market outcomes. The latter group are a major concern as they begin to exhibit all the signs of this marginalisation: low self-esteem, poor physical and mental health, inadequate income and access to health, housing or education. Many of the latter are early stage for Asian immigrants but are well-documented for Pasifika communities. The coincidence of economic marginalisation and minority ethnic group membership presents a major policy and political challenge for Aotearoa New Zealand in the twenty-first century.

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1 James Belich, *Making Peoples: A History of the New Zealanders from Polynesian Settlement to the End of Nineteenth Century* (Auckland: Penguin, 1996).

2 Robert Miles, *Racism* (London: Routledge, 1986).

3 Paul Spoonley and Richard Bedford, *Welcome to Our World? Immigration and the Reshaping of New Zealand* (Auckland: Dunmore Press, 2012).

4 These three articles characterised the arrival of the new migrants as part of an 'Inv-Asian' that was creating a range of problems.

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CROSSROADS: EXPERIENCING SAMOAN BEREAVEMENT PARADIGMS AS AN AFAKASI SAMOAN

BYRON MALAELA SOTIATA SEIULI

I am — a Samoan, but not a Samoan . . .
I am — a New Zealander, but not a New Zealander . . .
To New Zealanders, I am a 'bloody coconut' at worst,
And . . . a 'Pacific Islander' at best[1]

This chapter provides a case presentation that forms part of a larger doctoral study into the way death and mourning are experienced by Samoan people living in New Zealand, particularly by men.[2] It extends Guy Standing's concept of the precariat[3] beyond labour exploitation of Pasifika migrants to include social marginalisation, cultural performativity, grief and agentic resilience in search of ways to realise the ever elusive migrant dream.

The greater impact of long-term migration from developing nations to industrialised countries tends to produce a 'migration-oriented' society and a goal-oriented type of migration/remittance syndrome with those communities remaining in the homeland.[4] This was, and still is to a large extent, the situation for many Samoan migrants who came to New Zealand for work and economic advancement.[5] Not surprisingly, when opportunities opened up for manual labour in New Zealand and Australia, many more vacated their homeland in search of the 'better life'.[6]

On the whole, migrants from Samoa (previously known as Western Samoa) travelled to New Zealand or Australia, while those living in

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American Samoa headed for Hawaii or mainland America. Although these early migrants had little capital to start with, their determination to work hard and their efforts to maintain cultural connections led to the establishment of community initiatives and Samoan churches relatively quickly in New Zealand.[7] Joan Ablon, who carried out research on Samoans in West Coast America in the 1960s, reported that 'Samoans adjusted with relative ease and poise into an environment that could hardly be more different to that of their native islands'.[8]

From 1964 the government of New Zealand issued three-month visas for Samoan migrants, and then in 1967 proceeded to set annual quotas for all immigrants entering New Zealand.[9] Regulation of immigration laws remained flexible as long as the need for cheap labour remained a priority. As the New Zealand economy declined after 1973, so did the flexibility that allowed immigrants to remain beyond their allocated visas.

Many Samoans were left embarrassed when some politicians unjustly blamed Pasifika people for straining social services when in fact statistical records on migration reveal that the greatest influxes of temporary migrants were from the UK and Australia, not from the Pacific, as suggested by politicians and media.[10] This period reflects Standing's argument that the precariat group — in this case Samoan and other Pasifika immigrants — became victims of labour market flexibility as exercised within New Zealand at the time, masking a covert agenda of risk transferral and insecurity to such workers and their families.[11] Moreover, the accusations against them shaped a negative stereotype of all Pasifika people living in New Zealand, and Samoan and Tongan people in particular became victims of New Zealand's failing economy, which was not of their making.[12]

One major consequence of the political and racial allegations against Pasifika people was the series of police raids on the homes of alleged overstayers, beginning in 1974.[13] These took place very early in the day, and were widely criticised as 'dawn raids'.[14] It was supposed by the authorities that guilty parties were likely to be asleep and would be caught unaware in homes, garages or under the houses of relatives. Worse, the New Zealand public was encouraged to report to the immigration department or the police neighbours who seemed to

have an excess number of Pacific Island people living in their homes. Those discovered without the proper documentation were deported back to the islands on the next available flight. To their shame, they were escorted to the airport in handcuffs by a police officer, and on to the plane. For many Pasifika migrants, the trauma and embarrassment associated with the dawn raids remain bitter memories.

Tauivi's (not his real name) father was among some of the first migrants from Samoa to New Zealand in the early 1940s, armed with the family's expectation to succeed. Personal ambition was set aside for the greater good of the collective. His primary task was to work and remit the bulk of his earnings to help build a fale-palagi (European-styled house) for his parents in Samoa. He initially stayed with a family member in Auckland before moving to the South Island in search of more permanent work. This came in the form of shiftwork in a timber mill. It was while living and working in the South Island that Tauivi's father met and then married his wife, a palagi of Scottish/English descent.

The terrible working conditions in the mill did not deter Tauivi's father from taking on additional shifts or seeking extra work elsewhere to earn more money to send to Samoa. The unrelenting burden to remit so much of his earnings left very little money for his young family's weekly necessities. Tauivi captures his father's struggle in a song he wrote, titled 'Crossroads'.[15] He writes:

> I am living in a stranger's land
> Trying to listen, trying to understand
> What it was that brought us to this place?
> I'm on my hand and knees but I don't feel like a saint

Achieving success in the land of milk and honey, as it was generally perceived, became more of a burden than a dream, one that drove many migrants to their knees as they unsuccessfully tried to fit in while contending with weighty family obligations in Samoa. The regularity of these obligatory contributions is often burdensome, particularly for those who are also responsible for their own families, like Tauivi's father. In addition, his long working hours, followed by excursions

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to the local pub, often meant Mum and the boys were left to fend for themselves. The demands for financial and material support from Samoa, in addition to his own relationship challenges, led to the eventual dissolution of his marriage.

After the separation Tauivi and his two brothers lived with their mother, who raised them as predominantly palagi. Tauivi recalls this part of his childhood as a time of watching a lot of Bruce Lee movies and looking up to bikies as role models when his older brother joined their gang. Contact with their father, or other Samoan relatives, became sparse and distant. And while he maintained a close connection with his younger brother, this was not the same with the older brother. His mother eventually moved to Australia, although he maintains regular contact with her.

In the early years, Tauivi's relationship with his father was filled with an array of mixed emotions and many unanswered questions. But what helped him to unravel and process their father–son relationship came unexpectedly when he was asked by the hospital to care for and nurse his father after a debilitating stroke. Tauivi was suddenly forced to become the primary financial and physical support for his father.

Although it was emotionally and physically draining, Tauivi used this opportunity to develop their relationship for the better. He discovered that his father was harbouring a lot of emotional turmoil that involved his life as a denizen of New Zealand.[16] That is, his father was granted some, but not all, of the discretionary rights allotted to natural citizens or indigenous people of New Zealand. He was treated harshly as a migrant not because of his work ethic, but because of his skin colour and perceived lack of mastery of the English language. Quite simply, he did not look like, or sound like, other New Zealanders.[17]

The dawn raids that began in the mid 1970s were the apogee of targeted racial and political treatment of many Pasifika migrants.[18] Consequently, the desire to acculturate and be accepted as a New Zealander led many like Tauivi's father to voluntarily enlist with the New Zealand Army as a way of demonstrating their commitment to serve and protect New Zealand citizens. Despite their pledge of allegiance, many were treated as Pacific Islanders at best and 'bloody coconuts' at worst, leaving them to continually struggle for acceptance

as full members of New Zealand society.[19]

Tauivi attempted to reach out to his father by sharing his own struggles as an afakasi Samoan, particularly those relating to his precarious childhood. His father reciprocated by telling his own stories of growing up tough in Samoa, which led Tauivi to conclude that his father was still carrying a lot of brokenness from his migrant experience. He captured this development in their father–son relationship in a song he titled 'Lash'.[20]

> I'm sitting in the front row watching all the things in my head
> Showing me all the things I've done, and all the things I've said
> Some I remember, some I'd rather forget
> I do not know how much time I've got, but I do not want any regrets
> Where are all the kings' horses and all the kings' men? The part of him is who I am
> I was a child; you were a heavy man, part of you is who I am.

'Some [things] I'd rather forget' is a challenging part of the grieving process for Tauivi regarding his father because it is one littered with trauma and painful memories. Nevertheless, his time during the final days of his father's life was one of soul searching and of looking for a way forward.

Tauivi and his extended family were advised that further medical intervention would not prevent his father's imminent death. He only had a period of six to eight weeks to live. Tauivi enacted the carer role, which involved making decisions on administering regular doses of morphine to relieve his pain, when his father was moved out of the hospital to a nearby accommodation. However, his father's condition then deteriorated dramatically, which led to his transferral back to hospital where he remained until he passed away. The final period at the hospital allowed Tauivi to spend valuable time alone with his father; time that slowly drew them closer. For a brief period, they were able to reconnect in a deeper way than at any other time. These were to become the most intimate and treasured memories for Tauivi in their father–son relationship. Despite their difficult relations, what really mattered to

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Tauivi was that his father knew that his son loved him to the end.

The prognosis of his father's impending death meant Tauivi and his relatives had to negotiate the most appropriate way to farewell him. The family descended on the hospital room where they took turns to massage their dying relative while offering each other support. Tauivi's last words to his father were: 'God will give you strength.' These moments of intimacy provided a spiritual connection that also helped Tauivi with his own healing. Significantly, his faith in God increased his love for a man he once despised and feared. Since then, God has remained a source of comfort during his journey with grief.

Traditional Samoan bereavement customs dictate that it is the duty of the surviving āiga (family) members to farewell and bury their deceased relative with cultural performance that endorses family honour and public status. In some instances, a ritualised mavaega (final wishes) decreed by a deceased or dying person may carry exceptional authority, particularly with the appointment of a new successor as inheritor of a soon to be vacant chiefly title.[21] More recently, especially in places like New Zealand, the implementation of a final will or testament allows the departing person a legalised process to ensure that their final wishes are carried out by their relatives.[22] However, such practices are rare and often leave the surviving relatives in contention, which was the case with Tauivi's father's passing.

As a way of seizing control from his surviving Samoan relatives, Tauivi's father enacted a will that specifically outlined the processes for his funeral service and burial arrangements. That is, they were to be conducted in a 'no-fuss, keep it simple, palagi-style' farewell. But some Samoans regard palagi-style funeral arrangements with uncertainty; they are highly contentious, particularly among those who maintain a strong preference for traditional fa'asamoa (Samoan culture) funeral patterns. In essence, opting for Western alternatives declares a departure from Samoan values. But Tauivi regarded his father's decision as relieving him and his siblings of the responsibilities that are often demanded by fa'asamoa funeral customs. Significantly, his father had saved from his pension to pay for all the associated funeral expenses. However, his efforts to discharge the family of any financial obligations associated with his passing did not result in family harmony.

The pressure to either conform to traditional ways or adopt modern alternatives can ultimately lead families to the brink of break-ups, long-term feuds, or even physical altercations. Therefore, effecting the will was a major struggle that had to be negotiated carefully during the mourning period. In this situation, the provisions outlined by the will were challenged by Tauivi's Samoan relatives. In fact, the directives were contested and refuted by those members of the family who felt that Samoan traditions were being undermined by Western influences. Even at the funeral service, there was a continued rift concerning the proper processes that some family members felt were being neglected. In such settings, allowing a will to dictate family action carries with it the risk of the family being perceived to be abandoning ancestral and cultural ties in preference for palagi ways.

In locations outside Samoa, huge tensions continue to exist for many as they try to negotiate these converging and conflictual paradigms. Death customs, together with their various interpretations, are significant markers to end-of-life memorialisation practices for Samoan people generally. If families simply accept palagi-led directives and do not demonstrate their rejection of such instructions, or do not advocate a return to traditional patterns, they may be perceived as uncaring towards their dead relative. Even worse is to be accused of devaluing their Samoan heritage and being labelled as fia-palagi (being like a European), a deprecatory term that is often used to criticise or condemn a person for their non-Samoan behaviour.[23]

To Samoan families, this label is a threat to their dignity and to family pride because to 'be palagi means that you really sold your soul, [and] you would forget your Samoan-ness'.[24] To publicly voice displeasure while advocating for traditional customs visibly demonstrates genuine love and respect for some Samoans. In accord with these beliefs, Tauivi's extended family rallied in their support of matai, elders and siblings to apprehend the deceased person's body so that he could be buried in a location closer to the Samoan relatives. Further, they demanded the right to assume personal responsibility to organise the necessary resources that would reflect Samoan traditional patterns of farewell.

Funerals can place people of mixed ethnicity like Tauivi in

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marginalised positions; they are either recognised or excluded as authentic Samoans. They may be perceived as not possessing sufficient 'cultural capital or competence to claim or to be recognised as Samoan'.[25] Melani Anae stresses that because New Zealand-born Samoans generally do not speak the Samoan language fluently or participate fully in general Samoan activities and practices, and predominantly live their existence in palagi-oriented society, they are 'bereft of the "real" fa'asamoa and a "real" Samoan identity'.[26] This means that although Tauivi and his siblings took an essential part in carrying out their father's final wishes, the senior members of the wider family network take precedence in all decision-making areas, particularly when fa'asamoa rituals are to be performed. In the wider context of decision-making, the concerns and contributions of the New Zealand-born are seldom, if ever, considered equal or substantial enough to contribute to any major outcome.

Whispers surfaced that some family members were insulted by Tauivi's insistence on proceeding with his father's wishes, to the exclusion of any fa'asamoa prerogatives. Importantly, his father's status as a pioneering member of the local Samoan community and the eldest son in the family fuelled expectations for a traditional farewell. Tauivi's firmness was met with a tense detachment by his father's family, not just through the funeral period but for many years after the burial. Notwithstanding such expectations and demands, Tauivi was unwilling to conform in order to appease them. His father's mavaega (final wishes) and his willingness to live with a free conscience were far more important than any condemnation by his extended family. Tauivi's decision to remain resolute despite the pressure to relent gave him peace of mind that he had made the right decision. Interestingly, Tauivi attributes his single-mindedness to being influenced by his father in the last part of his life.

The tense stand-off resulted in a rift between the family networks. In the end, the extended family reluctantly accepted the authority of the will to dictate the formalities of the funeral and burial. However, acknowledgement does not necessarily equate with acceptance for many Samoans, as was the case with Tauivi's relatives. In this difficult situation Tauivi chose to honour his father's wishes, and he says of

his ultimate decision: 'You must choose. I chose to honour [Dad]. The living get to live; the dead do not get that choice'.[27]

On the day, a simple palagi-style funeral service was organised where a few designated family members performed parts of the funeral service. The conclusion of the service was followed by a simple meal together before the extended family dispersed, leaving Tauivi and his brothers to enact the final part of the farewell — their father's cremation. The most common form of body disposal in Samoan culture is a burial. Christian Samoan belief opposes cremation on the basis of its impacts for eternal resurrection, a belief that many Samoans support.[28] Opting for cremation may appear to outsiders that Samoan funeral traditions, which are predominantly Christian in practice, are negotiable. Nevertheless, whether for religious reasons or otherwise, the pathways provided by Western legal authority allow long-held traditions and beliefs to be challenged, or superseded.

Tauivi was appointed by his brothers to safeguard their father's ashes, a task he has treasured. He intends to return the ashes to Samoa in the near future to be interred in the family cemetery with those of his ancestors. Laying his father's ashes to rest in his homeland of Samoa, and with his parents, will provide some closure for Tauivi and his brothers.

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2 Byron Seiuli, 'Ua Tafea le Tau'ofe: Samoan Cultural Rituals Through Death and Bereavement Experiences' (Doctoral thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton, 2015).

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PASIFIKA WOMEN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
THE CASE OF TEUILA[1]

BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE
AND JESSICA GOSCHE

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Domestic violence is a pervasive social issue in New Zealand, with the majority of victims being women and children. In 2008, the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey found that one in five Pasifika had experienced violence at the hands of their partner in the previous year.[2] Six years later the results of the same survey reported a 19 per cent decrease of intimate partner violence among Pasifika. Despite this reduction, domestic violence is still prevalent in Pasifika communities. Women in general are known to have low rates of accessing the services available to assist them in navigating themselves and their children to safety, and Pasifika women, with even fewer social and economic resources than other women, are thus left in an even more precarious position. The research presented in this chapter focuses on identifying the barriers and supports women encounter when they attempt to access external agency support to gain protection from their abusers in order to deal with the impacts of abuse.

PASIFIKA MIGRATION TO NEW ZEALAND

Although the Pasifika population in New Zealand has grown steadily,[3] and the majority of Pasifika youth are also New Zealand born,[4] it is important to understand the migration history of Pacific peoples to appreciate the current context.[5] Aotearoa New Zealand was viewed as the land of milk and honey because of better employment and education opportunities. The majority of migration from the Pacific to

this country occurred in the 1950s and 1960s as a tap-on/tap-off source of low-paid, semi-skilled and unskilled labour for secondary industries (for example, factories, cleaning, laundries, and hospital kitchens). New Zealand immigration regulations were adapted according to the economic climate, ensuring a low-wage economy was maintained. During growth periods, Pasifika peoples experienced increased economic security and were able to create their own communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the mid 1970s and 1980s, however, New Zealand's economy declined. Deregulation of the manufacturing sector and privatisation and casualisation of the labour sectors mentioned above meant that many Pasifika peoples were retrenched, which then led to high rates of unemployment.

Limited to insecure employment, benefit reforms and high rates of unemployment, Pasifika peoples became trapped in a low socio-economic status, and subsequently pepper-potted into areas of substandard housing/living environments. To this day, many continue to live in overcrowded houses as part of multiple family groups, which in turn contributes to the prevalence of poor physical and relational health. Pasifika peoples have disproportionately high rates of social problems in Aotearoa New Zealand — including domestic violence. Because of their migration history there has been significant disruption to traditional practices like fa'asamoa — the core protocol and values of Samoan culture — which include courtesy, respect, honour, alofa and being supportive of family (see also the glossary at the end of the chapter for an explanation of Samoan terms and concepts).

Fa'asamoa feagaiga (covenants between men, women and God) value interdependence and familial relationships as key coping mechanisms when faced with daily life and stressful situations. Relationally, feagaiga (the brother–sister covenant) governs the appropriate relationships between men and women.[6] Within this covenant, a mutually respectful relationship is the norm, where women are deemed sacred and men are to be their protectors.

Pasifika peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand have attempted to recreate fa'asamoa cultural systems via the church community to preserve identity and maintain support networks. However, this has been difficult due to the social and political environment in this country.

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Unfortunately for Pasifika women, the church system in Aotearoa New Zealand cannot offer the same support and protection as the village system in the Islands. Eurocentric expectations of women (containing attitudes of women as chattels) disrupted the fa'asamoa system. Messages of love were delivered through the church, but 'love' was interpreted through palagi values that embedded a power structure that deemed women to be subservient and demure, and the sanctity of marriage to be privileged over the safety of women and children. When the church message is combined with working multiple jobs to survive; a higher cost of living; isolation from family as a result of relocation, and an expectation to send money to the Islands, it is no wonder domestic violence has become problematic for Pasifika families who struggle within the dominant cultural systems in this country.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG PASIFIKA IN THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

Pasifika social, relational and family structures have been impacted by migration to Aotearoa New Zealand. Adapting to changes in physical and social environments has created multiple cultural shifts. Associated stress, anger and frustration in navigating cultural and economic obligations has been identified as a contributor to domestic violence.[7] An example of such cultural shifts is intracultural disagreement about how to manage the expectations to contribute to cultural commitments such as fa'alavelave (Samoan ceremonial exchange practices at special events), and sending remittances to Island-based family while providing for one's own family in New Zealand.[8] This issue is examined here through an exploration of Teuila's case. Within her example we can see a perceived subservience of women, which is not the fa'asamoa way.

The belief that we should not interfere or speak out still prevails. Women fear being blamed by friends, family and service providers for the abuse perpetrated against them. Primarily, when women decide to navigate their way to safety, they fear that if they seek help from service agencies (such as the police, the courts or other government-funded organisations) their children will be taken from them. Sela, a lawyer, comments, 'CYF use that as a weapon all the time. If you go back to him we're not giving you your kids back. They're not supposed to do stuff

like that but they do.'

The safety of Pasifika women affected by domestic violence is somewhat more precarious than that of some other New Zealanders, due to the social and cultural factors at play. Perceptions of domestic violence and attitudes to violence against women is also problematic in Aotearoa New Zealand. Pasifika women are less likely to access help from services such as Women's Refuge because such actions conflict with faith-based beliefs in the sanctity of marriage, and gender constructs that support male dominance and women's subservience. Pasifika victims of domestic violence have been socialised to believe violence is a private matter not to be spoken of (to be 'swept under the rug') and a source of shame to the family. Shame is to be avoided by Pasifika families at all costs. Such values are further compounded by personal shame (felt by the victims) for allowing themselves to be treated in such a way as to have brought shame upon their family. This is a no-win situation for the victims.

In situations where women have sought help, they report feeling blamed, stigmatised and retraumatised by the processes and systems involved in engaging agency support (as discussed in Chapter 6, 'Out of the Pan into the Fire'). The forced retelling of their experiences of domestic violence to multiple 'support' services revictimises women, particularly when a judgemental eye is cast from the hearing end of those experiences. Judgements reinforce the perception that people don't believe or support domestic violence victims. Predominantly, Pasifika women seek the support of family in the first instance. In some cases, family have been a great source of support for the women, but there are examples of family members colluding to protect the abuser. Teuila's narrative and experiences illustrate many of the issues faced by Pasifika women — the normalisation of violence (specifically violence against women and children), the culture of silence, and the stress of finances and intracultural differences in an intimate relationship.

THE CASE OF TEUILA

Teuila, a 30-year-old mother of three children with both Samoan and palagi genealogy, was born in Aotearoa New Zealand, raised until secondary school in the Pacific Islands, and returned to this country

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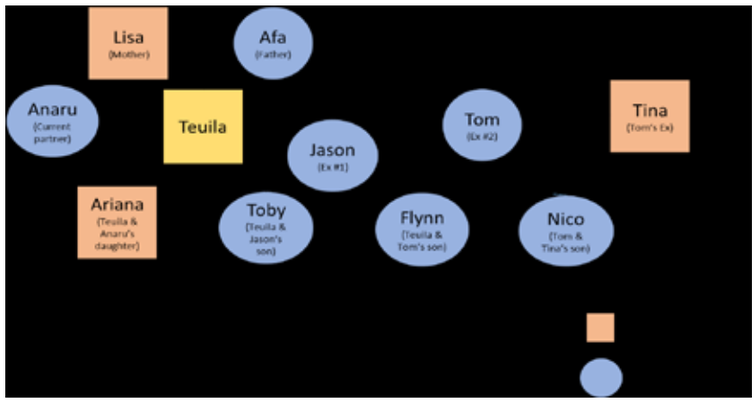
to finish her secondary education before undertaking tertiary study. Teuila experienced domestic violence in two relationships: first as a teenager, from her first boyfriend, Jason (father of Toby) and more recently from Tom (father of Flynn), now her ex-husband. Her current partner Anaru (father of Ariana) has shown Teuila a healthy relationship free from domestic violence.

Teuila's story is far more complex than can be covered in this chapter. For simplicity's sake only a few people are referred to here, but a visual reference to some of the familial/social relationships in her life are shown in the accompanying genogram.



Teuila first experienced domestic violence at age 14 during her first relationship, with Jason, who was several years her senior. Despite his reputation for being violent, Teuila did not believe that he would be violent towards her. Teuila and her mother had returned to New Zealand so that Teuila could finish high school and proceed to university. Jason subsequently moved to Aotearoa New Zealand to be with Teuila and once here he became abusive, hitting her so as to control what she said. Teuila grew up exposed to violence in social and institutional settings, so she rationalised Jason's violence as normal in relationships. Referring to different social gatherings, Teuila explained that 'it was normal for someone to get a hiding that night'. Intervention would only occur if people felt the physical violence crossed an unspoken threshold: 'So, there's this funny dynamic, that it's acceptable to beat up somebody

but then your family still intervene, because if it gets really hard-core and you're doing it in front of them, they'll still jump in and stop it.'

At school, teachers administered corporal punishment. Teuila was no exception, and she attributed such punishment to her having a 'big mouth'. From a young age she learnt that being hit was the consequence for speaking out. Humour was often used by teachers and children who would come to school with black eyes, and jokes were made about 'stepping out of line' at home. Teuila later compared the teachers' responses to violence in New Zealand with those in Samoa, and noted how vastly different the protocols are: 'In New Zealand if that happened, you know the teachers are on the phone to CYFS straight away. So when you hear things going on next door you know people are calling the police and stuff like that. But that's not part and parcel of what we did growing up.'

Acceptance of violence was insidious. Because Jason hit Teuila when she was alone, rather than in the presence of others, Teuila's mother was not aware of the abuse. The protective factor of witnesses had been removed, and Teuila interpreted Jason's treatment of her as normal and 'instinctively' knew to hide it from others. The pattern of abuse continued until Teuila learned she was pregnant with Toby. Her pregnancy, not the abuse, was the catalyst for the relationship ending. Jason left Aotearoa New Zealand and ceased all contact with Teuila and Toby.

Feeling abandoned and depressed, Teuila engaged the services of a counsellor — which turned out not to be a positive experience for her. She was not able to establish a relationship with one counsellor as she saw someone different at each appointment. Teuila described the service as 'hit and miss' and spent a lot of her sessions repeating her story to someone new. Lack of cultural competency was also an issue raised by Teuila:

> They gave me a Māori counsellor one time and I did not click with her at all. I was like 'just 'cos we're brown!' . . . We're a different type of brown. Totally different. In the end, I felt like I was sitting down listening to her story more than I was getting any opportunity to talk about my story. So, that didn't work

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either. I didn't find the person that clicked with me, so I didn't pursue it anymore.

Teuila's comments here highlight issues many victims encounter: systemic inequality and a lack of the cultural competence needed to adequately address the long-term impact of domestic violence. Here, the agency assumed that Teuila would receive the type of service she needed from a Māori counsellor. This type of cultural neglect was compounded through the failings of the agency, which made an assumption of her cultural needs from a position of ignorance.[9] Relationships are highly valued in fa'asamoa, and not to respect the sanctity of relationships leaves issues unresolved.[10] For Teuila, having little rapport with the counsellor left her feeling that her issues pertaining to domestic violence were unresolved. Lack of culturally competent service provision is a widespread problem across the helping professions and services. Teuila's case illustrates the providers' lack of understanding about distinct differences between Māori and Pasifika peoples. Teuila felt that if she had received effective counselling at this point it could have helped her to identify that domestic violence is not a normal feature of healthy relationships.

Seven years later, Teuila met Tom (an Island-born Samoan). Initially their relationship was not abusive. However, intracultural differences began to create tensions in their relationship. Although Teuila had not been raised in a fa'asamoa environment, she believed that she could adhere to fa'asamoa traditional gendered protocols, obligations, practices and ultimately financial commitments. Finances were a constant source of tension in Teuila and Tom's relationship. Tom regularly sent large monetary remittances to his family in Samoa. Teuila resented how much he spent on remittances and fa'alavelave as it placed a strain on already limited family resources. She felt the money sent to Samoa was equivalent to it being 'wasted on playing bingo', because they were struggling to provide for themselves.

When Teuila graduated and started her career, Tom's family began demanding that more money be sent back to Samoa, assuming incorrectly that there was more money that could be sent home. A common misconception Island-based families have is that those based

in Aotearoa New Zealand must have an abundance of money because of higher income levels. What is not well understood is the pressure of managing high living costs in Aotearoa New Zealand without access to communal village resources. Such demands lead families based in this country to seek multiple jobs and to take out high-interest loans from 'loan sharks'. Over-committing financially to maintain cultural obligations guided by the highly valued principle of reciprocity has led to families defaulting on loans, with serious impacts on their overall wellbeing, and ultimately even becoming homeless. While Teuila had a good job and Tom worked two jobs, they still did not earn enough to meet their cultural and day-to-day financial commitments. The stress of juggling their finances was the source of many arguments and ultimately Tom assaulting Teuila.

Teuila was desperate to keep the abuse private for multiple reasons. She did not want her private issues to be in the public domain, as she did not want them to impact negatively on her career. Ironically, the first time Tom was physically violent to Teuila it was he who called the police — he did this to pre-empt Teuila (who hadn't intended to call) and to get his side of the story in first. Teuila was more concerned that the police had been called than about what had happened to her. She described her reaction: 'I thought I had grown some balls and was strong and would never put up with violence again. And then when he did it, I fell back into, this is just normal and this is just what they do, he's just another Island guy that hits his wife or whatever.'

Teuila was infuriated when a domestic violence warning showed up on a mandatory police check as part of a job application. She was mortified that the stigma of domestic violence had crossed domains. Herein began the real fear that her child may be removed by CYFS if the authorities became involved. Teuila and Tom were also engaged in a custody dispute with Tom's ex-partner, as they were trying to get full custody of Tom's son Nico.

Tom and Teuila's lawyer found the family violence warning from the police, which should have been a warning signal that she was advocating for a child to be placed in a potentially violent environment. Instead, she did not ask whether domestic violence was an ongoing issue, and managed to keep the information out of the court proceedings. The

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lawyer's actions thus sent the message to Teuila that domestic violence needed to be kept hidden and that they needed to have a 'really good story' about what had happened. Teuila's and the children's safety was never positioned as a priority.

Gender identity and intracultural clashes were significant barriers for Teuila to overcome within her relationship. The influence of Christianity on relationship values meant Tom believed it was not okay for a Samoan woman to have platonic friendships with men. He expected Teuila to be subservient, obedient and never to challenge him. Such behaviours were appropriate for a 'good fa'asamoa wife'. Tom's Christianity-influenced expectations and Teuila's own beliefs about gender norms contributed to an inner conflict for her, which caused her to blame fa'asamoa for the abuse and to hate her own culture: 'I'm too white to be brown . . . Fa'asamoa is you beat up your wife . . . I can't change that . . . I actually don't like violence . . . so I had real big issues with my cultural identity.'

Teuila's first point of call for support was always her mother and extended family. This was both a barrier and a support — her mother would often placate Tom to defuse the situation, reassuring him that Teuila would return. After many years, Teuila decided to end the relationship because she discovered Tom had been unfaithful to her. She noted the irony that her threshold for infidelity was much lower than for violence. Teuila turned to water sports to help her heal from the abuse she endured with Tom. She felt that being on the water, focusing on her paddling, had a meditative effect. It also helped her to strengthen her relationship with her father as well as her Samoan culture. Complementing waka ama was the counselling she received from a male counsellor. She found it helpful to get a male perspective on things and he was able to equip her with tools to help process her experiences.

CONCLUSION

The expectations to assimilate into Aotearoa New Zealand cultural norms, practices and systems have impacted on the health, wellbeing and safety of Pasifika peoples, specifically women. Establishing a sense and place of belonging can be a very difficult process to figure out.

For those not born in Samoa, there is an expectation to assimilate to fa'asamoa. Likewise, those born in Samoa who travel to this country are expected to assimilate to 'our ways'. As a result, Pasifika women affected by domestic violence can feel as if they have to walk in two worlds — not feeling as if they belong in either one. Since social networks for some have been eroded by the migration process, families and Aotearoa New Zealand communities in general must no longer turn a blind eye to domestic violence.

Systemically, the lack of Pasifika-specific and culturally competent mainstream service provision in Aotearoa New Zealand is detrimental to the wellbeing of Pasifika victims of domestic violence. Pasifika women experiencing precarity after fleeing a violent relationship lack resources to challenge the support agencies, who they consider to have knowledge of what is available. In the case of Teuila, when help was sought, the culturally inadequate service and culturally complex dynamics of her domestic violence experience resulted in her feeling revictimised. Such barriers need to be addressed and eliminated to prevent women who leave abusive relationships being placed in a further marginalised and precarious position.

Teuila's story is one example of how traditional Samoan values and social structures have been adapted and experienced in Aotearoa New Zealand. The social isolation that resulted from the move from small villages (with no doors and windows) to houses (with doors and windows) in big cities changed the family dynamic. Teuila's Samoan identity has been disrupted by migration highlighting her internal tension between traditional cultural values, the beliefs of her paternal Samoan grandparents and those of her maternal palagi grandparents. Teuila's case involves multiple dynamics. The contrasting cultural paradigms affect coping mechanisms and can create generational conflict between New Zealand-born women and their Island-born family members or partners. For Teuila, the intracultural conflicts between herself and her ex-husband, who is Island-born, culminated in domestic violence.

GLOSSARY

afakasi: a term used by Samoans to classify those who have one Samoan

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parent and one palagi parent; it originates from the word 'half-caste'

alofa o lou aiga: by/for the love of family

fa'alavelave: Samoan ceremonial exchange practices for events such as weddings or funerals, often requiring significant amounts of money to be found and given out of filial duty.

fa'asamoa: the core protocols and values (referred to as covenants) that form the basis and makeup of traditional Samoan culture. The visible and invisible characteristics — such as fa'aaloalo (courtesy, respect and politeness), paia and mamalu (honour and dignity), alofa (compassion), osiaiga (being proactive in the support of family) and fa'akerisiano (Christian behaviour) — influence and guide individuals' behaviour and are the 'umbilical cord' that attaches Samoan people to their culture.

palagi (pronounced 'palangi'): a term used by Pacific Islanders to refer to people of European descent.

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1 This chapter is influenced by Jessica's experiences in the social services sector and Bridgette's research into domestic violence. The findings are based on Jessica's research for her Master's thesis, which explores the experiences of five Pasifika women (four Samoan, one Cook Islander) who each experienced domestic violence. Teuila's story is presented here as an example of the social and systemic barriers all Pasifika women face when navigating their way to safety. Pseudonyms have been used and any other identifiable information has been changed or omitted to protect the identity of Teuila and her family. While this chapter is specifically a synopsis of one Pasifika woman's story, her experiences are consistent with those of other Pasifika women and their families.

2 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey, *Te Rangahau o Aotearoa Mo Te Taihara Me Te Haumarutanga 2014* (Wellington: Ministry of Justice, 2014), 78, retrieved from http://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCASS-201602-Main-Findings-Report-Updated.pdf

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4 R. Tanielu and A. Johnson, *This is Home: An Update on the State of Pasifika People in New Zealand* (Auckland: The Salvation Army Social Policy and Parliamentary Unit New Zealand, Fiji & Tonga Territory, 2014).

5 K. Mila-Schaaf, 'Not Another New Zealand Born Identity Crisis: Well-being and the Politics of Belonging', in *Pacific Identities and Well-being: Cross-cultural Perspectives*, ed. M. Agee, T. McIntosh, P. Culbertson and C. 'Ofa Makasiale (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2013).

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7 M. C. Peteru, *Falevitu: A Literature Review on Culture and Family Violence in Seven Pacific Communities in New Zealand* (Wellington: Ministry of Social Development, 2012).

8 C. Macpherson, 'One Trunk Sends Out Many Branches: Pacific Cultures and Cultural Identities', in *Tangata o te Moananui: The Evolving Identities of Pacific People in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. M. Anae, C. Macpherson and P. Spoonley (Palmerston North: Dunmore Press, 2001), 66–80.

9 K. Tamasese, C. Peteru and C. Waldegrave, *Ole Taeao Afua: The New Morning: A Qualitative Investigation into Samoan Perspectives on Mental Health and Culturally Appropriate Services* (Wellington: The Family Centre, Lower Hutt, 1997).

10 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (2014).

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OCCUPATIONAL JUSTICE FOR SAMOAN TRANS(GENDER) WOMEN

SERAPHINE WILLIAMS
AND SHILOH GROOT

The Human Rights Commission's 2008 inquiry into discrimination experienced by transgender people acknowledged that trans people in New Zealand face significant discrimination in their day-to-day lives.[1] The commission called for submissions and held eight days of hearings in Wellington, central and south Auckland, Christchurch and Dunedin. The inquiry received 128 written or oral submissions, with close to 200 people participating in the process. The transgender people who made submissions to the inquiry lived in communities throughout New Zealand and came from diverse backgrounds; among them were farmers, business people, nurses, community workers, librarians, artists, students and academics, sex workers, project managers, tradespeople, parents and grandparents.

Most of the submissions about discrimination focused on employment. Discrimination can take many forms: refusal to hire, bullying, misgendering (mispronouncing/using non-preferred names), bathroom discrimination by an organisation and its staff members, and unfair dismissal. Although Employment New Zealand[2] outlines several inclusive policies that are meant to prevent employment discrimination for transgender people, evidence produced in reports like that of the Human Rights Commission inquiry demonstrates how organisational structure and authority can supersede the usefulness of such policies.

In this chapter, we describe the experiences in employment of four

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young Samoan transwomen aged between 18 and 24 — Ana, Mei, Noa and Pua.[3] These transwomen had been and/or currently are employed in a diversity of work settings, including customer service, call centres, retail, hospitality and with airlines. Their experiences of employment precarity demonstrate organisational practices detrimental to inclusion that need to be dismantled, deconstructed and redeveloped in collaboration with those they directly affect.

Terminology within the transgender community is dynamic, contested and has changed over time, so it is important to recognise the need for sensitivity when it is used within particular contexts. In this chapter, transgender is an umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from that typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.[4] Gender identity has been defined as a person's internal, deeply felt sense of their gender, whereas sex is the classification of a person as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex, usually based on the appearance of their external anatomy. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). People under the trans umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms — including, among others, transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, gender variant, gender nonconforming or gender diverse. It is respectful to use the descriptive term preferred by a person; too often this respect is denied to those in the transgender community.

It is important to note that some might not identify with any such terms, instead using conceptual terms drawn from indigenous languages to inform their identities. Across an indigenous Pacific, both in contemporary times and historically, there are many differing terms that describe people who do not conform to the Western gender binary of boy/girl or man/woman. Fa'afafine (Samoa), Fakaleiti (Tonga), Mahu (Hawaii), Rae rae (Tahiti), Akava'ine or Laelae (Cook Islands), Vaka sa lewa lewa (Fiji) and Fiafifine (Niue) are Pasifika terms describing someone who does not have a male gender identity and often, but not always, lives as a woman. Fa'afafine have been an integrated part of Samoan communities for centuries. However, Samoan migrants may encounter difficulties while adjusting to life in New Zealand, whereby our gender system does not easily recognise individuals who sit between

man and woman. Understanding terminological variation is crucial, as these terms are sometimes misappropriated and used interchangeably with terms such as transgender, but are best understood within their cultural context.

Throughout this chapter, we use the term transgender (and/or trans as shorthand) where appropriate to refer to transitioning or transitioned Samoan transwomen. Altering one's assigned birth sex (or transitioning) is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time.[5] Transition includes some or all of the following personal, medical and legal steps: telling one's family, friends and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery.[6] A trans identity is not dependent on medical procedures. The steps involved in transition are deeply personal, vary from person to person, and can be made before, during or after employment. While diverse sexualities have made some significant gains in social acceptance, gender-diverse identities and expressions are not as widely recognised, protected or affirmed by society and/or public policy.

THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN DIGNITY, EQUALITY AND SECURITY

Precarity has long been an issue that impacts disproportionately on Pasifika communities in New Zealand. Pacific nations across Oceania have over many years been drained for the labour that would distinguish New Zealand as a nation independent of England. As noted elsewhere in this section, the Labour Government of the 1970s, faced with an economic downturn, clamped down on people who were allegedly overstaying their working visas. Samoan and Tongan peoples were often the targets, despite the government's previous invitation to them to fill manual labour shortages in this country.

Today, Pasifika peoples have some of the worst health and social indicators in New Zealand. In 2013 the New Zealand Medical Council published a report outlining the most important factors adversely affecting Pacific peoples' health and wellbeing, which included low educational achievement; high unemployment rates; crowded, cold and damp houses, and inequities in access to and quality of healthcare

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provided.[7] Samoans comprised the largest Pacific ethnic group in New Zealand in 2013, at 48.7 per cent of the Pacific peoples' population (144,138).[8]

Often, oppressive assumptions and myths are so embedded in our society that it is difficult to recognise how detrimental they can be to a healthy and inclusive society. Context sculpts the degree to which Samoan transgender people experience discrimination and prejudice. Popular knowledge about Samoan people for many New Zealanders is likely to be drawn from media narratives, which have polarised and generalised perceptions of Samoan people (and Pasifika peoples in general). Social scientist Rob Loto and his colleagues explored media reports about Pacific peoples published over a three-month period.[9] Their findings reveal that Pacific people were predominantly portrayed as dependent on the government, lazy, violent and ill-educated. Such stigmatising portrayals have particular implications for Samoan transwomen in the workplace, who must prepare themselves for the degradation of their ethnic and gender identities.

Most New Zealanders will learn about transgender people through the media. So, when the media talks about transgender issues, it is imperative that they get it right. The media serves an important role in disseminating knowledge of transgender people and the issues that impact on their lives. Popular media portrayals of trans people in primetime television shows such as *Orange is the New Black* and *Transparent* have drawn widespread attention to the possibilities of gender-crossing and puberty suppression. Likewise, social media and chatrooms on websites such as 'Suzanne's Place: Transgender Resources' have become an important platform that enables many trans young people to record and publicise aspects of their gendered and bodily explorations, concerns and transitions.

However, beyond such positive examples, trans people find their appearance to be the subject of intense scrutiny, from both the public and the media. Mainstream media often misgender transwomen who are victims of crime by using terms in their reports such as 'secret', 'lies' and 'true gender', to emphasise how transwomen are manipulative and deceitful by not revealing their 'true identities'. Such mistakes normalise transphobic attitudes and provide a victim-

blaming rhetoric when a hate crime is committed against transgender people. The Human Rights Commission states that trans people can be punished severely for defying society's strictly defined categories of 'appropriate' behaviour and dress for women and men.[10] At worst, trans people in New Zealand experience constant harassment and brutal assault. Samoan transwomen experience discrimination not just because they are trans, but because they exist at the intersection of identities, race and class.

Finding employment can be difficult for Samoan transwomen who are visibly transgender, and for trans people who do not wish to conform to one gender or the other. Samoan transwomen also face discrimination within the workplace, particularly if they transition while remaining in the same job. 'Passing' is a derogatory term that refers to a transgender person's ability to go through daily life without others assuming that they are transgender. The term is problematic because 'passing' implies 'passing as something you're not'.

When transgender people are living as their authentic selves, and are not perceived as transgender by others, that does not make them deceptive or misleading. Daily life is disturbed when they work in organisations where their image becomes the subject of scrutiny, the trans body is viewed as unprofessional, overly feminine, a threat to masculinity and promiscuous. Tori Fletcher, an activist for sex workers' rights, notes that faced with discrimination at school and work, high rates of homelessness, and limited access to a community of support, some transwomen may engage in sex work to earn income for housing and food.[11] This does not mean all transwomen are sex workers, but assumptions about their sexuality and availability add extra complexities to problematic notions of 'passing' and what constitutes an appropriate femininity.

Not being visibly transgender becomes a key component of wellness for many Samoan transwomen both within employment and beyond. It alleviates the likelihood of experiencing transphobic incidents perpetrated by a dominant cisgender (people whose gender identity matches their assigned sex at birth) in society, alongside a marginalised Pasifika identity. However, as long as the focus remains on physical appearance, transwomen are compelled to chase an antiquated and

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superficial notion of femininity, at the expense of their own wellbeing. Until the transition itself is celebrated, rather than being scrutinised or ridiculed, they will remain marginalised, locked out of employment, and subjected to violence.[12]

UNIFYING BODY AND MIND IN A COLONIAL EMPLOYMENT SETTING

Transgender identities are often the object of public derision and negotiation in employment, which can impede Samoan transwomen's ability to flourish. New Zealand is a diverse society comprised of people from many different ethnic and social backgrounds.[13] This has important implications for the development of work environments that are able to foster inclusivity. Employment New Zealand has developed policies to counter discrimination against transgender people, filing protection under the Human Rights Act 1993 and the Employment Relations Act 2000. In response, many employers have claimed to have taken a zero-tolerance-to-bullying stance in recognition of the diversity of people represented within their organisations.

Despite the legal and ethical obligations imposed by the Human Rights and Employment Relations acts, in the event of a workplace transgression an organisation still retains the ability to reject and revise policies to bolster their position. Noa discussed the complexities and fears associated with seeking employment as a young transwoman who has only just completed high school and has limited work experience:

> Looking for a new job is hard. Especially when on my resume I have to write that I went to an all-boys school. I'm female but then there's this school that I went to which identifies me as a boy . . . I feel like as soon as they look at my resume and they see what school I went to it's like, 'Oh she looks like a girl but this high school she went to is a boys' school. So, does that make her like a "transgendered" person?' And I feel like they don't want to hire me because of that.

Many hiring practices require new employees to provide a curriculum vitae, birth certificate and/or passport to prove their eligibility to work in New Zealand.[14] 'Lawfully collecting' personal information for

company use may often require trans people to disclose and be labelled by their birth names on name badges, company rolls and written communications.[15] For many trans people, their preferred name and gender are left unchanged on these documents because of issues around financial support, family support and self-acceptance. When trans people are addressed incorrectly, their identities are invalidated, degraded and disregarded, leading to insecurity around employability, which impedes job security.[16]

Even when in employment, Samoan transwomen face further obstacles to acceptance and inclusion. Problematic media reports have conflated cross-dressing paedophiles, child sex offenders and predators in women's bathrooms with transwomen using women's toilets. Although trans awareness is gradually increasing, particularly through social media, fears around non-conformity to binary gender categories impedes efforts to expand knowledge of trans identities. Samoan transwomen experience further oppression when Western media discourses of gender deception and Pacific peoples as criminals and predatory are conflated over bigoted paranoia about their 'bathroom intentions'. Pua discussed a particularly hurtful and humiliating series of incidences of bathroom discrimination that she had experienced:

> My manager had told everyone that I was a biological male and so when I was using the female toilets someone from the checkout department approached my manager asking what I was doing in there. Sometimes I'd endure 10-hour days needing to go toilet but I was very afraid about the reaction I'd get and I felt unsafe in the male toilets. Two or three months passed until I started using the female toilets with no problems . . . My boss just turned around and said, 'Look we're not gonna have you back. You were seen going into the girls' toilets again.' I tried to explain but she never let me get any further. I guess her job was on the line if she didn't let me go so I thought that's fine. You can have everything back I'll return it . . . So, I left. I was shocked because I thought this would never happen, I thought the people that I worked with were friendly . . .

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Pua describes the consequences of her being assigned male sex at birth being publicised by her employer without her consent. After a period of humiliation and harassment she was eventually unfairly dismissed. Unfortunately, transgender people often report experiencing denial of access to facilities, verbal harassment and physical assault when attempting to use public restrooms.[17] Ana, Mei, Noa and Pua all discussed experiences of having their trans identities publicised without their consent in an employment setting. Their stories provide examples of how transphobia is not necessarily specific to any one industry, but is a deeply embedded facet of our society whose impact can be felt across a diverse spectrum of workplaces. It is sadly unsurprising that Pua's co-workers vilified and refused to support her; the rejection of a trans body is edged with cultural messages about beauty, acceptable sexuality and what constitutes a legitimate body.

Not all workplaces may present as overtly problematic. Capitalist ideologies around economic reform permeate many organisations, meaning that oppressive practices are hidden through marketing strategies that attract attention, support and, most importantly, money from the people they systematically oppress — a phenomenon known as 'Pink-Washing'. For example, organisations that host 'Transgender Awareness Day' to recognise organisational diversity, equity and equality claim to do so in acknowledgement of inclusionary hiring policies in capitalist institutions. Mei demonstrates how she experienced Pink-Washing in her previous hospitality job:

> At my old job, they hosted Rainbow stuff like 'Transgender Day'. Everyone was like, 'Oh it's transgender day,' and I will be looking at them like do you guys even know what that means?! Everyone would get free biscuits and stuff but I was just wondering . . . are they just exploiting us for their service? Or are they really recognising the LGBT or fa'afafine within the company? It made me realise so many things like why is it just one day when it should be entrenched in our company every day? So, does that mean every other day we are disregarded? The only transgender people there were myself and one older lady. I wasn't even notified of it. So, when I was talking to my

> manager I asked her, 'What do you think about Transgender Day?' And she was just like, 'Oh yeah it's cool you get free stuff.'

Mei highlights the contradictory type of 'diversity' that is often encouraged, which only allows for a narrow range of expression, and is displayed within the already narrow parameters of what constitutes 'normal' and palatable to cissexist goals of assimilation. While there is absolutely nothing wrong with appealing to the trans community or emphasising inclusivity in business, using trans-specific issues to downplay otherwise negative aspects of one's business is never a convincing strategy. Equality, transparency and accountability in business practices should be pursued and developed in collaboration with the communities (in this case, trans people/employees) on whom they impact. Visibility is essential to normalisation, to wider acceptance across society, and to greater understanding.

The workplace is further complicated for Samoan transwomen where contemporary understandings of fa'afafine can belittle a Samoan trans-self. Cisgender people will at times imply that fa'afafine are simply a creation of culture or that they are merely 'acting' like women, rather than living as women. Although fa'afafine serves their own personal, cultural and political significance around the existence and acceptance of trans people in Samoa, the mismatch between indigenous Samoan and Western gender fluidity often reduces fa'afafine to a drag-show performance. Ana discussed how she consolidated indigenous Samoan meanings of gender with a Western framework:

> In Samoan communities transwomen are seen as fa'afafines . . . They're the ones cleaning the house, running around, and some are even their parents' right arm . . . They stand for their family. The Samoan culture back then [pre-colonisation] embraced it until the missionaries came in and gender became man or woman . . . Fa'afafine have always been around . . . Transgender and fa'afafine are two different terms that we use for different groups of people that we are around. When I'm with my family they're all about their culture and stuff, they'll just say, 'Oh yeah they are fa'afafine.' But when I'm with friends

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> or if I have to put a statement down then I would say, 'I'm trans' and I use that in the workplace . . .

Ana acknowledges that for many young Samoan transwomen, navigating Western and indigenous Samoan understandings of gender separation between the two terms are not straightforward and, at times, are counterproductive for wellness. In employment, some will often identify with the term transgender to avoid intrusive conversations about their personal and cultural lives. A similar protection strategy of adapting terms is also used among Samoan trans people in cultural settings to establish familiarity and protect oneself from unwanted and intrusive personal conversations. Although fa'afafine are typically positively regarded within Samoan communities, colonialism and capitalism have impacted on their roles within the community. However, warmth towards gender-diverse Samoan people still exists because they serve a unique purpose in their families, villages and organisations.

In the passage quoted above, Ana also raises issues of precarity related to social status when considering Christianity's impact on Samoan communities through the imposition of a strict gender binary. Christianity is intimately interwoven into many Pacific cultural practices, making it difficult to usefully extract its influence from our ways of being. Further, problems arise because the Bible and Christianity serve a multiplicity of liberating purposes, both personally and communally. It would be easy to charge Christianity as the perpetrator of trans oppression within Samoan communities. However, its origins in Western colonialism suggest that it is more accurately a result of the rigid Western gender binary parasitically attaching itself to meaningful Samoan practices as a way to justify gender essentialism.

The church serves as a place where, for some Samoan transwomen, they are able to grow spiritually and build intimate social bonds with their family and community while connecting with their culture. Mei spoke of the intersections between Samoan and Western ideas around gender and sexual variance that can exist harmoniously together:

> A tapa cloth is shaded black, brown, and white reflecting

> the simplification of fa'afafine identities within our Samoan culture. Whereas the Rainbow community contains an ensemble of colours placing transgender at one end of the LGBTQ spectra. So, in New Zealand, I visualise the existence of a Samoan transwoman with a blue and pink coloured tapa sash.

Culture constitutes a field of human action, meaning-making and self-production. It is through culture that people construct themselves and make sense of the world. Although gender variance across the Pacific (including in New Zealand) has enjoyed a long history of acceptance and inclusion, Pacific communities are not static and are constantly evolving. Western understandings of gender sit alongside indigenous cosmologies of gender, not always in ways that are harmonious. However, Ana, Mei, Pua and Noa's stories do also provide examples of how a rich cultural framework compels people to reject colonial binary distinctions between men and women, and asks instead how tradition invokes familial ties and invites relationships across difference.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Transgender people, either by personal or political choice, or through economic necessity, occupy a unique space, challenging society to reassess its insistence that gender and sex are immutable and unchanged. Employers serve an important role around challenging precarity for Pacific transwomen through actively promoting belonging, inclusion and flourishing.[18] Although Employment New Zealand outlines specific policies regarding trans discrimination and trans 'inclusion', we are still reminded that places of employment in New Zealand are infiltrated by transphobic practices.

Perhaps a shift in focus from anti-trans-discrimination policies to working towards minimising the likelihood of transphobic incidences occurring in workplace environments is needed. Asking Pacific trans people about their needs for inclusion is an important potential starting point. The experiences of Ana, Mei, Pua and Noa testify to the limitations of current anti-trans-discrimination policies, and suggest some areas for future policy development around the inclusion of

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gender and sexually diverse groups. Perhaps a starting point would be to engage in gender-diversity workshops at all organisational levels to acknowledge and practise trans friendliness around hiring practices, equitable access to facilities, and appropriate pronouns (including preferences for trans or fa'afafine terms).

1 Human Rights Commission, 'To Be Who I Am: Report of the Inquiry into Discrimination Experienced by Transgender People' (2008), retrieved from www.hrc.co.nz/transgenderinquiry

2 Part of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

3 Pseudonyms are used when referring to these young transwomen.

4 GLAAD Media Reference Guide: Transgender Issues (2011), retrieved from http://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 I. St George, *Cole's Medical Practice in New Zealand* (Wellington: Medical Council of New Zealand, 2013), 260.

8 Ministry for Pacific Peoples, 'Pacific People in NZ', retrieved May 8, 2017, from http://www.mpp.govt.nz/pacific-people-in-nz

9 R. Loto, D. Hodgetts, L. W. Nikora, K. Chamberlain, R. Karapu and A. Barnett, 'Pasifika in the News: The Portrayal of Pacific Peoples in the New Zealand Press', *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 16, no. 2 (2006): 100–18.

10 Human Rights Commission, 'To Be Who I Am'.

11 T. Fletcher, 'Trans Sex Workers: Negotiating Sex, Gender, and Non-Normative Desire', in *Selling Sex: Experience, Advocacy, and Research on Sex Work in Canada, ed.* E. van der Meulen, E. M. Durisin, and V. Love (Vancouver, Toronto: UBC Press, 2013), 65–73.

12 Human Rights Commission, 'To Be Who I Am'.

13 Human Rights Commission, *Human Rights in New Zealand Today: Ngā Tika Tangata o te Motu* (Wellington: HRC, 2004).

14 Employment New Zealand, 'Discrimination Against Transgender People' (2016), retrieved from https://employment.govt.nz/resolving-problems/types-of-problems/bullying-harassment-and-discrimination/discrimination-against-transgender-people/

15 Human Rights Commission, 'To Be Who I Am'.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Employment New Zealand, 'Discrimination Against Transgender People'.

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PRECARIOUS REFUGE IN NEW ZEALAND
A CONVERSATION WITH ABANN KAMYAY AJAK YOR

SARAH HAHN

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What situation could be more precarious than fleeing from your home? If there was ever a group of people who understand loss, deprivation and uncertainty, then it is the unimaginably huge number of people who currently live in the ultimate state of precariousness: the world's 65.3 million forcibly displaced persons, 21.3 million of whom are acknowledged as refugees under the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) mandate.

Yet, some refugees overcome. The stories of people from a refugee background who have succeeded in making new homes in New Zealand are illustrations of people's astonishing ability to manage precariousness.

In this chapter, I wanted to focus in on one of these stories in order to demonstrate the immense resilience that is needed to leave a refugee past behind and become a New Zealander. I met my friend and former boss Abann Kamyay Ajak Yor in order to capture his perspective on how people manage uncertainty and instability when starting an entirely new life as New Zealanders.

Abann Kamyay Ajak Yor is the General Manager of the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC), a coalition of many different cultural groups who strive to gain access to the decision-making processes that directly concern them and their families. ARCC's vision is simple: 'Nothing about us without us.' Abann lives this vision in its most literal sense by being present and outspoken wherever

resettlement issues are being discussed, so he instantly agreed to this conversation about finding refuge in New Zealand, and the precariousness he experienced during his first few years in the country.

THE REFUGEE 'IDENTITY'

To begin, Abann tells me that people are often surprised to hear that, while he had to flee his home country when he was 13 and became a resident of New Zealand more than twenty years later, officially he had only been a refugee for five months of his life:

> My flight took many different stages: I fled from Southern Sudan when I was thirteen years old to Northern Sudan, where I was an Internally Displaced Person — an IDP — for 14 years. This is where I started my schooling. In 2000, I left Sudan and I came to Syria, where I was able to seek asylum to get refugee status . . . When I finally came under the protection of the UNHCR as a refugee, it took five months for my family to be referred to New Zealand. So, I can actually say: I was a refugee for only five months.

This surprises people, because the media often treat the label 'refugee' superficially and incorrectly, thereby contributing to a widespread misunderstanding of what it means to become a refugee.

If the legal terminology is used correctly, a person can only be labelled as a refugee once the UNHCR officially recognises them as persecuted. Before that, they remain in the legal vacuum that is created by seeking asylum in another country, or — if they remain within the borders of their country of origin — they are labelled as an 'Internally Displaced Person' (IDP). This is of crucial importance to the labelled person as prior to being officially granted refugee status one is neither protected by international law nor eligible for many types of aid.

It is also important to note that once a refugee is resettled to New Zealand as part of the UNHCR quota — as virtually all refugees arriving in New Zealand are — she or he is no longer a refugee, but a permanent resident of New Zealand. So-called 'quota refugees' are individuals and families who have been granted refugee status by the

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UNHCR and whose situation fits with New Zealand's Refugee Quota Programme; this means that they come from specific countries, are 'women at risk', and/or are emergency cases that need to be resettled with special urgency.[1]

New Zealand's regular refugee intake of 750 people per year has been criticised internationally for being far too low.[2] New Zealand's per capita intake of refugees ranks among the lowest of all OECD countries.[3] Nevertheless, the few who are lucky enough to be among these 750 annual referrals from the UNHCR arrive in New Zealand as residents, not as refugees. Abann never tires of explaining to people who refer to him as a refugee that he has been a New Zealand citizen for the past 11 years. He is a New Kiwi, not a refugee. Three of his children were born in New Zealand, yet even they are sometimes labelled as refugees. While I have seen Abann react to this with great patience and grace, I can also hear the hurt and frustration when he tells me: 'Labelling people as "refugees" is a way of distancing yourself from that group of people. Our entire life journey should not be defined by the unlucky circumstances that brought [us] here. We should be defined as just another person.'

FROM A PRECARIOUS LIFE INTO A NEW PRECARIOUS LIFE

Moving on, Abann describes the precarious life that led to his resettlement to New Zealand:

> When I fled to Syria, I thought that it was a good country, where I would be able to continue my education and find a job. It turned out differently. While I was seeking my asylum there, I had no rights in this country and therefore had to work illegally.
>
> After five years, the Syrian government decided that the people that were staying in Syria without a visa had to go — and I was one of them. It became very dangerous to stay for my family and me. When we were asking for protection by the UNHCR, the government found out about us and they put us in prison. When you don't have UNHCR protection yet, the Syrian government will deport you to Sudan. And at that time — Southern Sudan and Northern Sudan were still one country — we would have been in great danger in our home country, which was why I fled and came to Syria in the first place.
>
> The UNHCR needed to find a place where my family and I would be safe quickly. And this is how I ended up in New Zealand. New Zealand accepted me because they have three categories for receiving UNHCR referrals: 'Women at risk', 'Special medical attention and disability', and 'Emergency cases'. My family's case fit into 'Emergency cases'. That's why I came to New Zealand relatively quickly, just five weeks after being granted refugee status.

At this point of our conversation I tried to imagine how I would feel if someone told me today: 'You and your entire family will move to Peru (or somewhere similarly unfamiliar to me) in a few weeks.' I asked Abann how he first reacted when he learned he would become a New Zealander. He answered:

> When I was told, 'You are going to be referred to New Zealand in one month,' I didn't know much about New Zealand. Only that it is a tiny island. I had learned that when I was a student in intermediate. I remembered that tiny island next to Australia. When they told me about New Zealand, my first question was: are there any South Sudanese people there? They said yes.

I think Abann's reaction to being told about what would become his new home country is perfectly understandable. Knowing that there will be people who understand your culture and language probably feels like being thrown a life vest in an ocean of uncertainty.

We tend to assume that resettlement is a purely positive turn of events for refugees. But arriving in a new and unknown country is also very stressful, even when the alternative would be to remain in a refugee camp or other extremely precarious living conditions. Apart

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from relief, gratitude, and new hope, Abann also describes great anxiety after arriving in New Zealand:

> When I arrived in New Zealand, I had very high expectations about my new life here. I was motivated to find meaningful employment and to complete my education. I wanted to support my siblings and my mother, who had been left behind.
>
> When I arrived in the Mangere Resettlement Centre, a lot of things were going on in my mind:[4] what would New Zealand offer? During the orientation programme I tried to clarify things, but only after leaving the resettlement centre I found out what the reality of living here looked like. I started questioning everything.
>
> We had a social worker and a volunteer who were supporting us in navigating our new environment. But, when I came into my new home, I still felt so strange in the neighbourhood. I didn't understand why you couldn't just talk with your neighbour. That was the first thing that I became really worried about. I was wondering: how am I going to settle in this new country, when the neighbours don't even interact with one another? Everyone assumed I was strange, and I found no way to get to know the people around me.
>
> So that was the first worry I had. And then, also, the job. At that time, it wasn't clear to me what Work and Income was all about. That agency should have had a much better understanding of what it is like when you are looking for work as someone with a refugee background who has just been resettled.[5]
>
> There was so much pressure from Work and Income. I needed to find a job as soon as possible, so I enrolled myself into an English course to prepare myself. I was so confused about what kind of qualification I needed and whom I had to connect with

> in order to find a job. The people at Work and Income were asking me all these questions that didn't even make sense to me! At that time, I felt as if I was in big, big trouble. I felt like it had been a mistake to have come here.
>
> At some point I realised that I needed to think more flexibly. Otherwise, I thought, I might lose my mind. Or my family. Because, where I come from, I should be someone who provides the food for my family. But all of the sudden I depended on Work and Income, and had all this pressure from them . . .
>
> For me being a man, a South Sudanese man, not contributing something to my household by working means that my role in the family becomes very weak. So, I challenged myself to complete a qualification and made sure to gain some work experience to get out of this challenging situation.
>
> I was also thinking of my people back home. When I came to New Zealand, I included my mother and my siblings in my application form. When only my immediate family was accepted, I went back to Immigration to find out how I can bring them to New Zealand to reunite with them. In my mind, everything became about that. I wanted to support them. Not being able to send them money was a big problem. Not working, and not being able to reunite with them . . .
>
> But I quickly learned that I needed to focus on myself and my young family here. We had to find a way in which we could survive here.
>
> I should add that finding a job in New Zealand is not just a challenge to those who have a refugee background. Other New Zealanders are struggling as well. Still, it would be a big help if resettlement support was provided for at least two years. That would give a person the opportunity to get to know the culture

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> of the new country, its system, to know what they want to do with their lives . . . That lack of support in the first years is the big gap in resettlement right now.
>
> That is why I — now that I am a New Zealander — try to support the people from refugee backgrounds in any way I can. They shouldn't have to go through the same things that I have been through.

Abann's account of his first years in New Zealand sounds sadly familiar to me. During my time at ARCC, I became aware of many similar stories. It seemed like every individual within the resettled communities with whom we worked had their own account about falling through certain support gaps after leaving the Mangere Resettlement Centre.

Widely discussed obstacles include access to further language training and help with finding employment.[6] Also, some former refugees have little opportunity to use a computer before their resettlement, and all have to gain a New Zealand driver's licence if they intend to drive. While the six-week resettlement programme at Mangere deserves recognition, it is impossible during that time to cover all the skills that the average New Zealander takes for granted, let alone offer comprehensive medical and psychological care. Nevertheless, support drops off dramatically once an individual or family is placed in their new New Zealand community, and then stops almost entirely after their first year in this country.[7]

Organisations such as the Red Cross, Refugees as Survivors, ARCC, Auckland Regional Migrant Trust and Asylum Seekers Support Trust do their best to cover as much of the need as possible in Auckland through employment support, language training, advocacy, mental health and social support. Auckland is the primary point of contact, as all refugees who arrive in New Zealand under the Refugee Quota Programme spend their first six weeks at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre (MRRC). From there, they will settle in five regions across New Zealand, four in the North Island and one in the South Island. Accordingly, similar organisations provide support in other places such as Wellington, Hamilton, the Manawatū, Nelson

and Dunedin. However, as is evident in Abann's story, even the most motivated, resourceful and determined individual can 'lose their mind' when faced with the trials of the first few years after resettlement. Finding refuge in New Zealand means beginning a whole new journey of precariousness.

However, Abann came through. He and his core family have been living in New Zealand for 11 years now, during which he has completed a postgraduate degree and made a career out of caring for the resettled communities of Auckland. I was interested to know if he still had worries that were related to his refugee background. He scoffed at that, and then answered:

> Racism will always prevail in New Zealand. You like it or not, that is the reality. When someone asks you a lot of very peculiar questions, or you find that there are obstacles set up for you in regards to employment opportunities — that's racism. When someone judges you as soon as they look at you — that's racism.
>
> I think it depends on the person how you deal with it. In my case, if you look at me as if I was nothing, then that's going to be what I'm going to do to you: you are nothing to me. You need to remain confident in yourself and who you are. Regardless of how other people look at you.

I interpret Abann's initial scoff as a way of communicating that his answer to my question is as obvious as it is painful to him. As a white-skinned person with a German accent, I have never felt any antipathy that I could connect to my migrant background within New Zealand. The hostility that people from non-European ethnic backgrounds encounter in their daily lives always shocks me, even after hearing about it and witnessing it again and again. Racism is a topic that is still too uncomfortable for most people to talk about, and yet it is a critical obstacle in the lives of many.

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NOT SO DIFFERENT IN THE BIG PICTURE

After acknowledging this, our conversation turned to the things that New Zealanders can learn from their community members with refugee backgrounds. Abann went into a topic that rings of the collectivist aspects of South Sudanese culture, a system of cultural values that many countries from which former refugees originate have in common with Māori culture:

> Everyone in New Zealand comes from somewhere else. If it's not you, it's your parents, if it's not your parents, it's your ancestors. Someone in your family came from somewhere else.
>
> In my culture, it is important to value your ancestry, the history of your family. I think New Zealanders who have been here for a long time should make an effort to look into their own background. Learning about their parents, their ancestors, how they came to New Zealand, and why they came to New Zealand. Then they could relate that to our current challenges in the world. Some people who have been here for decades and centuries have built up all these resources for themselves, and they never look back. If they did, they might become more empathetic with the plight of others.
>
> Labelling people as 'refugees' is a way of distancing yourself from that group of people. But any New Zealander's ancestors, who came to this country, also had to rebuild a life. They weren't so different from the refugees struggling to get to New Zealand nowadays.
>
> How do you think they would have wanted to be welcomed? When you truly have sympathy for someone, you are not going to stop at just saying 'Haere mai!' Wouldn't you put your compassion into practice?
>
> People could also learn from former refugees that there are problems that you can't run from or talk away. They need to be faced, to a positive or a negative outcome, but they need to be faced. That is when you need your community, your networks. The more you connect with people, the more support you will have when you need it. For me this meant being involved in the sector for many years and doing all this voluntary work. My voluntary work gave me knowledge and connections that I would never have had otherwise.

Abann's voluntary work was the reason why we had to leave our Sunday morning conversation at that. Abann's time is precious, not only to him, but to all the community members, who rely on him to find their way in New Zealand.

His accounts of high hopes and equally high hurdles give an insight into what former refugees go through on arrival in their new home country. Abann refuses to give in to the 'gratitude attitude' that many people expect of former refugees. While being grateful for many things, Abann has been and continues to be a fierce advocate for the rights of New Zealand citizens from a refugee background ever since he went from 'refugee' to 'resettled'.

The main point that Abann and I would like readers to take away from our conversation is that we live in a world where the fates of all are growing more and more interconnected. This is most obvious on the remote islands of Aotearoa New Zealand, which is growing more and more diverse every year. Labelling a group of people, who are also your neighbours and fellow citizens, as 'refugees' places the focus on our differences rather than our connectedness. In order to build a community where everyone has a fair chance at a stable life that allows for the pursuit of happiness, we cannot exclude anyone from the conversations we have about how to achieve this. We need to treat each other as equals and assume that we can all learn from each other and that we all have something unique to contribute to New Zealand.

Abann and I both acknowledge that it can be difficult to converse across cultural differences, but it is never impossible. A great way to get to know New Kiwis is to become a volunteer with an organisation like the Red Cross, who help people out within their new community after they have left the Mangere Resettlement Centre. As Abann put it:

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> These volunteers are so crucial as they are the first contact for newcomers with the community and therefore have a great influence on how welcomed people feel. They can make a huge and continuing difference in the lives of former refugees. Their role should be celebrated more within the resettlement sector. On top of the training that the Red Cross provides for resettlement volunteers, ARCC is always keen to support them and offer advice regarding cultural competency.

For more information on how to become a volunteer, go to https://www.redcross.org.nz/get-involved/volunteer-opportunities/refugee-support-volunteer/

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3:18

PERFORMING THE PRECARIAT
ACTING FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

RAND HAZOU

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This chapter provides a very brief overview of some of the ways in which theatre in Aotearoa New Zealand has responded to the issue of asylum seekers and refugees. It begins by exploring the notion of the precariat in relation to refugees, and more specifically the idea of the denizen — a group of people who have limited rights. The chapter briefly sketches out how we generally tend to deal with refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand before exploring the ways denizens have been dramatised and how the precariat in relation to refugees has been performed in this country. If the refugee experience is defined by the condition of precarity, this chapter briefly considers the role that theatre might play in facilitating stability and belonging for refugees in our communities.

PRECARITY AND REFUGEES

In *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*, economist Guy Standing defines the precariat as a condition of 'precarious existence' — one that involves a 'temporary status of some kind'.[1] Standing mainly applies the notion of the precariat to an analysis of insecure labour conditions in the global economy. But precarity is not just about economic rights and the importance of finding meaningful, secure and ongoing employment. Standing also applies the notion of the precariat to various groups of people who have had their civil, cultural, social or political rights restricted or limited in some way. Given the often

traumatic experience of being forced to flee their homes, the often temporary and insecure living or working arrangements as well as the language, cultural and social barriers that they have to contend with in their new homes, refugees and asylum seekers are some of the most 'precarious' groups of people in the world today.

The idea of a group of people having limited rights is not a new concept. As Standing notes, the term 'denizen' can be traced back to ancient Rome, and was usually applied to foreigners who were granted the right to live or work in a place but not to participate in its political life.[2] In this way, a denizen is 'someone who, for one reason or another, has a more limited range of rights than citizens do'.[3] Standing goes on to suggest that all international migrants are denizens, with different groups having some rights — civil, social, political, economic and cultural — but not others. He also suggests that the least secure of this particular group of denizens are refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants.[4]

In his essay 'Reflections on Exile', published in 1984, the Palestinian scholar Edward Said proclaimed that our age is 'the age of the refugee, the displaced person, mass immigration'.[5] Today, more than thirty years later, Said's words are more accurate then ever. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2015 there were 21.3 million refugees in the world, and 3.2 million asylum seekers, more than at any other time in history. The UN refugee agency also found that, measured against the world's population of 7.4 billion people, one in every 113 people globally is now either an asylum seeker, an internally displaced person, or a refugee.[6] In other words, one in every 113 people around the world might be considered a 'denizen' whose rights might be limited or restricted in some way.

REFUGEES IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Following the upheavals and mass displacements of the Second World War, the United Nations attempted to design a strategy to deal with the global refugee problem. This resulted in the creation in 1951 of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.7 New Zealand acceded to the UNHCR convention in 1960, and under the Immigration Act 1987 the government adopted a quota system of 750 places that prioritised

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refugees with high health and social needs.[8] Under this system, New Zealand accepts people from overseas who have been recognised and mandated as refugees by the UNHCR. These are usually people who have been languishing in refugee camps overseas and have applied to the UNHCR for protection. The UNHCR assesses their claims against the 1951 convention, and then petitions countries like New Zealand to resettle those they find meet the definition of 'refugee'.

As well as these 'quota refugees', New Zealand also accepts 'convention refugees'. This second group of people are asylum seekers who have applied for protection, usually within the country, and whose refugee status is then recognised by domestic authorities within New Zealand. A third group of refugees that the government also accepts are what are known as 'family reunion refugees', who have been sponsored by refugee family members already residing in New Zealand.[9]

Generally, when any of these groups of people are recognised as refugees they can apply for permanent residency and live in New Zealand like any other citizen. They would also be entitled to the same types of civic rights that any other citizen would be entitled to. But being able to do things like vote and participate in jury service are sometimes not the only rights or responsibilities that people need in order to ensure that they become functioning and contributing members of society. And even though the government might provide resettlement support to help refugees transition into New Zealand society, this support might not go far enough and in some cases particular groups of refugees may not even be entitled to receive these services.

The New Zealand Human Rights Commission points out that while settlement support is vital for all refugees, convention refugees (asylum seekers) and family members of refugees resident in New Zealand do not receive the same level of settlement support as quota refugees.[10] So called 'quota refugees' receive things like support from volunteers trained by Refugee Services Aotearoa, access to a 'resettlement grant', an orientation programme at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre which includes language and literacy tuition, and automatic eligibility for Housing New Zealand housing.[11] Since 2012, the New Zealand Red Cross has become the primary provider of community refugee resettlement programmes, which include support from qualified social

workers, refugee-background case workers, cross cultural workers and trained volunteers.[12]

A lot of these crucial support services are not available to asylum seekers and family reunion refugees. In particular, and as Deborah Manning and Erin James point out, asylum seekers are extremely vulnerable through a combination of language difficulties, experiences of detention, cultural norms and past experiences.[13] Moreover, refugees — especially those who are marked visually as racially different — might remain vulnerable due to discrimination. For these and other groups, 'the potential remains for the persistence of social barriers to participation and belonging'.[14]

CULTURAL PARTICIPATION AND BELONGING

It is commonly recognised that among people from migrant and refugee backgrounds, discrimination contributes to depression, poor quality of life, psychological distress and substance misuse.[15] It has also been recognised that greater levels of community participation are associated with reduced experiences of psychological distress.[16] In promoting social inclusion and civic engagement, theatre and cultural practice can generate significant mental health and wellbeing outcomes when applied in marginalised community settings.[17] With this in mind, the arts, theatre and cultural practices are increasingly being recognised as vehicles for community building to promote wellbeing and social change.[18] More specifically, and particularly in Western countries, there is growing interest in arts-based practice with, by and for refugees and asylum seekers.[19]

As a collective cultural artform, theatre has an ability to bring people together in order to explore issues and experiences of concern. Theatre can challenge negative stereotypes around refugees and offer more positive personal stories. Ultimately this can help challenge the discrimination and various barriers to participation that refugees might experience in the wider community. Involvement in theatre can also build confidence, dignity and agency, as well as providing refugee participants with important skills such as public speaking, self-expression and communication skills. Being involved in theatre is also a good way to develop networks of inclusion and ultimately belonging.

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Theatre can help to develop friendships and a sense of belonging to community that can go some way to ameliorate or counteract the dislocation and social isolation that refugees can often experience in a new country.

Despite this country's relative geographic isolation, a number of theatre productions have been staged in New Zealand in recent years engaging with the issue of refugees and asylum seekers.[20] In the section that follows I briefly explore a few examples of these. If the asylum and refugee experience is defined by limitations on rights, dislocation and insecurity, the examples that follow gesture to the potential of theatre as a form of collective action that can offer opportunities for diverse groups to come together to promote rights, develop networks of inclusion, and foster participation and belonging.

PERFORMING PRECARITY AND THE REFUGEE EXPERIENCE

An early production that staged the precarious refugee experience was *Tempest: Without a Body*, a physical theatre and dance piece directed and choreographed by Lemi Ponifasio. The performance was presented by the Mau theatre company in March 2007 before later touring overseas to Australia, Europe, Canada and the US.[21] The production was inspired by Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and explored themes of colonisation, racial subjugation and oppression. It interspersed dance sequences, including a traditional Māori haka, with personal stories delivered in direct address by Tūhoe Māori activist Tama Iti.[22]

Iti was charged with illegally discharging a firearm in a public place after he fired a shotgun into a New Zealand flag on 16 January 2005 during a pōwhiri, a Māori greeting ceremony, that formed part of a Waitangi Tribunal hearing.[23] Iti said he had fired the shotgun because he wanted to recreate the 1860s East Cape war: 'We wanted them to feel the heat and smoke, and Tūhoe outrage and disgust at the way we have been treated for 200 years.'[24] Delivered in te reo Māori, Iti's story was also performed against the backdrop of a large projected image of Ahmed Zaoui, an Algerian refugee who was extrajudicially imprisoned in New Zealand after being issued with a Security Risk Certificate in 2003.[25]

By drawing parallels between the experiences of Iti and Zaoui the

production might be understood as also drawing parallels between the experiences of refugees and those of Māori as a colonised people — including the experiences of some Māori who have at times been refugees within their own country.[26] In this way, the production has the potential to foster affinities across cultural or ethnic lines and among seemingly disparate groups who might share certain experiences of precarity. As such, this production might be understood as an example of how theatre can work to raise awareness of the different ways in which various groups of people have had their civil, cultural, social or political rights restricted or limited in some way. Yet by staging these restrictions and drawing parallels between these seemingly disparate experiences, the production also gestures to the possible alliances that can be developed through cultural practice and collective action in order to address the insecurity associated with the condition of precarity.

One of the ways that theatre and cultural practice might work to address the insecurity associated with precarity is by attending to the negative stereotypes of refugees that can provoke discrimination within the wider community and the persistence of social barriers to participation and belonging. Indeed, many arts-based projects engaging with refugees are created to construct positive counter-narratives against dominant anti-refugee and asylum seeker agendas and sentiments.[27] An early production that undermined the potential negative associations with refugees coming to New Zealand was *The Arrival*, by the Auckland-based Red Leap theatre company.

Commissioned by the Auckland Arts Festival in 2009 before touring overseas to several Asian countries, *The Arrival* was directed by Julie Nolan and adapted by Kate Parker from an award-winning graphic novel by Vietnamese-Australian author Shaun Tan. The production was described on the Red Leap website as 'a universal migrant tale set in a fantastical time and place'.[28] Emulating the surreal and dream-like imagery that Tan uses to illustrate his books, the production used puppetry, choreographed movements and imaginative sets to explore the story of a man, played by Jarod Rawiri (Ngāti Whanaunga, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Hine), who is forced to flee his homeland and who journeys across a sea to a strange new world.

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As Ewen Coleman explained in a review of the production, it brought to the stage 'every immigrant's nightmare: arriving in a new country faced with a strange new language, people and customs and the highs and lows of dealing with all this strangeness'.[29] Although the man struggles to come to terms with the alien country around him, eventually he finds his feet through 'the kindness of strangers who share their own struggles and history'.[30] As Red Leap explain on their website, the production is a tribute to migrants, refugees and displaced people worldwide and is ultimately a story of overcoming hardship and of hope. As reviewer Bridget Jones noted, *The Arrival* is 'a story of belonging; of losing it, of searching for it, and ultimately, of finding it again'.[31]

If the experience of precarity for refugees is compounded by negative stereotypes and discrimination in the wider community, then *The Arrival* demonstrates the important role theatre can play in providing positive counter-narratives of the refugee experience. The production gives audiences an insight into the dislocation associated with the refugee experience and demonstrates just how alien and hard life can be for people trying to adjust to a new home. But importantly, the dream-like surreal art design gave the production a child-like quality reminiscent of a storybook. In some ways this might work to beguile audiences, seducing them into engaging with the story of an asylum seeker — a story that could easily have been dismissed or overlooked if told in a different mode or format such as a brief news report. As such, the production demonstrates the important role theatre can play in ameliorating the social isolation refugees can often experience in a new country by offering positive counter-narratives of their experience.

Another production staged around the same time that might be seen to work in the same way is *Kia Ora Khalid*, by Gareth Farr and Dave Armstrong. This production, which was directed by Sara Brodie and staged at the Opera House in Wellington in 2009, was described as 'the first professional opera to be created especially for children'.[32] Set in a school playground, the story is about a boy, Khalid, a newly arrived asylum seeker from Afghanistan, who is being bullied by Tom who won't let him play touch football because he is seen as an 'illegal immigrant' or a Taliban terrorist. Khalid's story of fleeing Afghanistan

and the long journey he takes before eventually ending up in New Zealand is juxtaposed against the stories of some of the other children in the playground, who have Cambodian, Samoan or Polish refugee backgrounds.

The opera's message about cultural diversity and tolerance is driven home in a song entitled 'It's Such a Beautiful Country', which is undercut by the characters as they recount their experiences of racial abuse in New Zealand.[33] The production company Capital E National Theatre for Children developed *Kia Ora Khalid* over two years, beginning with extensive research in Auckland schools and refining the script, score and production through feedback gained from trial performances to young audiences. Importantly, Capital E's creative technology department developed a living learning resource on a Wikispace webpage where visitors could view and respond to the initial recorded interviews, add their own footage, and connect with migrant and refugee networks.[34]

Again, this production highlights how theatre can work to challenge negative stereotypes of refugees that might contribute to discrimination and particular barriers to participation in the wider community. The opera is also an example of how theatre can work to develop affinities and alliances across disparate groups that might share experiences of precarity.

Another important example of how theatre in New Zealand has engaged with precarity and the refugee experience is an arts organisation called Mixit. Based in Auckland, Mixit provides creative workshops and classes in dance, drama, music and circus that are specifically targeted at young people from refugee backgrounds, who are encouraged to 'mix it up' with local and migrant youth. Mixit says its work is about bringing people together from a range of diverse backgrounds and getting them involved in creative projects that offer opportunities to establish networks that can help young people transition from school into study, training and life.[35] The organisation, which is based at the Corban Estate Arts Centre in West Auckland, has also produced several productions celebrating the experiences of the refugee and migrant youth with whom they work.

The *MiXit Ten: Gala Cabaret* was staged on 16 January 2016 at

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TAPAC theatre in Western Springs. The cabaret drew on key themes from the organisation's history, including arrivals and departures, as well as celebrating Mixit's work over the last ten years.[36] Perhaps in recognition of the precariousness of the refugee existence, according to founder Julie Preston, Mixit uses creativity as a way of engaging refugee youth because 'it builds confidence and self-esteem, helps people feel that they are worthwhile and have something to contribute, supports self-expression and core communication skills.' According to Preston, at Mixit creativity also offers participants 'positive, fun socialisation and a powerful sense of belonging'.[37] If the precarity of the asylum and refugee experience is defined by limitations on rights, dislocation and insecurity, Mixit again demonstrates how theatre and creative practice can be deployed to develop networks of participation and ultimately foster belonging for refugees in the wider community.

CONCLUSION

The focus of this chapter has been on exploring the issues of precarity and the refugee experience through the prism of theatre and cultural practice. Through a brief overview of some examples of how theatre has engaged with refugees and asylum seekers in Aotearoa New Zealand I hope I have shown how theatre might also work to challenge negative stereotypes around refugees and offer more positive personal stories for public consideration. The examples reveal that the refugee experience has often been presented on stage alongside the experiences of other 'denizens' such as migrants or other minorities such as Māori. In this way, these theatre productions often situate the refugee issue as a rights-based issue — highlighting the experience of a group of people whose rights have been limited in some way.

These examples from the theatre also highlight a broader definition of citizenship, one that focuses on ideas of membership and belonging, and on things like cultural rights rather than just civic privileges. Apart from civic rights, Standing highlights the importance of 'cultural rights', which can include 'equal access to enjoyment of culture and entitlement to participate in the cultural life of the community'.[38] As Nira Yuval-Davis observes, belonging is about 'emotional attachment' and about 'feeling at home'.[39] If the asylum and refugee experience is

defined by the condition of precarity and a lack of security, this chapter demonstrates the potential role that theatre can play in encouraging community participation and belonging of asylum seekers and refugees in the wider community.

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DISCUSSION

SHILOH GROOT, BRIDGETTE MASTERS-AWATERE, CLIFFORD VAN OMMEN AND NATASHA TASSELL-MATAMUA

> 'Knowing that your fellow citizen has the same rights as you do humanises us all.'[1]

Guy Standing's words have served as the launching point from which this book began. The book is a call for us all to renew our commitment and dedication to building diverse and powerful movements for a secure, stable and equitable society. To do so we must address inequality, as all peoples within our communities experience it. The book offers a revived purpose: not to surrender to economic and social practices as if they were inevitable and immutable but rather to pursue a common security that would enhance our communities.

One of the strangest and most prevalent (colonial) myths of our time is the myth of the 'individual'. We are all individuals: self-contained vessels, islands unto ourselves . . . or are we? The individuality myth is so pervasive (and heavily marketed) that it permeates every aspect of our society — and often goes unquestioned. Indeed, as a political ideology, neoliberalism emphasises individual responsibility and freedom from collective obligations. Capitalism is the spoilt and greedy child of this philosophy.

Our neoliberal society's present emphasis on individualism creates a version of human beings that can undermine our efforts to build healthy and inclusive communities. An increasing proportion of New Zealanders are living uncertain lives, battling poverty and seething with

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frustration and anger at the political elite who dismiss their concerns. They are the unemployed, those working multiple part-time jobs, the underpaid, and senior citizens who struggle with dwindling benefits. They are also those unfairly dismissed, politically ignored, culturally ostracised, and trying hopelessly to stretch inadequate budgets to feed their families. Our neoliberal society treats the precariat as a group to be criticised, pitied, demonised, sanctioned or penalised for seeking help. They are the 'individuals' who made 'bad choices', who didn't try hard enough, or who simply need to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. In this context, social issues have become redefined as *personal* issues.

None of authors who have contributed to this book has claimed that individuality and personal responsibility are unimportant. Rather, they have all highlighted how such concerns only provide part of the picture of *who* we are and *how* we become who we are. Many of the decisions affecting the lives of the diverse communities who comprise the precariat are made above and beyond them. It may be useful at this point for the reader to think to themselves about the various communities to which they belong: What political decisions affect them? How are they imagined in the political arena?

Each chapter has asked the reader to consider the following questions: Who is the precariat? Why is it growing in our country? Why should we care about it? And what do we as a nation need to do about it? The authors answer these questions through publicising the everyday struggles of Māori, Pasifika, migrants, refugees, families, the young and old, able-bodied and disabled, housed and homeless, and gender diverse. Each discusses how political, civil, cultural, social and economic rights have been denied the precariat. In this sense, the precariat is more than just a class-in-the-making; it is a social condition. Each author has promoted solidarity across liberation struggles and advocated for change at personal, community and national levels. Each of us must undertake the task of understanding, and making, change — together, and not imagined in academia alone. It is up to us as members of our various communities to promote advocacy and take action.

This book attests to the ideal that *people* are interconnected. Many

different cultures across the world acknowledge the interconnected nature of humanity and the world in which we live. In Aotearoa New Zealand, Te Ao Māori (the Māori world) provides a framework that reminds us that our social and emotional wellbeing is intimately interwoven with our connection to land, language, culture, spirituality, ancestry, family and community in a way that is seamless and uncontrived. Similarly, all the authors in this book have deliberately drawn attention to how human life is woven into relationships and situations and is not independent of environmental context. We are never truly separate from one another. It is from an understanding of our interconnectedness that we can resist, act and meaningfully work to address the struggles impacting on the diverse communities that comprise the precariat.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

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TBC

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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

James Arrowsmith is a professor in the School of Management at Massey University. His research interests include comparative industrial relations, employee engagement, and flexible pay and working time systems, and he has published widely in leading international journals in these areas. He is also the co-editor of *The Transformation of Employment Relations in Europe* (Routledge, 2013) and *The Big Issues in Employment: HR Management and Employment Relations in New Zealand* (CCH, 2013). Jim has acted as a consultant for employers, government agencies and trade unions, and most recently for the International Labour Organization advising Pacific Island countries on labour reform.

Mary Breheny is a senior lecturer in the School of Public Health at Massey University. Her research focuses on understanding how social and economic issues influence health and wellbeing across the life course. In particular, she is interested in the ways in which inequalities throughout the lifespan accumulate in later life and constrain older people from ageing well.

Stuart C. Carr is professor of psychology, Industrial/Organisational Psychology Programme at Massey University and co-coordinates the End Poverty and Inequality Cluster (EPIC). He also coordinates Project GLOW (for Global Living Organizational Wage), a multi-country, multi-generational, interdisciplinary study of links between decent wages and sustainable livelihoods for the eradication of poverty — UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG1). Stuart co-convened a Global Task Force for Humanitarian Work Psychology, promoting Decent Work aligned with local stakeholder needs, in partnership with

global development agencies. He also co-led Project ADDUP, a multi-country study of pay/remuneration diversity between national and international labour in low-income economies, funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

Kerry Chamberlain is professor of social and health psychology at Massey University. His research interests are in health and the everyday, with a specific focus on inequality and disadvantage, medications, media, materiality, mundane ailments and food, and in innovative qualitative research methodology. He is co-editor of the book series *Critical Approaches to Health* (Routledge; with Antonia Lyons), co-author of *Health Psychology: A Critical Introduction* (Cambridge; with Antonia Lyons), and co-editor of *Qualitative Health Psychology: Theories and Methods* (Sage; with Michael Murray).

Bill Cochrane is a senior lecturer in sociology and social policy at the University of Waikato as well as being a research associate of the New Zealand Work Research Institute (Auckland University of Technology [AUT]). His main interests lie in labour economics and he specialises in the econometric analysis of local labour markets, spatial econometric analysis, evaluation of policy particularly in relation to the labour market and social security system, labour market and small area demographic projections, and analysis of the organisation of work and workplace productivity.

Margaret Forster (Rongomaiwāhine, Ngāti Kahungunu) is a senior lecturer at Te Pūtahi-a-Toi, School of Māori Arts, Knowledge and Education, and Director BA (Programme) at Massey University. She teaches in the area of Māori knowledge and development, has expertise in tikanga and Māori research methodologies, and is engaged in research that explores the politics of indigeneity.

Jessica Gosche is a New Zealand-born palagi-Samoan mother of two who is completing her Master's of applied psychology (community). She is a member of the Māori Psychology Research Unit, and a senior

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sessional assistant in the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato. Jessica is committed to advocating for social justice and equity, and to being a voice for the marginalised and oppressed. Her research and work experience in the social services sector has influenced her belief that a decolonising standpoint and preventive focus, alongside active community participation, are paramount.

Rebekah Graham is a recipient of the Massey University Vice-Chancellor's Doctoral Scholarship and is currently working towards completion of her PhD in societal psychology. Prior to this, she completed her Master's in applied psychology (community) at Waikato University. Her research considers the ways in which food-related traditions invoke connection and belonging, linking people to each other and to broader socio-cultural narratives. Specifically, her PhD considers the wider social issues associated with ongoing precarity and food insecurity.

Shiloh Groot (Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Uenukukōpako) is a lecturer in social psychology at the University of Auckland. Shiloh is an interdisciplinary and indigenous social scientist who works in the fields of Indigenous worldviews and communities, gender and sexuality, and homelessness and urban poverty. Shiloh is the co-chair of the Tangata Whenua Caucus for the New Zealand Coalition to End Homelessness (NZCEH), which has been asked to advise on the expansion of research strategies that will inform the development of national policy and service provision.

Jarrod Haar (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Mahuta) is a professor of human resource management (HRM) in the Department of Management at AUT, and the deputy director of the New Zealand Work Research Institute. His research focuses on work-family-life roles, the role of cultural factors in the workplace and teams and leadership including its influence on followers. Jarrod is currently researching on a National Science Challenge (Science for Technological Innovation), and he has over 290 refereed academic outputs. Jarrod is a keen quantitative researcher and teaches HR analytics at AUT.

Sarah Hahn completed her Master's in organisational psychology with a thesis on power structures and collaboration in the Auckland refugee resettlement sector in 2015. She has since worked for the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC) as communications manager. After a brief return to her country of origin, Germany, for a research scholarship, Sarah has now settled in her home country of choice, New Zealand, and is working for Youthtown, a child development non-profit organisation. She continues to support ARCC as a volunteer and uses every opportunity to advocate for New Zealand to fulfil its international obligations in refugee resettlement.

Rand Hazou is a senior lecturer in theatre at Massey University. His research primarily explores theatre and performance engaging with issues of social justice. His research on asylum seeker and refugee theatre has been published in a series of international journal articles. He has a developing research profile related to Palestinian theatre specifically and Arab theatre more generally. A recent example of his research, exploring the rehearsals of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by Palestinian students of the Drama Academy in Ramallah, is published in *Research in Drama Education, 20* (2), 2015.

Darrin Hodgetts is Professor of Societal Psychology at Massey University. Prior to taking up his current post he held positions in community medicine at Memorial University (Canada), psychology and media at the London School of Economics, and community psychology at the University of Waikato. Darrin's research focuses on urban poverty, homelessness, the precariat and health inequalities. Darrin has authored other books including: D. Hodgetts, N. Drew, O. Stoltie, C. Sonn, N. Nikora and C. Curtis, *Social Psychology and Everyday Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillian, 2010) and D. Hodgetts and O. Stolte, *Urban Poverty, Penal Welfare and Health Inequalities* (London: Routledge, 2017).

Wayne Hope is a professor in the School of Communication Studies at Auckland University of Technology (AUT). He is a researcher, teacher, blogger and media commentator across the areas of New Zealand

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politics, New Zealand media ownership, public sphere analysis, the political economy of communication, sport-media relationships, globalisation and time. On the latter theme, *Time, Communication and Global Capitalism* was published by Palgrave MacMillan in 2016. He is joint editor of the online IAMCR journal, *Political Economy of Communication.*

Kimberly Jackson is a PhD candidate in psychology at the University of Waikato. She holds a BA in education and sociology from the University of Canterbury and a Master's in Social Policy from The Open University in the UK. Her doctoral project has a focus on food and milk in schools schemes as a response to hunger in New Zealand, both historically and in the present. The research includes analysis of media and policy relating to hungry children and their parents, as well as in-depth interviews with parents who are feeding their families on low incomes.

Harvey Jones is a computer programmer/analyst in the School of Psychology at Massey University. He develops and maintains the numerous websites associated with the school, its various research projects, and electronic journals. Harvey's extensive knowledge of the tools and options available within the Qualtrics survey package has enabled researchers to deliver clear and accessible surveys to respondents with a variety of question types and logic flow according to needs, and collate data for analysis. These skills have helped support data collection for the Living Wage studies and the development of the international Project GLOW.

Delta King is a psychology graduate from Te Arawa. She is new to research but is familiar with what it means to be in the precariat. With a growing interest in poverty-related issues, Delta's Master's thesis was produced with Māori precariat whānau and their advocates, and is the basis for her contribution to this book. Delta has also worked in mental health settings supporting Māori who experience precarity with their income, housing, food, and ultimately, their health.

Bridgette Masters-Awatere (Te Rarawa, Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau, Ngāi Te Rangi) is a lecturer at the University of Waikato. She is a principal investigator for the Māori and Psychology Research Unit (MPRU), and convenor of both the Community Psychology Programme and the Kaupapa Māori Management Committee within the School of Psychology. Bridgette's research and evaluation experience is in indigenous methodologies, Māori development, domestic violence, and indigenous psychologies, health and wellbeing.

Jane Parker is Professor of Employment Relations and HRM at Massey University. Her work focuses on equality and diversity, employee consultation and state regulation. Jane has led various ILO projects, including studies of labour law and child labour in Papua New Guinea, and social dialogue and gender equity in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. She co-directs the MPOWER research group, is an Associate Fellow of Warwick University's Industrial Relations Research Unit and is co-Editor-in-Chief of *Labour and Industry*. She is editing *Big Issues in Employment: HRM and Employment Relations in Australasia* (CCH, 2017/18) and was named 2017 New Zealand HR Researcher of the Year.

Neville Robertson is a Pākehā of Scottish descent. He is a senior lecturer in psychology at the University of Waikato, where he teaches community psychology. Neville's professional work focuses on men's violence against women and children. He facilitates stopping violence programmes and provides consultancy and training. His research focuses on community and institutional responses to domestic violence. Other aspects of Neville's work include anti-racism and Treaty of Waitangi education and the evaluation of health and social service programmes.

Mohi Rua is a senior lecturer in the School of Psychology at the University of Waikato and teaches community, indigenous and social psychology. Mohi is a principle investigator in the Māori and Psychology Research Unit, with an interest in Māori psychology and cultural concepts, indigenous psychology, and health inequalities.

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Jane Scott has a PhD in political studies and has taught political theory, public policy and media politics at the University of Auckland, economics and English language at the University of Exeter (INTO), and media communications at Auckland University of Technology. Her research areas have focused on political economy, media discourse, labour market and social policy. She is currently an academic advisor for curriculum development at Unitec, Auckland.

Byron Malaela Sotiata Seiuli is Samoan, with ancestral lineage to the villages of Malie, Faleula, Manono and Sataua. He is a research fellow at the University of Waikato's School of Psychology. As a senior Pacific clinician with over 15 years of face-to-face counselling work, Byron brings extensive knowledge and experience in the areas of family relationships, suicide prevention, trauma, grief, youth and adolescents, mental health, addiction and recovery. His current research focuses on mental health challenges among Pacific adolescents and young adults in New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga and Fiji.

Distinguished Professor Paul Spoonley is the Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. He has been involved in research projects on immigration and diversity in New Zealand, including Capturing the Diversity Dividend of Aotearoa New Zealand (2014-2020). He is the author or editor of 27 books ranging from political extremism to the nature of work, and he was Ranginui Walker's biographer (*Mata Toa*, Penguin). He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand and of the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Guy Standing (?)

Ottilie Stolte is a senior lecturer at the University of Waikato and teaches social and community health psychology. She has more than 30 peer-reviewed publications on issues relating to homelessness, poverty, inequalities, health, place and culture. In her research, Ottilie seeks to understand psychological issues within the broader social, cultural and political contexts of people's everyday lives.

Thomas Stubbs is a lecturer in quantitative sociology at the School of Social Sciences, University of Waikato, and a research associate in political economy at the Centre for Business Research, University of Cambridge. His research spans development studies, global and public health, political economy, economic and political sociology, urban sociology, quantitative methods, and East Africa. Over the years, his research has been funded by Cambridge Political Economy Society Trust and Cambridge Commonwealth Trust. It has appeared in leading academic journals, including *Review of International Political Economy*, *Social Science & Medicine* and *World Development*.

Natasha Tassell-Matamua is a senior lecturer in the School of Psychology at Massey University, where she teaches in the area of cultural psychology. Natasha's research interests include indigenous psychology and indigenous ethics, and she has been involved in a variety of research projects, including with Māori samples, which have explored issues related to these areas. She has also extensively studied near-death experiences, writing book chapters, journal articles and articles for popular media. Natasha is the recipient of several awards and a medal in recognition of her work in relation to near-death experiences.

Lynley Uerata (Ngaati Tahinga, Ngaati Mahuta) is a PhD candidate at the Māori and Psychology Research Unit, School of Psychology, University of Waikato. She has worked principally in the fields of health research, including chronic conditions and employment, the application of biofeedback technology in primary education contexts, pathways of Māori women in breast cancer and health. She was a member of the research team that developed two sets of guidelines and cultural frameworks that inform the engagement of Māori in genomic research and biobanking.

Tycho Vandenburg is a PhD candidate in social psychology at the University of Auckland, whose research aims to explore the lived experiences of trans and gender-diverse homeless young people living in Aotearoa New Zealand. Tycho is also the co-founder and executive

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director of Breaking Boundaries, a grassroots creative arts organisation for queer and gender-diverse people.

Clifford van Ommen is a senior lecturer at the Centre for Psychology at Massey University's Auckland campus. He has published in the area of critical neuroscience, body studies and the history of psychology, including a book co-edited with Desmond Painter, *Interiors: A History of Psychology in South Africa* (Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2008). He is a member of the International Society for Theoretical Psychology (ISTP).

Felicity Ware (Ngāpuhi) is a mother and a lecturer in Māori health development at Te Pūtahi-a-Toi, School of Māori Arts, Knowledge and Education, Massey University. Felicity is a doctoral candidate in public health at Massey University and is researching the experiences of support of young Māori parents. Her research interests include Māori health and development, policy and research, young people's health and wellbeing, and parenting.

Seraphine Williams is a young Samoan transgender woman who is passionate about the rights and growth of people. Seraphine is a Master's student at the University of Auckland; her research aims to explore occupational justice and belonging for Pacific transwomen. Her interests are in the areas of Pacific, community, critical qualitative, industrial and organisational psychologies, with a specific focus on human rights and social justice.

Christian Yao is a lecturer in the School of Management at Victoria University of Wellington, where he teaches human resource management and employment relations. His research interests are global careers, mobility, expatriation and international HRM in China and other emerging countries. He has published his work in a range of journals including *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Career Development International* and *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources.*

Abann Yor has been an integral part of the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition (ARCC) since its inception and is currently its general manager. A professional community developer, providing leadership through clear objectives and well-developed strategic thinking, he has strong advocacy, leadership and management capabilities, and takes a human rights approach. He has established and maintained networks with the extremely diverse resettled communities in looking to find community-driven solutions for resettlement issues.

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Spare spread if we need it

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