Is "Positive Parenting" really positive for children and families? Early childhood parenting as a site of governance in Aotearoa New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

Educational policies have significant impacts on the lives of those involved, silencing or strengthening one mode of pedagogy over others in society. The way that issues are re/presented within policies limits what is considered to be desirable or even possible in society (Bacchi, 2000). Consequently, looking into how a certain issue is problematised and framed in policies invites individuals to unpack the unspoken regulations and issues that derive from these policies. Drawing from Bacchi's 'policy-as-discourse' model, this thesis explores "what is unsaid yet present" (Bacchi, 2004, p. 131) within the early childhood parenting programme, *Incredible Years* [IY].

For its wealth of evidence and science-based strategies, IY has been chosen and implemented by many countries as an official parenting programme 'to prevent and to treat' children's conduct problems. The aim of the programme is to equip 'high risk' parents with behaviour management skills and developmentally appropriate techniques, so that they can provide better support for their children's development of social and emotional competence and school readiness. Presenting reports of various clinical trials as evidence, the developers and the supporters of IY argue that the programme is an efficient tool to prevent "predictable negative consequences" such as violence, delinquency, and substance abuse among such child/ren in adolescence and adulthood (Borden, Schultz, Herman, & Brooks, 2010, p. 223). This argument, however, needs more thorough consideration, because evidence-based approaches can be criticised for the gap they leave in our knowledge of the reality of children's and families' daily lives (Robertson, 2014). Whether IY does provide sufficient, sustainable, and meaningful support for children and families, as trial reports suggest, remains to be seen.

This thesis takes a post-structural, post-colonial, feminist approach, examining the issues and how they are framed in IY through Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation'. By unpacking discourses of parenting produced by IY as an accepted parenting programme, it aims to reveal the 'norm' of parenting that is promoted by the current system, and explores how this concept of 'truth' in parenting influences the everyday life of families. This critical

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analysis shows that the IY policy privileges a scientific understanding of child rearing practices while silencing and pathologising other ways of being. The discourses produced in IY reinforce colonised, economic/neoliberal and scientific/clinical docile bodies, which exercise and maintain the existing power relations in society. The author argues that this notion of a curriculum for parents provides only a limited understanding of the issue, and intensifies inequality and injustice.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last two decades, New Zealand has undergone a significant change in policy direction for early childhood education. This transformation has important implications for the lives of children and families. It not only signifies the political and ideological orientations of different governments, but also shifts the way in which issues around education and parenting are framed. Between 1994 and 2014, parents and children have experienced radical changes, both in educational contexts and in their everyday lives, as these policy shifts have influenced society's perspectives on desirable parenting and the responsibilities of individuals (Farquhar & White, 2014).

One of these changes in educational policy has been governmental endorsement of parenting programmes such as *PAFT - Parents As First Teachers* (Ministry of Social Development, 2006) and *Incredible Years* (Ministry of Education, 2009). *Incredible Years,* in particular, has been promoted strongly by the centre-right National government since the introduction of the programme in 2009. Although trials of the programme in North Island and South Island had not yet been completed, the Ministry of Education made an announcement in December 2009 to expand the programme from 1000 parents to 3000 parents per year by 2012. The Ministry of Education (2014) claims that these government initiatives support parents "to build positive relationships with their children and develop strategies to manage problem behaviour" (para. 2). Since the IY programme's introduction in 2009, the National government's target has become even higher: 12,000 parents were to participate by 2014 (Collins, 2011).

Throughout these centre-right government initiatives in parenting, the discourse of 'positive' parenting has been strongly promoted. What is 'positive' parenting and what does this concept of parenting entail?

1. Research questions

Drawing on Foucault's notions of 'discursive normalisation' and 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 2014; Foucault, Burchell, Gordon, & Miller, 1991), and aspects of post-structural and decolonising research, this study seeks to disrupt the concept of 'truth' in parenting. The purpose of this project is to unpack the values and

assumptions that underpin the implementation of *Incredible Years* as an accepted parenting programme, and to explore the implications of the discourse of 'positive' parenting for parents' and children's lives.

This project aims to explore the following questions:

1. What is 'the norm' of parenting presented as 'desirable/positive' in the early childhood education policy, *Incredible Years*?
2. What are the values, beliefs and assumptions that underpin these discourses of parenting in *Incredible Years*?
3. What are the implications of these discourses for the lives of children, teachers and parents in the New Zealand early childhood?

In this project, the term 'discourses' is used to refer to social knowledge that constructs and restricts how we think and behave in relation to a specific social context and practice (Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006). Foucault (1980, 2014) explains that discourses determine what is 'acceptable' and 'normal' for each individual in a particular social relation, altering their forms and trajectories as power relations and historical circumstances change (Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006). Discourses are constantly working in our daily lives, unconsciously influencing our thoughts and behaviour. In particular, the dominant discourses formed by dominant relations in society, such as those associated with Western culture, have such a strong effect on individuals that they may stimulate practitioners to operate in accordance with these 'normal behaviours', even when these dominant discourses are not aligned with their beliefs and attitudes (Fairclough, 2003; Rogers, 2003).

For example, the parents who are originally from a culture where 'close relationships between parents and children' and 'humility' are highly valued may instead encourage their children to be 'independent' and 'confident'. Even though the display of 'confidence' and 'independence' of children can be read as 'arrogance and disrespectfulness' and 'weak family ties' in their own cultural values, these parents may endorse their children to demonstrate the discourses of 'confidence' and 'independence' that are highly regarded by the Western culture. In spite of the conflict between parents' own values and what is described as a 'positive/desirable'

parenting in the policy, parents may adopt the policy's recommendations so that their parenting practice will be deemed 'normal' and 'acceptable'.

2. Methodology

2.1 Method

This thesis conducts a critical analysis of *Incredible Years* through the lens of prominent philosophers' thinking on education. The models of critical analysis shaping this study are based on the idea of 'policy-as-discourse' (Bacchi, 2000, 2004). The premise behind the 'policy-as-discourse' approach is that "*problems* are *created* or *given shape* in the very policy proposals that are offered as *responses*", rather than "policy as government's responses to *problems* that exists *out there*" (Bacchi, 2000, p. 48). 'Policy-as-discourse' theorists argue that the traditional notion of 'policy as a means to an end' analysis often leads the practitioners to accept the norms and definitions created by policies without questioning them, thus hindering individuals from recognising 'real' problems of the society veiled under deep seated assumptions. Bacchi (2004) argues that:

> One way to understand what is at stake in policy contests is to identify what is represented to be a problem. The position starts from the premise that policy 'problems' do not exist separate from their representations. Representations of a 'problem' must then be closely examined to see what assumptions underpin different representations, what effects follow from them, and how subjects are constituted within them…. Crucially we need to reflect upon what is left unproblematic, what is likely to change and what is likely to stay the same (p. 131).

According to 'policy-as-discourse' theorists, considering policies as merely a means to an end (as solutions to problems) and examining their effectiveness as such distracts individuals from recognising the existing tensions and the crucial issues of society (Bacchi, 2000, 2004; Fairclough, 2003; Gale, 2006; MacLure, 2003; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Rogers, 2003). The way in which issues are re/presented within policies limits what is considered to be desirable or even possible in society (Bacchi, 2000). Consequently, the investigation of a certain issues and how

they are problematised and framed within policies invites individuals to unpack the unspoken regulations and issues that derive from these regulations.

Based on this notion of 'policy-as-discourse', this study seeks to challenge definitions and norms that are created and reinforced by policies, and question the way in which discourses in current policies limit what can be said, and what is possible in the lives of children and parents. As mentioned previously, this thesis explores "what is unsaid yet present" within the policy in order to make visible what underpins the norm and definitions created by policies (Bacchi, 2004, p. 131), and the power dynamic that operates to transform and reform social relations in society (Bacchi, 2000, 2004; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw, White, & De Almeida, 2006).

2.2 Theoretical framework

Philosophical notions from Foucault constitute key elements of this critical study. His notion of 'discursive normalisation' and 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1977, 1980; Foucault et al., 1991) are core elements of the project used to critique how early childhood education is governed and regulated by policies.

Foucault defines the term 'governmentality' as "the conduct of conduct", "a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons" (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 2). In his notion of 'government', governmentality concerns not only relations within social institutions and the exercise of political sovereignty, but also private interpersonal relations that involve control or guidance of self and others. Governmentality, then, includes the way that social institutions aim to direct the behaviour and thinking of people in society, as well as the ways in which individuals govern themselves (Baez & Talburt, 2008). Through this process of governance, a particular form of reality becomes conceivable, and a specific norm of being is considered more desirable in that social context. More comprehensive study of these ideas will be provided in Chapter Two of this thesis.

Foucault's perspective of 'discursive normalisation' and 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1977; Foucault et al., 1991) are applied in this thesis as a lens to interpret discourses in *Incredible Years*, and to explore how these discourses influence the

everyday life of children and parents. Other key ideas from prominent educational philosophers, early childhood researchers, and decolonising theorists are also examined in conjunction with Foucault's concepts to increase depth in the analysis of this study.

To gain a better understanding of 'positive/desirable' parenting and how this discourse has been constructed and reinforced, this thesis begins with a brief overview of early childhood education policies and media responses within the last decade. In addition, this chapter explores various scholars' perspectives on parenting, and reviews the dominant stances on this topic. The more detailed investigation of political climates and complex interrelated factors regarding *Incredible Years*, will be discussed in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

3. Background
3.1 A landscape of parenting in Aotearoa New Zealand
As globalisation and neoliberalism pervaded society on a global scale, the notion of neoliberalism found its foothold in New Zealand. Since the fourth Labour government in 1984, the general direction of New Zealand government has been consistent with neoliberal movements, progressing further towards its goal of establishing 'Information society' and 'Knowledge economy' (Cederman, 2008; Olssen, 2004, 2006; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Roberts, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2014; Roberts & Codd, 2010).

Under the 'shared goal' of economic competitiveness and prosperity, New Zealand has undergone an uncompromising reform process of economic and social policies (Roberts, 2007). A larger portion of governments' fiscal responsibilities in the education, health and welfare sectors has been transferred to individuals, identifying them as private beneficiaries and consumers of these services (Roberts, 2004, 2007; Roberts & Codd, 2010). Knowledge as information has become "a commodity to be sold, traded and consumed", and an area of investment to gain advantage over others in a competitive environment (Roberts, 2005, p. 44). Parents and students are expected to cover the financial gap that the withdrawal of state funding has left, and to personally shop around the various educational services that

will provide an edge among others (Roberts, 2004, 2007, 2009b, 2014; Roberts & Codd, 2010).

Although the neoliberal reforms that promote 'choice' and 'competition' have persisted under both centre-left and centre-right governments, there has been a different degree of and emphasis on neoliberal ideas by each government. For example, the fifth Labour government's ideological stance seeking shared commitment of inclusion and equality led a neoliberal reform with a softer face, the government's version of Third Way politics (Roberts, 2007, 2009a). The Labour government's commitments to a fairer and more inclusive society were evident in its advocacy for universal funding in welfare and education sectors. Nonetheless, the government's political direction continued towards establishing a knowledge economy.

From 1999 to 2008, the Labour government introduced increased universal funding for better quality and access to early childhood education for *all* parents and children. The Strategic Plan, *Pathways to the Future* (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2002) provided a clear vision of this centre-left government's focus on establishing educational infrastructure at governmental level to ensure equality for *all* in society (May, 2014). The published Plan document (MOE, 2002) identified its goal as building "a more integrated [educational] system that allows government to better support quality across the diverse Early Childhood Education [ECE] services" (p. 23). To achieve this 10 year goal, the Labour government introduced twenty hours of free ECE services (per week) for three and four year old children, set a target to have 100 per cent qualified teachers by 2012, and increased subsidies for all children under three.

Te Whāriki (MOE, 1996), the early childhood curriculum was developed and tentatively introduced to the early childhood sector during the National government's 1993-1999 term, and between 1999 and 2008 the document was actively implemented in New Zealand. The curriculum document was well received by early childhood theorists, both in New Zealand and overseas, for its innovative approaches allowing teachers to tailor their pedagogy to suit the different needs of children and families in their diverse settings (Alvestad, Duncan, & Berge, 2009). Rather than giving a set of

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prescribed teaching instructions and a specific way to approach each curriculum area, *Te Whāriki* (MOE, 1996) encourages educators to focus on providing holistic learning environments and reciprocal learning experiences between learners, families and educators (Alvestad et al., 2009; Gunn, 2003). The document highlights the significant role of parents/families in a child's learning, and encourages educators to build up a respectful partnership with them:

> The wider world of family and community is an integral part of the early childhood curriculum…Children's learning and development are fostered if the well-being of their family and community is supported…They (educators) should also respect the aspirations of parents and families for their children. Providing the flexibility to respond to different conditions, different needs, and the expectations of local communities (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 42)

Respecting the different backgrounds of families (religions, beliefs, values, child rearing styles, and economic status, etc.) and supporting parents and families to meet diverse needs are described as a part of early childhood education's responsibilities.

This, however, has changed drastically since the current National government came to power in 2008. True to its neoliberal orientation emphasising market-led competition and economic prosperity, the government withdrew the universal funding of the previous government, and implemented more 'targeted' approaches for those in 'high need' areas (May, 2014). Economic growth and financial efficiency have become driving forces for policy decisions.

Under the fifth National government, the previous government's commitment to having 100 per cent qualified teachers and increased pay and working conditions for early childhood educators was abandoned, and more freedom was given to privately owned early childhood centres to run their centres as businesses (Farquhar, 2015; Mutch & Trim, 2013). 20 hours free ECE services has instead become 20 hours ECE of subsidised services*,* which allows the private ECE centres to charge parents 'optional charges' that could be used as a means to cover the costs of keeping qualified staff (May, 2014). By changing the title of the benefit to 'subsidy', the

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current government transferred the costs and responsibilities of ensuring the quality of early childhood education from government to parents and families.

The media's attitude to parenting has shifted in a similar pattern. Under the centre-left government from 1999 to 2008, the majority of media reports approached the issues surrounding parenting as a failing of systems in society. By emphasising different needs of children and families that were left unmet by the structure of society (e.g. the education system, government funding for health and education, etc.), the angle of articles was often about the inefficacy of government policy and systems that failed to meet the diverse and unique needs of individuals. The following excerpts from newspaper articles printed during this period clearly demonstrate how these issues were framed to critique the system or society as a whole:

> "New Zealand culture emphasises individualism, making it difficult for child and family welfare agencies to work together."
> (Pattison, 2003, para. 1)

> "A UNICEF report on the well-being of New Zealand children was a good wake-up call for the Government.....There also needed to be structural change, like extensions to tax credits for low income families and adjustment of family support to accommodate cost of living increases."
> (Fox, 2002, para. 12)

> "More financial support was needed and more government action to tackle the 'huge problem' of violence against children."
> (Gibb, 2002, para. 9)

In contrast, the media coverage since 2008 has concentrated on portraying individuals' responsibilities and roles as parents. While current government support for health care and education for families has been reduced with the justification of economic efficiency (e.g. closing down school resident dental services, and removing government funding for swimming lessons at school), parents' responsibilities have increased considerably. Parenting advice from 'experts' such as scientists, doctors, and psychologists is frequently presented in the media, suggesting 'scientific'

methods to reduce 'risks' and to be in control of lives (e.g. advice on vaccination, breast-feeding, bed-sharing, and 'positive behaviour management'). The following are some examples of newspaper headlines displaying some of the expectations which have been thrust on parents.

> "Children who are not immunised against measles risk being sent home from school."
> (Thomas, 2009b, para. 1)

> "Poor vaccination record raises fears. A new report on child well-being ranked New Zealand the second worst in the developed world for immunisation against the measles and the fifth worst for whooping cough."
> (Hartevelt, 2009, para. 2)

> "Epidemic fears as babies infected."
> (Thomas, 2009a, para. 1)

> "..To make dysfunctional families self-managing, live healthy lifestyle, participate fully in society, be economically secure, involved in wealth creation, cohesive, resilient and nurturing."
> (Espiner, 2010, para. 20)

> "More grandparents raising children-they are a stabilising role for many families."
> (Gates, 2010, para. 10)

> "Welfare changes seen cutting liability by $4.4b."
> (Small, 2014, para. 1)

These newspaper excerpts suggest increased anxiety and tension over parenting in society. Reading the articles about outbreaks of illness, poverty, and dysfunctional/unstable families, one cannot avoid the message that our modern society is always at some kind of 'risk' (Espiner, 2010; Hartevelt, 2009; Small, 2014; Thomas, 2009a, 2009b).

Furthermore, a recent article in the *Listener* (Woulfe, 2014) presents a stark portrayal of a shift in the way that we perceive parents in our society: from competent and valuable partners in learning who deserve systematic support and respect, to incompetent and inadequate novices in parenting. The article supports its claim about the inadequacy of modern parents by referring to brain and cognitive development theories.

> It's a scandal that New Zealand early childhood education doesn't put more emphasis on language and cognitive development… Many parents are dropping the ball… They (children) came to school with virtually no language. Now they're doomed for the rest of their career… it's critical that parents use words, married up with eye gaze, married up with gesture. This is something that comes naturally, but which parents should try to do more deliberately and slowly, in plain language, they should always look at whatever it is they want the baby to focus on and they should point.
> (Woulfe, 2014, para. 17)

It seems that it is not a question of whether systems in society provide enough support for parents to be good parents, but whether individuals are pulling their weight to prevent 'risks' for society, and performing their duties as competent citizens. Thus, issues relating to parenting are framed as if they are the result of individual incompetency.

3.2-1 'Positive/desirable' parenting in New Zealand

The image of model parenthood conjured by media reports is that of parents with two incomes who send their children to early childhood settings fully vaccinated. After a long day of work, these parents 'try more' to be a good parents so that their children will not 'be doomed for the rest of their careers' (Woulfe, 2014). Using techniques advocated by psychologists and educational gurus, these parents talk and read to their children using eye contact and signals to further their children's language and cognitive development. These self-managing individuals take the initiative to seek 'experts' help' to better their childrearing practices. They are in control of their own and their children's wellbeing, and require minimal support from the government

(Espiner, 2010; Gates, 2010; Hartevelt, 2009; Small, 2014; Thomas, 2009a, 2009b; Woulfe, 2014).

This model of 'positive/desirable' parenting represented in policies and media reports is consistent with international studies in modern parenting. In their critical analysis of discourses on parenting within school and education policies in the European context, Ramaekers and Suissa (2011) point out that the modern conceptualisation of parenting involves a particular set of goals and tasks, pressuring parents to interact with their children in a specific way to promote children's learning. According to the current trend of parenting, engaging with children in daily interactions is not enough to set up children for a good job and life. Instead, parents should 'stimulate and take responsibility for the intellectual development of their children' (Lareau, as cited in Ramaekers & Suissa, 2011, p. 197).

The challenge of the 'positive/desirable' parenting illustrated in the current trend towards parenting derives from its lack of consideration of the complex dimensions of parents' lives and the dynamics of families. This discourse of parenting gives families the illusion that mastering a list of behaviour management strategies should be sufficient to overcome the challenges that families face, while the roots of issues such as family dynamics, poverty and domestic violence may be left unchallenged (Ramaekers & Suissa, 2011). Rather than having government policies that address all matters related to parenting, these discourses of parenting pass the blame to parents, citing their 'poor performance' and advising them to draw from professional 'expertise' for better childrearing practices. This parallels Smeyers' (2008) perspective on modern childrearing practices. Smeyers contends that the performance and efficiency-focused mode of modern parenting provides only a limited understanding of family dynamics and contexts, and distracts parents and society from dealing with real issues such as the values and beliefs of families.

3.2-2 The framing of matters relating to parenting

The attributes of 'positive/desirable' parents also reflect attributes which are generally valued within modern society, such as autonomy, efficiency, economic productivity, science-based and measurable knowledge, and self-betterment. Throughout the current policies and newspaper articles, parenting is described as a performance by

which to prove one's capability and value as a member of society. Therefore, failing to meet this specific norm of parenting practice not only indicates one's inadequacy as a parent, but also incompetency as a member of society.

Baez and Talburt (2008) claim that this is how the government's family policy operates as a "site of intense regulation" in the modern world (p. 25). Drawing from Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' which seeks to form, direct, or affect the conduct of the individual, Baez and Talburt (2008) analyse two pamphlets that were published by the U.S. Department of Education. The authors argue that this mode of parenting problematises the conduct of children and families, and seeks to channel their conduct to meet particular purposes. Without considering the diverse and complex needs and backgrounds of children and families, these policies convert parenting into "a surrogate to schooling" (Popkewitz, as cited in Baez & Talburt, 2008, p. 34), placing home as a centre of the responsibility to train children to be moral and dependable citizens. In this norm of parenting, 'good/desirable' parenting is described as something universal and achievable that is directed at the 'common good', and if not met, 'ineptitude' in parenting can be fixed through experts' support and parenting courses run by institutions. The authors contend that this entry of school's and society's goals into homes has far-reaching consequences as it normalises a certain notion of parenthood, and silences and excludes other forms of child-parent relationships. The findings from Macartney's (2011) study in New Zealand resonates with this. By exploring the 'real' experience of her own family and another family with a disable child, the author illustrates how this rigid and normalised concept of parenting systematically excludes parents and children with differences.

A very particular and rigid model of parenting is identified within policy changes: self-managing, economically sound, and functional individuals who are in control of their children's education and well-being. While the support that is given to families by government is reduced, the responsibilities of individuals are increased significantly. By constructing the norm of the 'positive/desirable' parent, individuals are pressured to confirm their competence as capable and valuable members of society.

International research in parenting parallels the current direction of New Zealand early childhood policies towards 'parenting as a performance'. This, however, is cause for concern, as these studies point out the shortcomings of a modern model of parenting. Caution must be exercised as this discourse of parenting in current policies could operate as a tool leading to the exclusion and stigmatisation of families with different values and beliefs, as well as creating "a site of intense regulation" (Baez & Talburt, 2008, p. 25).

To address this point, this project intends to unpack "what is unsaid yet present" (Bacchi, 2004, p. 131) within discourses of 'positive' parenting in *Incredible Years*, and to develop a greater understanding of their implications in children's and parent's lives. By disrupting the norm of parenting in IY, this thesis seeks to loosen the static position where only a particular way of being is considered to be true/normal, and aims to dismantle taken-for-granted assumptions. In so doing, the author aims to make space for what was unthinkable/unimaginable in the context of the current approach to parenting, opening up possibilities for the future. The matters that are raised in this project may inform the planning of future parenting policy decisions and further investigation.

4. Thesis structure

The first two chapters of the thesis provide a comprehensive overview of the chosen policy document (Chapter One) and the theoretical framework of this study (Chapter Two). Chapter One examines the background to *Incredible Years*, its theoretical assumptions, the structure/design of the policy and the way in which it is implemented in the New Zealand early childhood context. Chapter Two explains Foucault's notion of 'discursive normalisation' and 'governmentality', and how these ideas are applied as a tool of analysis in this thesis. Chapters Three, Four and Five present the detailed analysis and findings of the project. Lastly, the Concluding Thoughts section revisits and summarises findings of this study, discusses the limitations of the project, and offers a direction for further investigation.

CHAPTER ONE:
INCREDIBLE YEARS

Based on cognitive behaviour psychology and social learning theory, the Incredible Years [IY] programme was initially developed as a parent training course 'to prevent and to treat' children's conduct problems in the United States (Advisory Group on Conduct Problems, 2011; Borden, Schultz, Herman, & Brooks, 2010; Robertson, 2014; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton, 2013). The programme offers various parent, teacher and child training courses that address conduct problems. In line with the topic of this thesis, this analysis focuses on a parent training aspect of the programme.

The premise behind the course is giving parents insights into 'positive' parenting principles to support them to change their own behaviours towards children, thus altering the problem behaviours of the children in these families by modifying the interaction patterns between children and parents (The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010).

Presenting reports of various clinical trials as evidence (Robertson, 2014; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Webster-Stratton, 2013; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010), the developers and the supporters of IY argue that the programme is an efficient tool to prevent "predictable negative consequences" such as violence, delinquency, and substance abuse by these child/ren in adolescence and adulthood (Borden et al., 2010, p. 223). However, this argument warrants careful consideration prior to acceptance, as evidence-based approaches can be criticised for the gap they leave in our knowledge of the reality of the daily lives of children and families (Robertson, 2014). Whether IY does provide sufficient, sustainable, and meaningful support for children and families as trial reports suggest still remains to be seen.

This chapter explores the chosen policy document of this thesis, *Incredible Years* [IY] in detail, probing into the background of its construction, theoretical frameworks, structure/design, and implementation in New Zealand. The purpose of this thesis is to unpack assumptions and reveal "what is unsaid yet present" (Bacchi,

2004, p. 131) that underpins the norm of 'positive/desirable' parenting. Therefore, it is necessary to probe deeper than the straight, direct information given by the IY programme providers. By investigating the IY's foundation and the way in which it has been translated into the New Zealand context, this chapter will provide a solid foundation by which to understand the concepts to be discussed in the subsequent chapters namely, the discourses of 'normal/positive' parenting (re)produced in IY, and how these discourses of IY have a significant influence on parents' and their children's lives.

1. Background and goals of IY

The Incredible Years programme was developed by a clinical psychologist and nurse practitioner, Professor Emeritus Carolyn Webster-Stratton, and her colleagues at the University of Washington's Parenting Clinic (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). Over the last 30 years, the programme was further developed into parent, teacher, and child training courses for families of children with conduct problems and ADHD. Targeted at 'high risk' children and families, IY aims to equip parents and teachers with "behaviour management skills and developmentally appropriate techniques to improve children's social and emotional competence and school readiness" (The Incredible Years®, 2013a, para. 2). The parenting strategies and session content are based on social learning theory principles and the 'typical' development progression of child conduct problems (Borden et al., 2010). The programme is designed to work in tandem with Head Start Services (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, n.d.), promoting the 'school readiness' of young children from such 'high risk' families in the United States of America (The Incredible Years®, 2013a).

IY prides itself on its evidence-based coaching methods. Both the developer and independent scientists have evaluated its effectiveness as a preventive parenting programme (Borden et al., 2010; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010). Evaluations of the programme include over a dozen randomised control group research studies (clinical trials), which conducted independent observations in various contexts (Borden et al., 2010; Robertson, 2014; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010). The developers of IY argue that the 'universal outcomes' shown in these clinical trials across different contexts and sectors are a good indicator of the

programme's effectiveness with a wider range of children and families (Borden et al., 2010; The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton, 2013).

For its wealth of evidence and science-based strategies, IY is well received internationally. The IY course has been implemented in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, Ireland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, Portugal, Australia, and New Zealand (Sturrock & Gray, 2013; The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010). The programme has also been acknowledged for its scientific approach, and implemented in various sectors. The American Psychological Association Task Force recommends IY as an empirically supported mental health intervention strategy for children with conduct problems, and IY was selected as a model 'Strengthening Families' programme by the Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention, and as an 'exemplary' and a 'Blueprint' programme by the Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention in the states (The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton, 2013). In the United Kingdom, the IY programme is endorsed by the Home Office and Sure Start, an early intervention programme.

The IY programme developer, Webster-Stratton (2013) identifies the following as the standardised goals of the programme (p. 1):

- Treatment of child aggressive behaviour problems and ADHD
- Prevention of conduct problems, delinquency, violence and drug abuse
- Promotion of child social competence, emotional regulation, positive attributions, academic readiness and problem solving
- Improved parent-child interactions, building positive parent-child relations and attachment
- Improved parental functioning, less harsh and more nurturing parenting
- Increased parental social support and problem solving
- Improved teacher classroom management skills and teacher-parent partnership

From the academic backgrounds of IY's developers through to the language used within the proposed goals of the programme, it is evident that IY's approach to addressing children and families who experience challenges in life is a clinical one: to prevent and to treat risks to society (Borden et al., 2010; The Incredible Years®,

2013a). In a similar manner to other evidence-based intervention parenting programmes (e.g. Head Start, Sure Start), the IY course associates the onset of children's conduct problems with most of the "societal burdens" in communities (Borden et al., 2010, p. 230). Therefore, the programme addresses the conduct problems of children as a means to prevent 'predictable and undesirable outcomes' for society such as violence, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and anti-social behaviour.

While the strategies that IY proposes may have been proven effective for reducing 'conduct problems' and ADHD, the programme as a whole still deserves scrutiny, as it may lead to unintended consequences. For example, a number of terms used in IY such as 'families and children at risk', 'societal burden', 'predictable negative outcomes' and 'treatment' and 'intervention' are often associated with characterising so-called 'high risk' families and children in terms of a deficit model. This raises concerns as much research in recent years highlights the negative personal effects of deficit labels in terms of motivation, achievement, power relations and sense of self (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Burman, 2008; Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg & Moss, 2004; Duncan, Jones, & Carr, 2008; Gunn, 2003; Kincheloe, 1995; Miller, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2006; Soto & Kharem, 2006; Swadener, 1995; Viruru, 2006).

The IY's evaluation design and outcome (The Incredible Years®, 2013b) gives added insight to the norms of parenting promoted as 'desirable' and 'positive' (para. 4). The desired outcomes of IY illustrate a particular form of childrearing practice: using proactive discipline techniques, increased monitoring, and implementing 'positive' parenting techniques such as praise and coaching. Consider the following list of IY's desired outcomes provided by the programme developers (The Incredible Years®, 2013c).

- Parents' increased implementation of Positive Parenting techniques (e.g. engaging with child-directed play, coaching and praise)
- Parents' reduced use of criticism and negative commands

- Parent's effective limit-setting (replacing parent's harsh discipline methods such as spanking/hitting with proactive discipline techniques and increased monitoring)
- Reductions in parental depression and increases in parental self-confidence
- Positive family communication and positive problem solving skill
- Children's positive affect and compliance to parental commands
- Two-thirds of children in 'normal' range at three year and at 10-year follow-up

An interesting aspect of the list of outcomes above is how the terms such as 'command', 'proactive', 'techniques', 'monitoring' and 'coaching' are connected to parenting. There are obvious questions that arise from these goals. What is the 'normal' range? Who decides what is 'normal' and how is it decided? If parents use a different style of childrearing practice, does that mean that they are not good parents and risk exposing their children to 'predictable negative consequences'?

2. Theoretical assumptions

Three key theories have shaped IY. The developers of the IY programme state that Patterson's (as cited in Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009) 'coercion hypothesis', Bandura's (1977) modelling and self-efficacy theories, and Bowlby's (1956) attachment theory informed the design of the programme (The Incredible Years®, 2013d). As the programme developers' epistemological stance suggests, all these theories are grounded in the psychological academic tradition. This 'scientific' way of making meaning of the world through the lens of social learning theories and cognitive psychology theory is evident throughout the content, justification, structure and delivery of IY.

For instance, the content of the 'positive' parenting technique originates from Patterson's coercion hypothesis. According to Patterson (as cited in Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009), the interaction patterns between children and adults determine the patterns of later communication. He suggests that employing negative reinforcement develops and maintains children's deviant behaviour as well as reinforcing parents' coercive disciplinary tactics (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). The child may stop hitting other children in front of parents to stop their lecturing (negative

reinforcement), yet when adults are not present, the child will continue to lash out at others or learn to find another ways to hit others undetected. This behaviour will reinforce adults' reliance on negative reinforcement, giving the false impression that the disciplinary tactics employed to stop the child's undesirable behaviour have been effective, while in reality, the behaviour was strengthened. Patterson further argues that this pattern of interaction continues to feed on itself, producing and maintaining the undesirable behaviours of both adult and children. Thus, it is crucial to change adults' (teachers and parents) behaviour and disciplinary strategies in order to change the nature and pattern of interactions between the children and adults. By paying attention to positive behaviour and praising the children for these (positive reinforcement), parents break a coercion cycle and enable change to occur in children's behaviour (Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009).

The IY's parenting principles strongly reflect Patterson's (Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009) perspective on behaviour management. IY advises the parents to actively 'ignore' the unwanted behaviour of their children, and to generously apply 'positive' parenting strategies such as 'coaching' and 'praise' of the desired behaviour (The Incredible Years®, 2013b; Webster-Stratton, 2013). The premise of the course also strongly reflects Patterson's coercion hypothesis, justifying its focus on changing parents' behaviour in order to replace children's conduct problems with 'normal' and 'positive' behaviour (The Incredible Years®, 2013a).

IY's delivery and design are based on Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. Bandura (1977) explains that individuals' behaviour is learnt through observation of the environment and others. He claims that children's lives are surrounded by 'models' that provide examples of behaviour. In particular, adults with whom children have a strong attachment or with whom they can easily identify themselves with (e.g. parents, characters in television programmes, and teachers) are called 'influential models' (McLeod, 2011, para. 4). By observing these 'models' and imitating them, children learn behaviour that is considered appropriate in the context (McLeod, 2011). The observed behaviour of others may or may not be internalised by children depending on several factors.

Bandura (as cited in McLeod, 2011) proposes gender of the models, responses from the models (reinforcement or punishment), and qualities of the models that the child considers rewarding as deciding factors as to whether their behaviour will be adopted. He argues that if the observed behaviour of the models is deemed gender appropriate, it will be more likely to be reproduced by the children. Drawing from this, the IY programme promotes the importance of having a male role model especially in low-income families throughout the coaching sessions (The Incredible Years®, 2013a).

The child will also be more likely to repeat the observed behaviour when adults respond with positive reinforcement, such as approval. This is translated into IY's parenting strategies. Parents are encouraged to implement coaching and modelling, and to use praise (positive reinforcement) when the desirable behaviour has occurred, and to ignore the unwanted behaviour (punishment). Bandura's (1977) social learning theory is not only applied to the parenting principles, but also within IY parent training sessions. During the sessions, parents watch live and filmed vignettes of 'positive' parenting (modelling), and participate in rehearsals and self-reflection related to what they have 'learnt' about parenting practice.

The first six weeks of an IY programme focus on building parent-child relationships. The team leader (coach) teaches parents how to 'play' with their children, and demonstrates praise and coaching techniques. This emphasis on relationships in IY derives from Bowlby's (1956) attachment theory. According to Bowlby (1956), children have an innate instinct to attach to their primary care givers and failing to do so for the first five years of their lives will have a negative influence on the construction of their working theories and the way they interact with others later in lives. The IY programme takes on this perspective from Bowlby, and aims to strengthen the attachment between the child and parents by changing parents' childrearing practice. IY claims that being more involved with 'child-directed play', and using coaching and praise during the interaction will provide the attachment, supposedly needed by many of these high-risk families (The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010).

3. Structure and design

The programme is implemented and delivered according to an 'IY manual'. In this way, regardless of participants' backgrounds and contexts, the programme should achieve a standardised outcome (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). To ensure consistency of quality in programme implementation – or in IY's terms, 'fidelity' – the IY developers suggest the IY facilitators follow a series of protocols. First, the IY programme facilitators or group leaders need to purchase "standardised and comprehensive intervention materials" which include a manual, books and DVDs from The Incredible Years® website (The Incredible Years®, 2013a, para. 4). The Comprehensive Leader's Manual (The Incredible Years®, 2013a) contains questions for group discussions, role play exercises, brainstorming and values exercises, homework, hand-outs and key points to guide facilitators to deliver the programme in the prescribed fashion. The next step is for 'clinicians' to attend three-day standardised training workshops that are run by certified/accredited mentors and trainers. These are followed by on-going support (supervision, coaching and mentoring), fidelity monitoring and organisational agency support.

There is an IY parenting series for each age group: Parents and Babies Programme (birth to 12 months), Toddler Basic Programme (one to three years old), Preschool Basic Programme (three to six years old), and School Age Basic Programme (six to twelve years old). Supplementary programmes such as the Home Visiting/Self-study Programme, School Readiness Programme and Advanced Programme are also available for those who seek further parenting training (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). Recently, The Incredible Years Inc. has included two more programmes that target different groups of parents: The Attentive Parenting® Programme (a concise and universal course for all parents), and The Autism Spectrum and Language Delays Programme.

The programme has four stages of learning (Webster-Stratton, 2013). The first six weeks of the IY course concentrates on strengthening the relationships between the child and parents. This involves building relationships by parents engaging in child-directed play, and learning about 'normal developmental milestones' and coaching principles (The Incredible Years®, 2013e). In the second stage, group leaders/facilitators demonstrate how to use praise and incentives to encourage

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'cooperative behaviours' (The Incredible Years®, 2013e). The third stage involves learning the strategies such as establishing predictable routines and giving effective commands to set effective limits. The last stage of the programme introduces techniques to handle misbehaviour. Parents are encouraged to use a combination of distraction and ignoring it to discourage misbehaviour. If the child is too upset, IY recommends using time out tactics (The Incredible Years®, 2013e).

There are 12-20 weekly group meetings lasting two to three hours per session, during which parents are encouraged to master behaviour management skills under the supervision of two trained/accredited facilitators, and to set personal goals through home or classroom activities. In the group meetings, the programme facilitators – group leaders in IY terms – play video vignettes of real life parenting situations, and give parents the opportunity to discuss their thoughts and ideas that have arisen after watching these videos. Parents share their own experiences, and brainstorm to problem-solve, and participate in role-play exercises. The IY group leaders also give parents hand-outs and fridge magnets to remind them of what they have learnt during the sessions, and homework that involves self-reflection and activities to do with their children (The Incredible Years®, 2010). Upon completion of the programme, each parent receives a graduation certificate.

The developers of IY claim that the programme is "delivered in a collaborative nature" between group leaders and parent participants, as it is run as a group meeting and encourages active discussions between the two (The Incredible Years®, 2013a, para. 5). However, in spite of IY's claim to be collaborative, the programme has many similarities with a traditional school system that has expert/novice binary relationships. While the programme format does allow parents to share their ideas and thoughts, the discussion and training still occur within the frame of knowledge that is chosen to be valid and worth knowing by the IY developers. Once this science-based knowledge of experts (IY group leaders) is transferred to novices (parents), the novices' performances are evaluated and 'accredited' to reinforce the internalisation of transferred knowledge.

4. *Incredible Years* in New Zealand

4.1 Background of its implementation

In response to the growing body of international research on the adverse influence of early onset conduct problems, the Advisory Group on Conduct Problems [AGCP] was established in 2007 (Sturrock & Gray, 2013). The AGCP was given the responsibility of recommending effective programmes and policy for the prevention and management of child conduct problems. This led to implementation of the IY programme and the Positive Behaviour for Learning Strategy [PB4L] (Ministry of Education, 2014) in New Zealand (Sturrock & Gray, 2013). By December 2012, the Ministry of Education had spent $ (NZ) 7.6 million for 7,461 families to participate in the programme (Robertson, 2014).

The AGCP identified that the highest portion of 'high risk' families and children are of Māori and Pasifika origin, highlighting the importance of making the programme accessible for parents and children with these cultural heritages (Advisory Group on Conduct Problems, 2011; Robertson, 2014). The New Zealand Government's tactic to reconcile the American intervention programme with the unique needs of a New Zealand socio-demographic and cultural profile was to work in collaboration with other interested groups (Sturrock & Gray, 2013). By bringing together IY service providers, government researchers, academic advisors and Māori researchers, the New Zealand Government attempted to adopt the programme into this country's distinctive context without sacrificing IY's 'proven' universal outcomes for high risk families and children. The result of this effort has been to keep the same framework and behaviour management strategies of the American IY programme, while integrating some of the cultural aspects of Māori and Pasifika population. For example, the group leaders (often with the same cultural backgrounds as the parents in the group) start the meeting with Karakia (a blessing ritual of Māori culture), and employ resources (e.g. Parenting Pyramid) that are translated into Te reo Māori and Pasifika languages (The Werry Center for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2014).

4.2 Course delivery in New Zealand

The Ministry of Education, Special Education staff and 51 NGOs deliver the IY programme in partnership (Robertson, 2014). The programme is funded by

government grants, so there is no charge for parent participants. The early childhood institutions, social services staffs and health professionals have a responsibility to identify those who will benefit from the course, and to refer them to the programme providers.

Currently the Toddler Basic Programme is the only available early childhood parenting course from the Incredible Years series available in New Zealand. The New Zealand Toddler Basic Programme runs for 12 to 14 weeks for parents of children aged one to three. Similar to American IY programme, the group leaders go through three-day basic training sessions run by IY accredited mentors (e.g. psychologists, health professionals and clinicians, and therapists who have completed IY mentor courses). What is interesting in the New Zealand IY programme, however, is that many of the NGOs that deliver the IY sessions are churches (Familiy Works, n.d.). Whether the religious background of some of the programme providers has any influence on participating parents' experiences has yet to be determined. There have been no studies on this aspect.

4.3 Evaluation in New Zealand

Since the introduction of IY, a few evaluation reports have been carried out to assess the effectiveness of the programme (Robertson, 2014; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock, Gray, Fergusson, Horwood, & Smits, 2014). *Incredible Years Pilot Study Evaluation Report* (Sturrock & Gray, 2013), in particular, was conducted "to provide Government agencies with profiles of the families participating, demonstrate programme fidelity, measure both programme effectiveness and parent satisfaction, and assess the programmes' responsiveness to Māori" (Robertson, 2014, p. 72).

Using mixed methods, single case studies and a six-month-post-course follow-up report, this pilot study was carried out over a period of two years. Participants in the evaluation study were interviewed at baseline, mid-programme, post-programme and six-months follow-up. 214 parents attended nine or more IY sessions in Bay of Plenty, Canterbury and MidCentral, of which 116 participants who completed the interview series. The interviewees indicated considerable improvement in their children's behaviour. The follow-up interviews also demonstrated a similar linear trend in improvement, demonstrating the sustainability of IY's effect on positive

parenting practice (Sturrock & Gray, 2013). However, the result of the follow-up study also highlighted a significant difference in the maintenance of the behaviour changes between Māori and non-Māori children. Sturrock and Gray (2013) suggested that further study is needed to increase IY's positive outcomes for families with Māori heritage.

5. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the parenting training programme, *The Incredible Years*, in detail. The programme derives from a strong behaviourist framework, approaching the challenges that families face in life with behaviour management strategies, cognitive development and psychological understanding of early childhood. Drawing from a large number of randomised control group research studies on its effectiveness, the developers of the IY programme argue that the course is effective in all groups of parents in all contexts. However, as the pilot study in New Zealand has shown, the reports of the clinical trials conducted in some contexts are insufficient to support the programme developers' claim of its effectiveness in all contexts. To provide sufficient support for families and children who experience challenges in life, further study is necessary in terms of the contexts within which the programme is implemented and the living experiences of participating families and children.

CHAPTER TWO:
FOUCAULT AND *INCREDIBLE YEARS*

Throughout his studies, Foucault (1977, 1980, 1988a, 1991, 2014; Foucault et al., 1991) was interested in understanding the techniques of power and by what means human beings are made or become subjects. He argues that power and knowledge are inextricably linked, and that they maintain self-referring circularity between each other (Foucault, 1977, 1980). In a certain system, a particular form of knowledge becomes indisputable 'truth', while closing off other perspectives and meanings in the milieu (MacNaughton, 2005). This regime of 'truth' operates as an apparatus of power to reinforce the current system by providing privilege to those who possess and operate this 'norm' of knowledge over others. Those who do not fit into this 'norm' become systematically marginalised and pathologised as 'abnormal' (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Burke & Duncan, 2015; Cannella & Swadener, 2006; Kincheloe, 1995; MacNaughton, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2007; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2006).

Foucault's analysis of 'governmentality' illustrates that the study of power relations and their effect on individuals in society is the core of his hypothesis (Foucault et al., 1991). Foucault's definition of the term 'government' covers not only the exercise of political sovereignty or relations within social institutions, but also the interpersonal relations between oneself and others. He describes 'governmentality' as "the conduct of conduct"; "a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons" (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 2). He argues that this activity enables a certain type of practice and thinking only possible and visible to its practitioners and those on whom it is practised.

So then how can one disentangle the power/knowledge relations that are present in the system? If a system of power produces a specific form of knowledge as the only conceivable way to understand and characterise a particular context, how can one see what is supposed to be 'invisible' and 'unthinkable' while she/he operates within the same system of power?

Kincheloe (1995) argues,

> Understanding the socially constructed nature of our comprehension of
> reality, critical accommodation involves the attempt to dis-embed ourselves
> from the pictures of the world that have been painted by power (p. 79).

Seeing what is 'invisible' and 'unthinkable' requires one to recognise that one's own understanding of the world is also constructed by power, and calls for an attempt to dismantle the existing picture of the world.

The concepts of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation' are particularly helpful in this respect as they provide tools to systematically unpack a regime of truth and other ways of being that are 'eclipsed' and 'hidden' underneath this 'truth'. Foucault suggests looking deeper into what has been presented and considered as 'normal/natural' as well as investigating the gaps and silences in the milieu. He further suggests reconstructing a particular mode of 'techniques of power' or 'power/knowledge'. He argues that practitioners of this method are enabled to discern how and what power/knowledge relations are at work "to observe, monitor, shape and control the behaviour of individuals situated within the range of social and economic institutions such as the school, the factory and the prison" (Foucault et al., 1991, pp. 3-4).

As discussed in the previous chapter, Foucault's notions of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation' shape how this study makes sense of discourses produced within/by the parenting policy, *Incredible Years*. This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of these notions, and explains the way that these concepts are applied as an analytical tool in this project. Some early childhood studies are discussed to provide examples of Foucault's ideas being implemented to unsettle what is considered to be 'truth' in the milieu, and to open up possibilities for multiple ways of understanding and being in early childhood education. The chapter outlines a clear connection between discourses of parenting in IY and emerging themes presented in the following chapters of this study.

1.1 Governmentality

'Governmental rationality', 'art of government', or in his own terminology, 'governmentality' was the key concept that Foucault explored during his time at Collège de France between 1978 and 1979 (Foucault et al., 1991). The forming of Foucault's idea on 'governmentality' starts to emerge in his earlier work, *Discipline and Punish,* and carries on among his later studies and interviews (Foucault et al., 1991). His inquiry into this topic evolves from the status of science in the penal system, "dividing practices" in clinical medicine, and self-subjection of sexuality (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982, p. 208).

He defines 'governmentality' as techniques of power that are designed to govern and to control individuals and populations (Foucault et al., 1991). As he considers government as an activity, he explores structures and traits of the practice of both the State and individuals in relation to 'who can govern', 'what governing is', and 'what or who is governed' in the context (Foucault, 1977, 1991, 2014; Foucault et al., 1991). The object of Foucault's study of 'governmentality' is to understand techniques that made individuals into subjects in histories. He analyses different rationales behind 'objectification of the subject' to gain insight into how power is exercised in the context (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982).

In *Discipline and Punish*, for example, Foucault (1977) analyses punitive methods not simply as consequences or indicators of social structures, but also to show how the punishment is used as "a political tactic", "the specific technique which supports exercising of power in more general fields of power relations" (p. 23). His term, "microphysics of power", is proposed to illustrate this method of political analysis in this study (Foucault, 1977; Foucault et al., 1991, p. 3). By engaging with this study of 'microphysics of power' within the modern penal system, one can understand how the political investment of the body is entangled with multi-dimensions of power, being bounded with its economical value (Foucault, 1977; Foucault et al., 1991).

According to Foucault, human history and the history of the penal system are derived from the same process of "epistemologico-juridical" formation, situating the technology of power as the heart of both phenomena (Foucault, 1977, p. 23). He

argues that the humanisation of punishment and the rise of scientific/technical knowledge about humankind are not two separate historical events that overlap in some points. Rather, they are products of various power relations in society that share the same matrix of "a political technology of the body" (Foucault, 1977, p. 24). Only a productive and subjective body is useful in terms of exercising and maintaining the mode of modern power relations, thus the political technology of the body invests, marks, trains, tortures, and exerts pressure upon the body to objectivise it as the productive subject.

Foucault (1977) contends that a trace of torture (the corporal punishment of the classic era) still persists within the modern penal system being enveloped by its non-corporal nature. The physical penalty from the classic era is no longer the essential component of punishment, yet the body of the convict still serves a major role in the penal system. It becomes an instrument of punishment to deprive the rights and liberty of individuals "with a much higher aim to correct, reclaim, cure" (p. 10). The penalty is executed in order to punish the crimes, but it also defines and categorises individual actions as illegal/legal, reinforcing the current techniques of penal systems and the mechanics of power.

Another crucial theme of Foucault's inquiry is power-knowledge relations and their implications for everyday life. In modern penal systems, judgement is passed not only on crime itself, but also on the associated thoughts and desires so that "punishment may strike the soul rather than the body" (Foucault, 1977, p. 16). The sentence bears the guilt of an individual, as well as assessment of his/her normality and technical strategies to normalise the convict for him/her to fit better (as 'normal') in society. Judging the guilty party has become a matter of establishing "the truth of a crime" by a host of technicians such as warders, doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, and educational professionals (Foucault, 1977, p. 19). A criminal's past experiences, biological/medical histories and even the intention of his/her actions are dissected, assessed, and diagnosed in order to reform his/her perceived 'abnormality'.

Foucault (1977) claims that this entangled mixture of science and penalty demonstrates circular relations between power and knowledge. By rationalising its foundation using a scientifico-legal complex, the modern penal system has produced a

corpus of knowledge and discourses that privilege 'human science', extending and reinforcing its effects of power. This particular power-knowledge relation determines the possible domain of knowledge, and "the subject who knows (the knower)", "the objects to be known", and "the modality" of knowledge (p. 28). Therefore, analysing power-knowledge relations provides an insight into the effect of certain techniques of power and their transformation in the milieu.

The Pacini-Ketchabaw and De Almeida (2006) study provides a clear example of how Foucault's idea can be applied. The researchers in this Canadian study explore the way in which the discourses of the dominant language influence immigrant parents' and early childhood educators' perception of bilingualism. These discourses from the dominant language group privilege one language over others, and a particular language is imposed as the only worthwhile knowledge to learn and to speak. By unpacking discourses on language learning in the Canadian early childhood context, Pacini-Ketchabaw and De Almeida draw attention to the way in which power and knowledge directly imply each other. The results of this study illustrates that the hierarchical standing of English as the dominant language perpetuates unequal power relations in the context.

Using Foucault's ideas of the power-knowledge relation and governmentality, Bloch and Popkewitz (1995) analyse discourses of child development in American early childhood settings. Their study shows that the understanding of child development as a biological and universal process is deeply entrenched in a system of reasoning (Foucault's governmentality), constructing the way in which educators perceive children and conduct their teaching. The researchers point out that this Cartesian-Newtonian knowledge of childhood operates as a part of broad power relations by shaping the truth about children and early childhood education. This embedded notion of development, then, "orders how difference was to be understood, classified the normal and that outside of normalcy, what care for children came to mean" (p. 10). They caution that this scientific knowledge of children's development is assumed and naturalised, rather than challenging it and problematizing where appropriate. As the discourses on universal and biological developmental stages become entangled with the practice of power in early childhood, the power to judge 'normal/abnormal' childhood is extended and its excessive singularity obscured.

1.2 The mechanism of power
1.2-1 Disciplinary power

Foucault's investigation of prisons is one of the studies by which he seeks to understand the technologies of power at work in modern society (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). He points out that, since the 18th century, the disciplinary strategy shown in prisons has dispersed to other fields and institutions such as education (schools) and health (hospitals), and he further explores the characteristics of related disciplinary procedures. Drawing from his analysis of penal systems, Foucault (1977) articulates the more broad form of disciplining practice that affects individuals and populations.

According to his definition, 'discipline' is a type of power rather than a particular institution or apparatus (Foucault, 1977). It encompasses a series of instruments, techniques, and "a modality for its exercise", in other words, a "physics or an anatomy of power" (p. 215). In contrast to the majestic rituals of sovereignty, disciplinary power is insidious and calculated, but permanent. It begins with inconsequential procedures, and steadily infiltrates the primary structures, changing their technology and perpetuating their instruments.

Rather than replacing the classical forms of power (for instance, sovereignty), discipline links them together, extending their control, and enhancing their efficiency. It also enables the infinitesimal distribution of power (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). By arranging the operation of the body by minute details of time, space and movements, the disciplinary power aims to increase the utility of the body. Foucault (1977) uses monasteries and armies as examples of this mechanism of power in its early form. Using time-tables, collective training, exercises, and systematic surveillance, this technology of power breaks down the body, and rearranges it to maximise the efficiency of the force with the least cost. Foucault (1977, p. 170) explains,

> Instead of bending all its subjects into a single uniformed mass, it separates,
> analyses, differentiates, carries its procedures of decomposition to the point
> of necessary and sufficient single units. It 'trains' the moving, confused,
> useless multitudes of bodies and forces into a multiplicity of individual

elements - small, separate cells, organic autonomies, genetic identities and continuities, combinatory segments.

This subtle yet meticulous technology of subjection totalises and centralises power-knowledge, while it individualises and categorises each unit of the population. To increase the production and efficiency of the multiplicity of the population, the discipline divides the body by competence, and centralises strategies to adjust and distribute individuals. The binary division and branding practice (e.g. good/bad students, sane/insane, normal/abnormal) of disciplinary power marks and reduces the gap between individuals.

Pacini-Ketchabaw's (2007) investigation on discourses of multiculturalism in Canada illustrates this distinctive characteristic of disciplinary power at work in early childhood settings. Having Anglo-American culture as the dominant discourses in the context of the study, even the discourses of multiculturalism (e.g. sensitivity, tolerance, inclusion and acceptance of difference) operate to further marginalise immigrant children and families. The researcher calls attention to problematic assumptions that normalise whiteness under these discourses of a culturally supportive and inclusive approach. This approach is framed as positive support for immigrant children. However, in actuality, this governing of immigrant children allocates early childhood educators to work closely with them and shape them as a form of assimilation. It indirectly differentiates these children and families from the norm and reinforces "normative and hegemonic whiteness" in the context (p. 228).

1.2-2 The means of 'training'

Foucault (1977) presents three instruments of disciplinary power that 'train' the body to ensure its maximum utility: hierarchical observation, normalising judgement, and the examination. Hierarchical observation can be explained as a network of hierarchical surveillance that "see everything constantly in a single gaze" (Foucault, 1977, p. 173). Foucault uses the military camp to provide a better insight into this tool of 'training'. Architectural details such as the geometry of the paths and the division and opening of spaces are carefully calculated for indirect partitioning of individuals' behaviours, and the surveillance of one another. Each gaze forms a part of an overall

chain of surveillance, and aims to increase the visibility of individuals while keeping the seat of power discreet.

This instrument of training eventually moves onto a more complex form of surveillance, following the arrival of factories and great workshops. To achieve uninterrupted, intense, and continuous supervision without slowing production, a new mode of surveillance is embedded into the production machinery. It bears not only on the production, but also on the whole process of labour. The network of surveillance "holds the whole together and traverses it in its entirety with effect of power that derives from one another", enabling the disciplinary power to be both discreet and indiscreet (p. 175). Constant surveillance reinforces the omnipotence of disciplinary power (indiscreet), and leaves no spot hidden from the gaze. The workshop supervisors are also under the constant surveillance of others. And yet, the disciplinary power itself remains discreet as it operates in subtle and insidious form.

The second apparatus of corrective training, normative judgement, derives from the binary divisions and distribution practices of discipline. The disciplinary power imposes a clear definition of performance with two opposed values, and judges and distributes individuals according to this standard (Foucault, 1977). This makes it possible to quantify economic values for each position, and to privilege one over another. The qualities, skills, and aptitudes of individuals become hierarchically ordered in relation to each other.

Normalising judgement requires individuals to conform to society's hegemonic and homogenous norm by "transforming their conception of who they are and want to be" (Duncan & Bartle, 2014, p. 21). Conformity to the norm is rewarded by progression through ranks and marks, while those who are judged as 'abnormal/shameful/of less value' are indirectly excluded and penalised. For example, if breastfeeding is the norm in society, a mother who cannot or does not breastfeed her baby may experience both external and internal pressures that subtly label her a 'bad mother', urging her to conform (Duncan & Bartle, 2014). This perpetuates the homogeneity and hierarchisation of the social body, "sustaining itself by its own mechanism" (Foucault, 1977, p. 177).

The examination as a form of discipline is thus a combination of both surveillance and normalising judgment. This reduces each individual to a case to be measured, described, compared and corrected (Foucault, 1977). It formalises and ritualises differentiated distribution between individuals, and "manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected" (p. 185). The individuality (e.g. individual features, progress, and aptitudes and abilities) of each person is documented so it may be utilised as a means of control and domination. This examination enables better control over a population by classifying, categorising and comparing individuals.

1.1-3 'Governing of body' and 'Governing of soul'

As explained above, Foucault's study of disciplinary power mainly concerns the microphysics of power and 'governing of the body'. This political anatomy, which he classifies as the 'body politic' (or bio-politics in his later works), "invests and subjugates the bodies by turning them into the object of knowledge" (Foucault, 1977, p. 28).

As the capitalist economy grows in the modern world, there arises the need for intense and continuous supervision running right throughout the entire labour process. The scale of production becomes larger, hence the slightest dishonesty of a worker may equate to a massive financial loss (Foucault, 1977). It becomes insufficient simply to have control over the body so that individuals will perform tasks physically. Suddenly, it is also necessary to transform their thoughts and desires so that they operate autonomously in a particular way. Thus, governmentality extends its focus into a "micro-governing of the self", or the "governing of soul" to ensure the more effective governing of the body (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995, p. 9). By increasing aptitude and capacity of the body, modern disciplinary power effectively increases its mental control over populations, producing subjected and docile bodies (Foucault, 1977).

Foucault (1977) uses Bentham's Panopticon as a metaphor to describe the mechanism of this new form of surveillance. In this circular shaped prison, a person in each cell is individualised and visible at all times. He/she is a permanent subject of observation, yet he/she cannot see whether the guard is present in the central

watchtower. The inmates do not know whether they are being watched at a particular moment, but self-polices and self-governs themselves due to perpetual possibility that they are being watched. This permanent visibility of an individual automatises and totalises power, turning him/her into both "the subject and the principle of his/her own subjection"(Foucault, 1977, p. 202). This subjection of the body is tied to one's own identity, enforcing the regime of truth that it wishes the person to recognise and the way in which they are perceived by others (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). Subjection changes the way individuals see themselves, and transforms their desires and aspirations so that they not only perform in a certain way but also want to do so (Duncan & Bartle, 2014).

Foucault's use of the term 'soul' bears little resemblance to that represented by Christian theology. Rather than considering the 'soul' as an illusion and an ideological impression, he argues that it should be understood as the representation of a specific technology to govern the body (Foucault, 1977, p. 29):

> This real, non-corporal soul is not a substance; it is the element in which are articulated the effects of a certain type of power and the references of a certain type of knowledge, the machinery by which the power relations give rise to a possible corpus of knowledge, and knowledge extends and reinforces the effects of this power.

Foucault contends that by looking at what is underneath the 'soul', one can gain insight into the so-called 'truth' that is inscribed in the course of power relations in the context at that time. This, in turn, supports contemporary practitioners to decipher the power relations that are entangled within the discourses. By analysing the process by which the human body and soul have become objects of penal intervention and objects of knowledge, Foucault (1977) has acquired a deeper understanding of power-knowledge relations in the milieu.

1.3 Foucault and *Incredible Years*

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Foucault's concepts of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation' are useful tools to unpack assumptions that are hidden under the dominant discourses, and interpret their impacts on everyday life. This

chapter has covered Foucault's own works, as well as various examples from other researchers who have applied his ideas, showing how his ideas can be utilised to understand beyond that which is often overlooked, or taken for granted.

Upon examining discourses of parenting in *Incredible Years* through the lens of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation', three themes have emerged around the norm of parenting: the colonised soul, the economised (capitalised) soul, and the scientific soul. The following three chapters investigate these three themes, and seek to understand the possible implications of this norm of parenting as presented in *Incredible Years*.

In this thesis, the term 'discourses' refers to social knowledge that both restricts and constructs how we think and behave in relation to a specific social context and practice. Hence, this study does not limit itself only to the analysis of languages used within the policy document, but also examines the norm of parenting in structures, delivery, frameworks, evaluation and the programme as a whole that may be present, yet not verbally illustrated. A wider range of research and perspectives of educational philosophers is interwoven into the analysis to complement Foucault's concepts.

CHAPTER THREE:
THE COLONISED SOUL

As discussed in the previous chapter, Foucault (1977, 1980, 1991, 2014) argues that tracing the way in which certain knowledge or ways of being have become 'the truth' (the norm) in a particular context enables one to see what is made invisible under the shadow of power relations within that milieu. His studies of penal systems, clinical medicine, and the self-subjection of sexuality explore rationales that make individuals into subjects, and techniques of power that are designed to govern and control the body of populations (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982; Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1988a, 1991).

The insidious yet effective mechanism of power draws strength from its grip on the individual's soul. It transforms one's thoughts, and desires, and alters the way one communicates, behaves and understands the world. The technique of modern disciplinary power effectively increases its control over individuals, turning them into subjected and docile bodies (Foucault, 1977). The modern process of colonisation illustrates this point exactly (Oliver, 2004, p. 26):

> The success of the colonization of a land, a nation, or a people can be measured through the success of the colonization of psychic space. Only through the colonization of psychic space can oppression be truly effective.

By wielding power over the psychic place of individuals, the newer colonising concepts take deeper root than the previous forms managed (Asher, 2009; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Mazzei, 2008; Smith, 1999; Yuen, 2010). The values and knowledge of 'the West' are internalised as 'the only worthwhile way of being or truth', thus subtly diverting the attention of 'the Other(s)' and preventing them from recognising the previous oppression of the dominant culture and assimilation into the Anglo- or Euro-centric norm (Asher, 2009; Oliver, 2004; Soto & Kharem, 2006; Viruru, 2006).

It should be noted that the term, 'the West' is to be used with caution. It is often misrepresented and misused to generalise multiple traditions across Europe and America as one cohesive culture, value and knowledge (Smith, 1999). As we should

not oversimplify different cultures, and it is acknowledged that beliefs exist among the various groups of people who have experienced colonisation, it would be similarly inaccurate to assume that there is one truth that is relevant for *all* with European or American heritages.

This study applies the term 'the West' with reference to a Foucault's notion of 'episteme' (Foucault et al., 1991), an overarching system of knowledge, values and beliefs that filters various traditions of knowledge in the milieu. Through this 'episteme', multiple traditions of knowledge and cultures are categorised, (re)formed and transformed. While knowledge traditions change over time, the 'episteme' itself does not, perpetually influencing the way in which these traditions are understood and expressed (Smith, 1999). As an overarching rule, or a principle in the milieu, the 'episteme' operates as a prism to filter a certain type of knowledge, and cultures with such filters are more readily recognised and privileged. It is in this sense that the term, 'the West' is applied in this study: the 'episteme' that regulates the understanding of the complexity and subtleties of life through the lens of the Enlightenment and through the modernist perspectives of Anglo European white middle to high class contexts.

Examining IY through Foucault's perspectives of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation' has revealed that there are many discourses of colonisation masked as 'the truth' and 'normal/natural' within the norm of 'positive/desirable' parenting. The labels, forms of representation, and positions of privilege in these discourses embody the Anglo/Euro-centric values and knowledge, and those who do not fit this norm are portrayed in a deficit manner, for instance as uncivilised savages or incomplete human beings. The justification of intervention or corrective training is to 'save' the immigrants and indigenous people from their own infirmities and savageness for the 'common good'.

This leads back to the questions that drive this project: what values/knowledge/assumptions are behind the Western discourses of parenting in IY? Who benefits from the construction of this norm? Whose voices are silenced/absent by the construction of the norm in IY? What are the implications of these discourses of parenting for children's and parents' lives?

In this chapter, the discourses of parenting in IY are examined as a product of power relations in the context, particularly in the context of a colonial outcome. Various theorists' and researchers' decolonising perspectives are incorporated into the analysis of the discourses in IY to complement Foucault's ideas. The author of this project acknowledges that decolonising research or post-colonialism encompasses a large volume of research with multi-dimensional analysis. These theories are not the focal point of this project. However, some are applied as a supportive tool to bring a sharper and deeper focus to Foucault's lens. This chapter aims to map the identity of positive parenting in the colonised landscape of New Zealand early childhood education, and analyse the way in which parenting has become a site of colonisation through the power relations present within it.

1. Parenting as a site of colonisation (Discourses of colonisation in IY)

1.1 Universal and totalising 'truth' of parenting in IY

The premise behind IY is that there is a universal principle of parenting, the 'Positive Parenting Principles' in IY terminology (The Incredible Years®, 2013a; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010). The IY course developers argue that 'Positive Parenting Principles' can effectively modify parents' behaviours towards children, ultimately changing the interaction patterns between them. The principles include implementing proactive discipline techniques (e.g. effective limit-setting, increased monitoring), and positive parenting techniques such as praise and coaching. Regardless of the contexts and backgrounds of participants, IY's developers claim that transferring and training parents with these skills and knowledge will deliver the desired 'universal outcomes' of preventing and treating risks to society by increasing 'parental competence' and 'child social competence'. The programme identifies 'parents of children with conduct problems' as the 'high risk' families, associating them with most of the 'societal burdens' in the community (Borden et al., 2010). Various clinical trials of the programme across different contexts and sectors are presented as evidence of its universal application (Borden et al., 2010; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock et al., 2014; Webster-Stratton, 2013; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010).

The assumptions underneath these claims of IY are; 1) there is one truth or natural law that is applicable and relevant to *all* human beings. 2) those who do not abide by this 'truth' are burdens on society, therefore *the civilised* members of society

must step into prevent the behaviour of the burdensome, or to teach them to be more competent and responsible. Where do these assumptions originate? What are the values and knowledge inscribed as this universal, totalising truth in IY?

The construction of these thoughts can be traced back to ideologies that emerged from 17th and 18th century Europe (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Smith, 1999). During this period, the Enlightenment, modernist perspectives became the dominant system of thought, centring human progress and reason in human existence and civilisation. The promotion of science, economic growth and politics in this era meant not only a physical extension of imperialism, but also a broadening of its reach into different dimensions of human experience: psychic place or according Foucault, the soul of individuals. The advance of scientific technology, for instance, in transportation, communication and construction, enabled the inhabitants of European countries to travel further and to *conquer/claim* more *undiscovered* lands (Smith, 1999). These thoughts derived from the Enlightenment and from modernist perspectives, which rationalised the act of colonisation and oppression within the mind of both the colonisers and the colonised (Cannella & Viruru, 2004).

Ideas from prominent philosophers of the time, such as Bacon, Descartes, and Galileo, established and strengthened the belief that predetermined truths/natural laws were waiting to be discovered *out there*. These thinkers claimed that the search by European middle and high class men for these predetermined/natural truths through scientific methods and reason were advancing human progress further than any other cultures or time (Cannella & Viruru, 2004). Humanity is essentialised in terms of progress and reason, therefore worldviews that do not express these qualities are uncivilised, and less than human (Smith, 1999). Discourses produced by these ideas represented privileged white European males as "the eventual saviours of the world", armed with science and reason, and spreading civilisation around the globe (Cannella & Viruru, 2004, p. 66), not as oppressors who exploited the riches of the land they occupied and exercised colonising power over their indigenous populations. The dark and untold side of privileging universal truths of science and reason was that other kinds of knowledge and values were relegated to the periphery, and peoples of colour categorised as savage, incompetent and ignorant not-fully-humans (Smith, 1999).

From the development of IY to the programme itself, it is evident that scientific methods and cognitive psychology are favoured over other worldviews in shaping IY and justifying its effectiveness. The programme was developed by a clinical psychologist and nurse practitioner, Professor Emeritus Carolyn Webster-Stratton and her colleagues at the University of Washington's Parenting Clinic (Webster-Stratton, 2013). IY draws from Patterson's (as cited in Crosswhite & Kerpelman, 2009) coercion hypothesis, Bandura's (1977) modelling and self-efficacy theories, and Bowlby's (1956) attachment theory. The programme consists of parenting strategies and session content aimed to equip parents with behaviour management skills and *developmentally appropriate* techniques to deal with the *typical* developmental progression of child conduct problems (Borden et al., 2010; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010). There is no mention of different knowledge and values in parenting such as Māori and Pasifika epistemology, whereas strategies and knowledge presented in IY are portrayed as one-fits-all parenting principles. The programme justifies its effectiveness based on its wealth of evidence (over a dozen randomised control group research studies by the developers and independent scientists) and 'science–based' strategies, rationalising its implementation across diverse contexts and sectors.

What is interesting, however, is that since 2001, Atawhaingia te Pā Harakeke (Ministry of Education, 2001), a whānanau training and support programme for Māori, had already been developed and implemented in New Zealand by the Ministry of Education. While the Advisory Group on Conduct Problems [AGCP] identified that the highest portion of 'high risk' families and children are of Māori and Pasifika origin (Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock et al., 2014), the New Zealand Government decided to scrap the programme based on Kaupapa Māori philosophy and its own context, and introduce IY in its place. Since the introduction of IY to New Zealand, the Ministry of Education has invested NZ$7.6 million for 7,461 families to participate in the programme (Robertson, 2014).

The underlying assumptions of IY show the presence of colonising discourses; all humans are the same in essence, therefore there exists a natural law/universal truth of human existence that can be found by the civilisation's active practice of reason and science. While IY places Western scientific knowledge at the centre of 'positive' parenting, other worldviews are disregarded, and cultural backgrounds are identified

only to highlight the over-representation of people with a different worldview, and thus their inferiority and lack of civilisation.

This is a good example of how 'discursive normalisation' and 'regime of truth' operate as an apparatus to govern individuals' souls and their bodies (Foucault, 1977). In *Discipline and Punish* (Foucault, 1977), this point is illustrated using penal systems and health institutions as examples. Foucault (1977) argues that:

> It is not simply at the level of consciousness, of representations and in what one thinks one knows, but at the level of what makes possible the knowledge that is transformed into political investment (p. 185).

Privileging human science and psychology as the centre of our knowledge system, the modern disciplinary power utilised/gained the rationality to pathologise those who do not fit into the norm, justifying its exercise on individuals to "correct" and "to cure" (p. 227).

Similarly, the notion of 'positive/desirable' parenting in IY produces a corpus of knowledge and discourses that centres on human science, authorising the colonising power to extend its reach. 'Scientific' knowledge and discourses are formed and entangled with the power to judge and correct children and parents, "masking its exorbitant singularity" (Foucault, 1977, p. 23). For human nature is assumed to be fundamentally scientific and reasoned, Western thoughts are normalised as the only possible domain of knowledge in parenting. There is little room for individuals to deviate from this 'truth' of parenting without associating themselves with deficit terms (e.g. uncivilised, aggressive, harsh, or not functioning).

The values and hierarchical status of the West are attached to a particular system of knowledge, which is then applied as the rationality and tool to "sustain the operation of a relational power by its own mechanism" (Foucault, 1977, p. 177). In this endless circular power-knowledge relation, "the subject who knows, the knower [Western middle and high class males]", "the objects to be known [indigenous people, people of colour]", and "the modality of knowledge [Western scientific knowledge]" are already determined (Foucault, 1977, p. 28). For example, IY establishes the truth

of deficiency within the indigenous people and those of colour using a host of technicians such as researchers, psychiatrists, psychologists, educational professionals, counsellors, and health professionals. Parents' past experiences, education levels, and the intention of their actions are dissected, assessed, and diagnosed in order to reform their 'abnormality' in the course of by means of the before-, after- the course surveys. The programme referral process is also facilitated by these 'experts'. By normalising the Western thoughts as the totalising truth, the people with this particular knowledge are automatically placed in a status of 'experts', as well as perpetuating the power relations that warranted their status of privilege.

1.2 Binary practice/dualism in IY

Many of the ideas in colonialism legitimise their claims on the basis of Descartes' perspectives, which explain the world in two spheres: the inner domain of the human mind and the external world with its natural law/truth (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Smith, 1999). This Cartesian dualism seems to imply the dichotomy of mind/body, good/evil, civilised/savage, truth/false (non-truth), expert/novice, and child/adult, consequently generating colonising discourses of language and ideology based on of individuals' conduct. Even the understanding of colonisation is highly saturated with this binary thinking. Instead of considering the subtleties and multifaceted challenges people face during and due to the colonisation, duality presents the issue as existing between the colonised and the coloniser (i.e. the victim/the offender) (Smith, 1999). It does not acknowledge that different levels of oppression are experienced by various groups of indigenous people (e.g. Ngai Tahu who made a deal with the Crown and were thereby better off than other tribes), nor how the oppressive nature of the colonising power influences the coloniser.

An oft-used term in decolonising studies and philosophy, 'The Other' (Mazzei, 2008; Said, 1978; Smith, 1999) is a good example of this. This notion of Us-versus-Them not only influences understanding of the self in the colonised, but also in the coloniser. The only possible or imaginable way to understand the self and others, for both the coloniser and the colonised, becomes limited to this notion, which is imposed on them by the colonising power (Smith, 1999). In a colonial context, a person's sense of self is measured against this norm of 'civilised us', and his/her non-conformity to this norm is marked strange and uncivilised (Said, 1978). When one

understands and labels the world through this dichotomous lens with such conviction of its accuracy, uncertainty of the superiority of Western thoughts over those others diminishes, and the rule of one over the other is hence rationalised.

Foucault (1977) points out that dualism, or in his terms binary practice, is also a part of the mechanism of disciplinary power. He maintains that the viability of the modern disciplinary power depends on the technology of representation. Once the two opposing values of good and evil in an individual's conduct are established, all behaviour is judged and distributed between a positive pole and a negative pole. This makes it possible to differentiate and distribute individuals in a hierarchy according to their level of values (their conduct as well as their nature and aptitude). In this form of power, non-conforming is an offence, and the purpose of differentiating is to correct the *defects* of the *abnormal*, and to exclude. The process of "judging individuals in truth" is finely interwoven with penal practice, rewarding and punishing to pressure one to conform to the norm (p. 181). The individuality of a person is compared, differentiated, and hierarchically ordered merely to mark the gaps so that homogeneity of the social body can be maintained. The undesirable, abnormal individuals "exist only to disappear" (p. 182).

The languages and discourses present in IY provide an insight into the way in which the dichotomy perpetuates the exercise of colonising power in the reality of children and parents.

Table 1. Languages presented in IY's outcomes and resources

	Negative pole (before/without IY)	**Positive pole (After IY)**
Outcomes	•Predictable and undesirable outcomes: societal burdens in society such as delinquency, violence, anti-social behaviour, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy	•Scientifically proven universal outcomes: improved child social competence, emotional regulation, positive attributions, academic readiness, problem solving

		skills.
Children and families	•At risk	•Typical/normal developmental patterns, •Positive parent-child relations and attachment •Positive family communication •Positive problem solving
Children	•Children with conduct problems •Misbehaviour	•Socially competent children •School ready •Compliant to parental command •Normal range •Cooperative behaviour
Parents	•Not functioning •Parental depression	•Improved parenting function •Parental self-confidence
Parenting practice	•Harsh •Critical, negative command	•Nurturing •Positive parenting techniques (child-directed play, coaching, praise) •Proactive discipline techniques (increased monitoring, limit-setting, consistent follow-through, ignore, distract, redirect, time out, loss of privilege)

Table 1 shows that the language used to describe children and families in IY reflects the Cartesian dualistic worldview, reducing many complex dimensions of parenting to two extremes. At one end of the pole are competent and knowledgeable parents in control of their children's conducts, and at the other end are non-functioning, depressed and at risk families. It portrays clearly the forms of desirable/undesirable parenting, and distributes children and parents in relation to these two-value

opposites. Once these children and families at risk are identified, Western science-based 'Positive Parenting Principles' and universal developmentally appropriate knowledge of children are transferred to *prevent* and to *cure* the predictable and undesirable outcomes such as violence and substance abuse in the community.

In this simplistic method of dividing and categorising the world as truth versus non-truth, parenting practice is presented with only two possible forms, eliminating the values of parenting practices that exist outside of the norm. The individualities of parents are identified only to mark the gaps between the norm and the individual, so that the most effective strategies may be applied. Presenting a particular norm of parenting as the universal truth distracts an individual from questioning the validity of its claim to be true, and redirects one to conform to the norm.

This is exemplified in the Cultural Enhancement Framework [CEF] (Macfarlane, 2011, 30 August), a set of 'Kaupapa Māori principles to enhance programme efficacy for use with Māori'. As a pilot study and follow-up study of IY (Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock et al., 2014) acknowledge in these reports, the unique socio-cultural demographics of New Zealand and its commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi demand that more thought be given to the implementation of IY. The decision of the Ministry of Education was to develop the CEF (Macfarlane, 2011, 30 August) for implementation of the programme in cooperation with Māori researchers and leaders, rather than critically examining the relevance of IY to Te Ao Māori (Māori worldview). Using the metaphor of wharenui (Māori meeting house), CEF carefully lays out various strategies to implement Western programmes with Māori in a culturally responsive way. Culturally important routines such as Kai (food sharing) and Karakia (blessing and prayer), as well as the use of Māori language and resources are encouraged in this framework.

However, the subtle yet unyielding power of colonisation is still present at the root of the framework. At the beginning of the programme (Whāianga, meaning door in wharenui analogy), participants in IY are introduced to the purpose and benefits of the programme already constructed and drawing from Western values. The assessment stage (Matapihi, meaning window) also shows a similar pattern of subjugating the values of colonialists' values, seeking to translate the original

principles of the programme into a Māori context without questioning its meaningfulness in their worldview. While it is evident that much thought was given to Māori Tikanga (custom) in developing the CEF, it is still questionable whether or not the touted cultural *enhancement* is enough to provide sustainable and meaningful supports for families and children with Māori heritage. By giving power to the colonised to control the less essential parts of the programme (e.g. cultural routines), the current system of power presents the illusion that its interest lies in cooperation with and respect of 'the Other', "pacifying the will to resist" of the subjugated people (Soto & Kharem, 2006, p. 22). This distracts the colonised from recognising oppression by the dominant culture and dampens the need to challenge the status of Western knowledge as universal truth, which effectively maintains the grips of the colonising power on individuals.

1.3 Disconnection from self and others

The binary practice or dualism of colonising power presents individuals in society with stark contrasts between the Western worldview and 'the Other' (Smith, 1999). The West represents particular views of human nature and morality, and those who do not possess this social knowledge are placed in the position of savages, less-than-humans who require repression and discipline. Individuals are forced to bear the labels assigned to them by a dualistic system of differentiation, these being 'good parents' or a 'not-functioning and at-risk family', rather than questioning the assumptions behind the norm that bases its rationale on Western thought. For example, when the traditional Korean childrearing practice that discourages verbal praise is perceived through this notion of truth, it could be misunderstood as harsh. However, this view does not take into account that traditional Korean culture places great value on humility and harmony in the community, thus verbal acknowledgement of your child's good performance can be considered arrogant and vain. While the traditional Korean parenting styles do not carry less truth or value than the 'Positive Parenting Principles' of IY, the discourses in IY disregard these values and beliefs of other cultures by (re)producing Western notion of parenting as the only worthwhile knowing and being. What does this mean in terms of parents' and children's aspirations for themselves? Are these Korean parents endangering their children with the predictable and undesirable outcomes by their nonconformity?

Potential richness within Other's conceptions of the world becomes invisible to those who operate within this power relation, as they are blinded by the brilliance of modern disciplinary power. Nothing except that which is named or represented as 'the Other' (i.e. savage, uncivilised, and exotic) by the colonising power is readily recognisable.

> Thus, even as the identification with the coloniser diminishes the self of the colonised, it also establishes a distance between that self and home, whether in terms of culture, or language, or the connection with one's own people (Asher, 2009, p. 3).

The colonising power obscures the ability to recognise other aspects of the colonised, except what is attached to them or named by the coloniser. This alienates individuals from themselves and others, imposing a detachment from their own worldviews and values, and forcing them to examine themselves as an object through the eyes of the coloniser (Asher, 2009).

Soto and Kharem's (2006) study of American bilingual education settings is a good example of this. The researchers discuss the way in which education reproduces the colonising power by reinforcing the cultural hegemony in the colonial context. Their analysis shows that non-whites are often associated with criminal activity, laziness and sexual promiscuity in the media and education, and indigenous children are de-cultured from their own cultures. The researchers argue that the hegemonic position of Anglo-American culture is indoctrinated through the education system, educating children to be proud to be American (Western), and to devalue their own heritage cultures and languages. The home languages of indigenous children are used only as a mark of inferiority, a tool to keep them out of privileged status. As a result, the subjugated children and families are pressured to discard their own language and culture and to "wear the white mask" (p. 25).

Soto and Kharem (2006) label this process as the 'cultural genocide' of indigenous people as it not only robs them of their language and culture, but also of the right to name their world. It disconnects them from their history, languages, social relations, and their way of connecting and making sense of the world (Smith, 1999).

The 'Otherness' of these people is only forced to appear to disappear, marking its strangeness and savageness. They are forced to learn and to bear the way that their identity and world are coded into the Western system. The complexity of their identity is condensed into simplistic and fragmented stereotypes and their world is carved up to serve the needs of the colonisers. The cultural system of classification and representation of the West, then, becomes "the shared culture" of the colonisers and the colonised, providing the modality by which they understand the world through only the languages and knowledge of colonisation (Smith, 1999, p. 45). Within this shared culture of colonisation, the colonised are only recognised through the eyes of their master, an inferior subject to be subdued and controlled.

To move from the colonial periphery to the centre of the imposed hierarchy, people of colour must prove how different they are from their *native* selves. The success of these people in the colonised context depends on the distance they have moved from their own heritage, and how well they have adjusted to wearing white masks. For example, some immigrant parents actively avoid teaching children their heritage languages and cultures, encouraging them instead to concentrate on seamless assimilation into the dominant culture. This encourages the colonised to deny themselves and "to take on the role of the *mimic* coloniser… almost the same (as colonialists) but not quite…" (Jones & Osgood, 2007, p. 292).

Using a psychiatric asylum, the penal system, Christian schools and a hospital in 19th century Europe as examples, Foucault (1977) explains how the mechanisms of binary division and branding extend the exercise of disciplinary power. These disciplinary institutions establish the representation of binaries such as normal/abnormal, and civilised/savage, and the individuals are categorised according to these. The categories or the labels that brand an individual determine "who he is; where he must be; how he is to be characterised; how he is recognised; how a constant surveillance is to be exercised over him in an individual way" (p. 199). These labels and ranks, then, are applied to impose further pressure to conform, punishing or rewarding those with lower or higher positions respectively.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, discourses produced by colonisation essentialise human nature in terms of reason and science, placing the West on a

pedestal. Under its colonising disciplinary power, therefore, the world is divided and categorised into dualistic opposites such as civilised/uncivilised, human/non-human, and truth/untruth. Consequently, those who do not possess these essential traits of humanity, represented by Western culture, are positioned as "not fully human" (Smith, 1999, p. 25). Being dehumanised and objectified, the colonised are assumed to be ignorant, thus they need to be rescued and guided by the civilised West.

This is clearly exemplified in a study of Mexican immigrant children in America (Miller, 2006). According to this study, immigrants, especially people of colour, are depicted in derogatory terms in policies and media (e.g. threat, terrorist, societal burden, drug dealer), blaming them for the problems of society. This animalistic and violent picture of 'the Other' builds a sense of fear towards them, and reinforces the prejudiced belief that 'the Otherness' is at the centre of the problems in society. The construction of immigrant children and families as "the problem in need of fixing" persists, even within the discourses produced by advocates for the subjugated group (Miller, 2006, p. 46). The project by Soto and Kharem (2006) also indicates a similar result. Many of the so-called bilingual/bicultural programmes produce subtexts contending that the academic challenges experienced by bilingual children are their own fault, inciting labelling by the use of a pathological and deficient language.

Smith (1999) calls attention to this technique by which colonising power rationalises and reinscribes its dominance over 'the Other'. Drawing on a hierarchically ordered representation of race and culture, the disciplinary power justifies cultural genocide or domestication of 'the Other' with the claim that it is for 'the good of mankind'. By dehumanising the colonised and problematising 'the Otherness' of the subjugated, the exploitation of indigenous people is dressed up as a moral duty of civilised man, to save the savages from their defects. For example, standardised testing is highly regarded in modern education for its ability to objectively assess the progress of children. As modern education places blind faith in standardised testing, research in education invests huge resources to find the best way to implement and conduct tests, rather than questioning the medium and content of the assessment (Viruru, 2006). The lower test results of indigenous children

crystallise the deficit representation of them, and legitimise the restricted opportunities and oppression imposed on them.

Similar to the function of the Panopticon as a constant, effective exercise of power, this binary division and branding of individuals enables the automation of such power, making one "both the principle and the subject of his/her own subjection" (Foucault, 1977, p. 202). Being subjected to a strong dualistic representation with values given by the colonising power, what made the colonised who they are as the individuals with culture and colour become invisible even to themselves, while their otherness grew ever more apparent. This point of difference is recognised by the individuals, as well as by others, to identify how and where they must move away from, so that they will be able to transform themselves ever closer to that which is considered to be normal. This value-embedded representation of labels and ranks is used to reward progress and punish defects, continuously increasing the pressure to conform to the norm.

The strategy of the colonising power, being the alienation of the individuals from the self, is evident in the delivery and discourses in IY. The pilot studies and follow-up report on the application of IY in New Zealand (Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock et al., 2014) established the negative representation of Māori and Pasifika children and families. Their cultural backgrounds are only identified in terms of the negative aspects of children and families with Māori heritages. For example, the higher rates of conduct problems among Māori children (15%-20% higher than non-Māori), and their lower behaviour outcome measures in the follow-up study (Sturrock & Gray, 2013, pp. 3, 5). The delivery of IY by 'culturally-competent and experienced Māori facilitators', or 'Kanohi kitea or the seen face" in the CEF (Macfarlane, 2011, 30 August), also illustrates the strategies of the colonising power used to strengthen its control over the minds of the colonised. Those who have successfully conformed to the Western worldview are represented in the higher rank of group leader, in contrast to the deficit labels of children and families with Māori heritage presented in the documents. This defines the model citizen, who gains elite status by aligning his/her cultural and economic interests with the coloniser instead of his/her own community (Smith, 1999).

1.4 A linear notion of space, time and experience

Understanding the world through Western ideas also establishes a certain approach to a perception of time, space and experience (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Smith, 1999). The indigenous understanding of time and space as relative and fluid has become static under the absolute categories of the colonising discourses. This notion of time, space and experiences is encoded in history, modern languages and science, influencing the way in which the individual understands the world (Smith, 1999). Whether it is time, behaviour, action or space, the notion is divided into small, independent units to increase the efficiency of the colonising power over its subjects.

This is one of the strategies that disciplinary power utilises to extract the maximum time and force from bodies. A subtle partitioning of individual behaviour may seem minor if one does not consider the function of this mechanism: "a microscope of conduct" (Foucault, 1977, p. 173). By dividing up time, movements, and spaces into infinitesimal detail (for example, using timetables in armies and schools), the management of multiplicity of each individual becomes rapid and efficient with the least cost (Foucault, 1977). These analytical divisions further enable the constant surveillance of every individual in a single gaze.

Discourses of colonising disciplinary power are present in the structure of IY, in its outcomes and in the delivery of the programme. The progress of the programme is neatly organised in linear timelines (e.g. stage one, stage two, etc.), presenting clear fixed outcomes that participants need to achieve at the end of each phase. Time is understood as a fixed and absolute point, thus the progress of parents is evaluated whether or not they reach or arrive each point fully developed or transformed. The expected outcomes of IY are presented as the absolute truth, which stays the same regardless of time, context and environment, urging parents to seek to reach the final stage.

The behaviour management strategies given by the programme also categorise the movement of individuals' into small units, reducing the interactions between parents and children to simple verbal communication. There is no consideration of the complexity involved in relationship building, such as family dynamics, beliefs and values and contexts, yet the programme claims that mastering the prescribed set of

behaviour management skills and proactive discipline techniques will ensure positive relationship in families.

This chapter has examined discourses of IY by drawing on and using Foucault's concepts of discursive normalisation and governmentality as a lens. The analysis shows some of these discourses are related to assumptions of colonisation, (re)producing the colonised norm of parenting as the truth. Centring progress and science in one's way of life may seem harmless at a glance, and one may argue that it is just a particular 'episteme' (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 54) of the time, existing among many other knowledge systems. However, a large volume of research conducted by post-colonial and decolonising theorists provides added insight into the far-reaching consequences of colonising power (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Jones & Osgood, 2007; Kincheloe, 1995; Mazzei, 2008; Miller, 2006; Nxumalo, 2012; Oliver, 2004; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2006; Smith, 1999; Soto & Kharem, 2006; Swadener, 1995; Viruru, 2006; Yuen, 2010). These colonising discourses in IY transform the way in which individuals understand themselves and others, stripping the identity and culture of the subjugated group.

CHAPTER FOUR:
THE SCIENTIFIC/CLINICAL SOUL

The previous chapter of this thesis investigated the discourses of colonisation in IY, and how these discourses promote a certain norm of parenting as 'the only and universal truth'. The findings raise concern, considering the resounding presence of colonising discourses within IY, and the problems that accompany them. Being placed in the centre of this knowledge system, the scientific epistemology identified by post-colonialists as of 'Anglo-European, white, middle/high class origin' (Smith, 1999; Viruru, 2006) has become the apparatus of a modern colonising power, extending its reach into new territory: the soul of subjects (Asher, 2009; Mazzei, 2008; Oliver, 2004). As the control of the colonising power on individuals intensifies, the privileged position of scientific knowledge has become entrenched (Asher, 2009; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Smith, 1999).

This is clearly demonstrated in IY. The foundations of the programme are psychology and child development theories (The Incredible Years®, 2013d; The Werry Center for Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 2014; Webster-Stratton, 2013), whereas other types of knowledge are left unstipulated and overlooked. More than a dozen clinical trials are presented to attest to its 'universal' outcomes across various sectors and contexts (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). The discourses in IY present scientific knowledge as the only worthwhile, natural way of understanding the world, while other kinds of knowledge are omitted. What does this mean for the lives of children and families who operate within this context? What does it imply in terms of power relations in the milieu?

This chapter follows on from the previous chapter, particularly expanding on the discussion regarding scientific discourses in IY, and further investigates the assumptions and values veiled beneath these discourses. It explores the function of the scientific discourses within parenting pedagogy in relation to the mechanisms of modern disciplinary power, and the way that they may influence the lives of individuals. Foucault's lectures between 1974-1975 on the emergence of the norm and of correspondingly abnormal individuals (Foucault, 2003), and his books on the

penal system (Foucault, 1977) and the power/knowledge dualism (Foucault, 1980) are applied as a tool to make sense of the scientific discourses presented in IY. In addition, wider works by educational philosophers and early childhood scholars are incorporated to bring rigor and depth to the author's interpretation. The author of this study has also engaged others to provide vigorous reviews of her own interpretations, and has undergone critical dialogues on her analysis with other scholars [1] in the field.

It should be noted that it is not the author's intention to refute the academic standing of psychology and science. Rather, the discussion should be understood as the author's attempt to investigate the potentially damaging influence of these scientific/psychological discourses on education and the lives of children and parents when applied to other sectors and disciplines.

1. Scientific discourses at the centre of parenting truth

1.1 One-fits-all: absolute truth

Attributable to growing interest in different approaches to child development in the last few decades (e.g. Vygotsky's cultural-historical account and Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory), the use of terms such as 'developmentally appropriate practice' has become less popular, and is even avoided in some educational disciplines (Burman, 2008). However, this does not necessarily herald the decline of developmental psychology. To the contrary, developmental assumptions have become naturalised and are now ingrained in the way professionals understand and assess the learning of children such that their subtle yet effective power has become less obvious and more difficult to notice at times (Burman, 2008; Hultqvist & Dahlberg, 2001; Kincheloe, 1995; MacNaughton, 2005; Viruru, 2006). Traces of Piaget's stage model of cognitive development still can be found in many teacher training courses and research journals in education, perpetuating the privileged status of developmental psychology as universal, factual, absolute truth (Burman, 2008).

Some of these discourses are expressed explicitly, and others implied by normalising assumptions within the content. Whether expressed in an explicit or

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1 Some parts of this project have been presented at Philosophy of Education Society of Australasia Conference 2014 by the author. In addition, the author's publication which was peer-reviewed and published by Springer Science+Business has drawn from Chapter Four of this thesis (Bae, 2015).

implicit manner, these discourses continue to authorise one way of learning as the truth, while excluding and disregarding other types of knowledge. The discourses produced by IY are no exception to this. These discourses portray the development of children as linear, and support universal progress towards a more logical, intellectually advanced being. Following statements about IY's theoretical framework, content and outcomes are provided by the IY developers to promote the programme. Consider how these narratives establish implicit and explicit truths about the normal child and desirable parenting. Sections in italics denotes the normative assumptions masked by these statements:

> Each of the programs is thematically consistent, includes the same theoretical underpinnings, and is based on the developmental milestones for each age stage.
> (Webster-Stratton, 2014)

> [*There are developmental milestones for each age stage. These are universally applicable for all children. The normal child will demonstrate these milestones correctly at each age stage.*]

> The objectives of Programme One (Attentive Child-directed Play) are to support children's independence and confidence; to understand the importance of individual time; to respond to children's developmental readiness.
> (The Incredible Years®, 2013b)

> [*The normal child shows independence and confidence. The normal child demonstrates developmentally appropriate skills, and adults should respond appropriately to these skills to encourage further development.*]

> Each of these core programs emphasizes developmentally appropriate parenting skills and includes age-appropriate video examples of culturally

diverse families and children with varying temperaments and development issues.

(Webster-Stratton, 2014, p. 3)

[*Good parents demonstrate developmentally appropriate parenting skills. There is an age-appropriate way to deal with various temperaments and developmental issues. This is also applicable for culturally diverse families and children.*]

The programs have been found to be effective in strengthening teacher and parent management skills, improving children's social and emotional competence and school readiness, and reducing behavior problems.

(The Incredible Years®, 2013e)

[*Good parents have a good command of behaviour management skills, and are in control of a child's behaviour. There is a particular/correct way to behave socially and emotionally. The normal child behaves well/correctly in this manner, and is equipped with skills that are required at school (academic competence).*]

To obtain similar outcomes, it is important to ensure that the programme is delivered with the highest possible degree of fidelity. Our core training methods and supervision ensure replication of the Incredible Years programs with fidelity. We offer five steps to success.

    1. Standardised and comprehensive intervention materials (manual, books, DVDs)

    2. Standardised training workshops for clinicians by certified mentors and trainers

    3. Ongoing supervision, coaching and mentoring support

    4. Fidelity monitoring

    5. Agency organisational support

(The Incredible Years®, 2013f)

[*As long as IY is delivered with the highest degree of fidelity, IY will produce similar outcomes regardless of cultural and socio-economical context and the backgrounds of the child and parents. Therefore, being equipped with this universal knowledge, the standardised materials and training workshop will be sufficient to meet the needs of all children and parents.*]

With such certainty, the discourses in these narratives authorise developmental psychology as the only factual and correct method by which to understand and measure the learning of children, and behaviour management skills as the 'one-fits-all' answer for the challenges that all children and parents face in life. Other types of knowledge, beliefs and values related to parenting must be set aside, and are considered un-natural (abnormal), incorrect, and inconsequential for normal/good individuals because scientific knowledge is 'The' universal/absolute truth.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the assumption underneath this approach to knowledge is that all human beings are the same, thus discovering and implementing the universal and absolute truth that encompasses this essence of human existence will solve the problems of society and achieve further human progress (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Smith, 1999). Subtleties, complexities, and the messiness of real life are ironed out neatly, reducing the multifaceted challenges experienced by individuals to a simple, straightforward problem. In the case of immigrant children and families, there could be a variety of reason for their apparently less than favourable behaviours (in the eyes of teachers and other experts). These children and families experience adjustment of social and verbal languages and environments (climate, food, cultures and beliefs), which makes it more difficult for them to demonstrate the desirable conduct in particular contexts. Or it could be financial strain and working at a job below the level for which they are qualified in their home countries increases extra stress and pressure on immigrant parents.

However, the problem with perceiving and judging individuals in relation to the absolute/universal truth of what post-colonialists refer to, i.e. 'the West' (Smith, 1999; Viruru, 2006), is that the complex challenges immigrant children and parents can experience are ignored, while responsibility for the welfare and the success of children rests entirely on their parents (Miller, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2007; Pacini-

Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Smeyers, 2010; Suissa, 2006). Instead of endeavouring to understand and support the genuine issues in children's and parents' lives, this approach concentrates on highlighting what they are *not* doing right, according to the norm, and how to fix this (Smeyers, 2010; Suissa, 2006). Through this developmental/behavioural psychological lens, the frustration of the immigrant children which derives from their difficulties in mastering different social skills and languages, may be seen simply as aggressive behaviour, and the manifestation of their parents' inadequate parenting skills and knowledge. Regardless of various socio-economic backgrounds, genders, contexts, cultures and beliefs, the normalising discourses suggest that being equipped with this universal/absolute truth should improve the behaviours and performances of problem children and parents.

Foucault (1977, 1980, 2003) challenges the notion of scientific knowledge as universal, indisputable, absolute truth with objectivity. Using a penal system and a mental institution as examples, he highlights the regime of truth as "culturally prejudiced, partial, situated and local" for it is the product of particular knowledge-power relations (MacNaughton, 2005, p. 23). Therefore, he claims that the regime of truth, or the politics of truth, should be understood as the manifestation of a power struggle over meanings in a specific milieu, rather than as an *indisputable truth* that equally encompasses all human lives (Foucault, 1980).

For example, to traditional Korean parents brought up in Confucian discourses, what is perceived as good parenting may include teaching children to respect elders and to value a strong family morality (e.g. teaching children to be polite, greeting elders, offering help such as lifting heavy things for elders, giving up their seats in the bus, and putting the family's needs first, including sacrificing their own gains, if need be). These values and beliefs are considered as the truth by Korean parents, yet they become invisible, irrelevant, and even inadequate in a context where scientific knowledge is positioned in a privileged status.

This does not imply that the traditional truth of Korean parenting holds less value/worth than the scientific knowledge. More accurately, it reveals the excessive singularity of psychological discourses in modern societies, and the way in which this enables the modern disciplinary power to punish the soul of the normal/the abnormal.

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Contrary to the widespread representation of scientific knowledge as a neutral and universal truth, it is highly political, and situated (Foucault, 1980). Neither the knowledge re/produced in Korean parenting, nor the scientific way of knowing has more value, as both come with their own sets of problems and limitations. The emphasis on family responsibilities and social hierarchies should be understood in terms of the way in which these discourses support the mechanism of power operating in the particular Korean context, rather than as a representation of higher moral values and stronger family bonds within the populations. It is a manifestation of "the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected", thus providing a useful insight into how the existing power mechanism sustains its authority by producing certain discourses (Foucault, 1977, p. 185). In other words, 'truth' should be understood as a system of power that regulates and distributes the bodies, governing the souls of individuals for economic and political production in societies; how normative discourses differentiate between the normal and the abnormal; and by whom and how these discourses are authorised.

1.1-1 The normal/natural relationship

The dominating presence of child development knowledge in early childhood education establishes such a convincing picture of "how to 'be' that it is difficult to imagine how to think, act and feel in any other way" (MacNaughton, 2005, p. 33). The discourses in IY offer a clear description of normal/desirable interactions between children and parents:

> The foundation of the Incredible Years programs focuses on building warm and nurturing parent-child and teacher-child relationships through children directed play, social and emotion coaching, praise and incentives.
> (The Incredible Years®, 2013d)

> Gerald R. Patterson's theoretical work on childhood aggression strongly influenced the development of training programs. Patterson's social learning model emphasises the importance of the family and teacher socialisation processes, especially those affecting young children…If parents and teachers can learn to give more attention to positive behaviors than negative behaviors and manage children's misbehaviour with proactive discipline and

appropriate problem-solving, the children can develop social competence, emotional regulation, and reduce aggressive behaviour at home and at school.

(The Incredible Years®, 2013d)

Drawing from behavioural science and developmental psychology, these statements emphasise the 'warm and nurturing' type of adult-child relationships, and the 'positive' verbal interactions for children's learning. The problem arises from the subjective nature of the terms 'warm and nurturing' from culture to culture. Some cultures, such as Korean and Tongan, may discourage verbal acknowledgement of desirable behaviours and may seem outwardly firm and strict, yet there may still be a strong and nurturing relationship between children and parents. However, relationships and interactions between these children and parents do not match the exact representation of the norm. They may appear harsh, inadequate or abnormal childrearing practices to people who are in a position of power to assess and to control (e.g. early childhood educators, health professionals and social workers).

By presenting discourses prescribing what is the normal or desirable way to be as a parent and a child in an explicit manner, these narratives implicitly categorise those who do not fit this norm as abnormal, thus rationalising the disciplinary power to intervene and reform these individuals (Foucault, 1977, 2003). Once *abnormal* individuals are identified, various institutions get involved to *catch them early* so that "predictable negative consequences", such as violence, delinquency, and substance abuse by these children in adolescence and adulthood will be prevented (Borden et al., 2010, p. 223).

In addition, the appropriate forms of parent-teacher and child-adult relationship are identified in the document. Parents are 'to partner with teachers and to be involved in children's school experiences', and to engage in 'child-directed play' for the child's academic success and social and emotional competencies (The Incredible Years®, 2013g). There is no regard for different cultures' approaches to child-adult, and parent-teacher dynamics, not to mention complexity and multiplicity within the same culture. The discourses in IY promote active involvement at school and letting the

child lead in play as *normal* parenting practice whereas other norms of childrearing practice are ignored.

For instance, among various styles of parenting in Japanese and Korean cultures, those who are brought up with more traditional values expect a distinctive role for each individual in relation to the social hierarchy. In classrooms and educational settings, it is teachers who are in the position of experts. Therefore, for those who are brought up in these particular Korean or Japanese contexts, if parents ask questions about school life or voice their aspiration for their child, it could be interpreted as an attempt to undermine teachers' pedagogy; an act of disrespect.

In the case of the child-adult dynamic in these cultures, it is adults who are assumed to be wiser and more knowledgeable, placing them in a higher position in a social hierarchy. This is not unlike the way in which 'Western hetero-patriarchal cultures' (Smith, 1999; Soto, 2005; Viruru, 2006) perceive the child and adult hierarchies. The difference, however, is the trajectory of this dynamic. Some Japanese and Korean cultures have a more candid manifestation of this child-adult relationship expressed with a more authoritative approach and more defined roles for each party. Either the parents decide what is good for their child, expecting the child to comply with their commands, or the child and parents get engaged in separate activities that are appropriate for each position (i.e. 'There is a place for child, and a place for adults.', 'Playing is for child, and adults need to work, be responsible and mature.').

The normalising discourses of active involvement and child-directed play fail to grasp these subtle cultural interpretations and representations of power in complex social dynamics, condemning these parents as unhelpful, uninterested and incompetent. It is highly presumptuous to assume that these parents care less or have no interest in their children's learning, just because they do not demonstrate the precise style of parenting provided in IY. On the contrary, many of these immigrants choose to move overseas to give their children a better chance in life and higher quality education, even if it means making a significant sacrifice such as giving up secure careers and being separated from family and friends.

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1.1-2 The normal/natural interaction

The IY programme's content and objectives (The Incredible Years®, 2013c) provide added insight into a standard or model behaviour of children and parents. The IY developers claim that the warm and nurturing relationship can be achieved by applying positive tactics such as incentives and praise. It is also suggested that competent parents should coach and model socially and emotionally acceptable behaviour, and manage children's misbehaviour with proactive disciplinary techniques. Desirable interactions and relationships between children and parents are described in microscopic detail:

> Program Two: Using praise and incentives to encourage cooperative behavior
>> Part 1: The art of effective praise and encouragement
>> ■ Modeling self-praise
>> ■ Promoting positive self-talk
>> ■ Getting and giving support through praise
>> ■ Recognising social and academic behaviors that need praise
>> ■ Building children's self-esteem through praise and encouragement
>> Part 2: Motivating children through incentives
>> ■ Recognising when to use the "first-then" principles
>> ■ Understanding how to "shape" behaviors
>> ■ Understanding how to develop incentive programs that are developmentally appropriate
>> ■ Understanding ways to use tangible rewards for problems such as dawdling, not dressing, noncompliance, fighting with siblings, picky eating, messy rooms, not going to bed, and toilet training
>> (The Incredible Years®, 2013c)

Many of the behaviour management strategies promoted in IY require explicit verbal responses. To 'shape' children's behaviours into desirable and normal patterns, parents are encouraged to use a great deal of verbal praise, 'negotiate' with children, and 'motivate' them with 'developmentally appropriate' incentives. On the one hand, academic and social skills are distinguished as key competencies to be mastered in the early years, and worthy of recognition and verbal praise. On the other hand, non-

compliance, not sleeping at given bedtime, reliance on parents for toileting and self-care, and insufficient movements are placed at the opposite end, the abnormal or detrimental behaviours.

By providing these infinitesimal details to describe desirable parenting, modern disciplinary power regulates the movement of the docile body. It "clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals wandering about the country in unpredictable ways", and it increases the efficiency of the power in the system (Foucault, 1977, p. 219). This subtle and calculated technique of subjection enables the disciplinary power to establish a meticulous chain of surveillance, exploiting the bodies' ability to produce at the maximum capacity (Foucault, 1977). The multiplicities of each individual are broken down and reduced into inconsequential and manageable pieces of movement for the systematic control of bodies. This enables offenses of non-conformity to be recognisable to the individual and to others instantaneously, increasing the efficiency of the surveillance. A fine web of surveillance across disciplines and institutions allows the disciplinary power to distribute the bodies in the most effective manner according to the attributes and skills of the individual, and if need be, to recodify the soul of the citizens so they become useful or compliant subjects in the system.

For example, in some cultures (e.g. traditional Afghani and Chinese cultures) children do not have a fixed bedtime. Being fully integrated into adults' lives, children stay up with adults to participate family gatherings and late night feasts. While this is regarded as a normal part of life for these families in their home countries, in the milieu where Western hetero-patriarchal culture is at the centre, the parents may be criticised for failing to ensure their child gets enough length of sleep to maintain their health and quality of participation in educational settings the next day. The clash between their own values and beliefs and the dominant truth is most likely to be resolved by parents giving in to what is believed to be *normal* in the societal context in which they operate.

Education, health and welfare institutions identify abnormal children and parents, and refer them to intervention programmes such as IY in order to *correct* and *cure* them. They may yield to the pressure of normalising discourses and make the

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decision to conform to the norm so that they will no longer be categorised with deficit labels. They will not be categorised as incompetent and irresponsible parents who have neither sufficient parenting skills nor knowledge. In spite of the dissonance these parents experience concerning cultural beliefs and dominant discourses in parenting, the elusive power of discursive normalisation pressurises individuals to perform according to the norm, reproducing and reinscribing a particular form of childrearing as the truth (Foucault, 1977).

So, where does this governing power of scientific knowledge come from? By whom and how does it establish and occupy its position as the truth in modern societies? Drawing from Foucault's works, the following section of this chapter explores the way in which disciplinary power justifies and maintains the privileged status of scientific knowledge.

2. Authorisation of scientific truth in parenting

Aforementioned studies of power by Foucault (1977, 1980, 1988a, 1991, 2003) include analysis of the dominant knowledge in the system regarding the self-referring circularity between power and knowledge. Contrary to the way in which the dominant knowledge is often presented as universal or the absolute 'truth', he argues that the political and economic dynamics of power in the milieu produce a particular notion of knowledge as truth (Foucault, 1980, p. 131):

> Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned: the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true.

This knowledge, the regime of truth, sustains the system of power in the context, while being supported by the very power dynamic that it maintains. Being finely interwoven, the mechanism of power and the knowledge feed each other, strengthening their status and extending their reach across the various settings and disciplines. Thus, for Foucault, what is taken for granted as truth in a particular milieu

needs to be understood in relation to a specific type of power system. It is important to know how it is produced by the system of power, how it maintains the power relations in the context, how it induces and extends the effects of power (Foucault, 1980). His analysis of the nexus between modern penal power and scientific discourses provides a good example of this. The penal system legitimises its power to decide the life or death of a criminal with either discourses laden with medical justifications, or discourses that are expressed by experts who possess scientific knowledge (Foucault, 2003).

Two forms of discourses that authorise and reinscribe the scientific truth of parenting are produced in IY: experts as judges and healers, and medicalisation of non-conformity.

2.1 Experts as judges and healers

To illustrate his point, Foucault (2003) uses the legal case of Henriette Cornier who killed her neighbour's little girl without any apparent motive. As the crime was committed by a subject with reason (who did not suffer from dementia), her act was to be punished in accordance with the code of law (i.e. 'There is no crime, if the subject, the defendant, is in a state of dementia at the time of the act.', or in modern terms, 'not guilty by the reason of insanity'). However, the penal system could not match this act of crime with a measured and appropriate punishment as the internal rationality of the crime could not be established (i.e. the why and how of the crime). This brought the exercise of punitive power to an impasse, that is, the conduct of the criminal must be punished, yet punitive power no longer has a justification for its exercise due to lack of intelligibility of the crime.

Jamming of these two mechanisms of the penal system was resolved by the meshing or interlocking of judicial power and medical power (Foucault, 2003). To substitute the absence of reason, the prosecution established the subject's resemblance to the crime with the help of psychiatry. The subject's conduct, history and life style were examined under the microscope, and the expert psychiatric opinion described and piled up a series of misdeeds and illegalities in the earlier life of the subject. For instance, the psychiatrist's assessment of Henriette Cornier recounted her debauchery, abandonment of her families, and her illegitimate children. While these acts were

neither illegal nor directly connected to her crime, the expert opinion presented them to establish a clear picture of how she "resembles her act, so the act really is hers, and we have the right to punish the subject when we come to judge the act" (p. 124). These discourses are presented with scientific status by experts, therefore they were received as "discourses of truth" (Foucault, 2003, p. 6), and taken to be the unchallengeable explanation of the criminality of the subject. Immorality, delinquency, family history and past offenses are often offered as a motive or a foundation of a crime, masking the absence of reason for and intelligibility of the crime. In this case, the exercise of punitive power was also successfully extended into realms over which it did not previously have jurisdiction. Not only was the offence of the subject given as the reason for persecution, but also her conduct, her morality and who she was as a person were also scrutinised by penal system.

The discourses in IY show a similar pattern. At the beginning of the programme, parent participants are asked to fill out detailed demographic and intake forms. These forms are designed to provide a comprehensive overview of each parent's background for the experts in IY who facilitate the programme. Such information as gross annual household income, the parents' age when their first child was born, social security number, medications that their child takes, their child's past use of special services, mental health treatments or social services, the highest level of education parents have completed, their occupation, whether they receive financial aid from the government, their ethnic group or race, the language spoken at home, and how many times they have moved in a year may be collected (The Incredible Years®, 2013h). The particulars of the surveys do not necessarily represent the parental inaptitude of the individual. However, once the information is piled up together by those who are qualified by institutions and supposedly have expertise in child development, it possess the power of truth, and becomes evidence of why these children and parents *require* intervention. Through this social screening process, expert opinion highlights the danger that lurks beneath these problem children and parents. It builds up the case against the person, portraying him/her as a morally defective and incompetent parent, an abnormal person who will likely be a danger or burden to society. The parents and children are seen to "already resemble (their) crime before (they have) committed it" (Foucault, 2003, p. 19).

Under the guise of science, logic and expertise, expert opinion convinces the subjects that the intervention process is for their own benefit, rather than being a tool for sustaining and reinforcing the exercise of power. The subject is represented in terms of their irregularity (e.g. marital status, teenage pregnancy, relationship status, behaviour problems) and deficiency (e.g. education level, annual income, occupation, mental health, financial aid, race, language), which authorises the subject to be observed, examined and cured of his/her defects. Not only the acts, but also the individual's "nature, potentialities, a level of his/her value" are judged (Foucault, 1977, p. 181), so that the disciplinary power can cure these abnormal desires of person, reforming the subject to be a docile body. Expert opinion justifies a technique of normalisation in modern disciplinary societies, and successfully turns parenting into a site of governmentality, a part of the network of gazes and subjugation (Foucault, 2003).

The emerging power of normalisation is further advanced by establishing the interactions between various institutions, validating each other's expertise and capability. Being sanctioned by the institutions with authority, the experts' status of privilege is fortified, and in return they continue to (re)produce the dominant discourses that qualified them as knowers. This is evident in the case of IY, which claims reliability for its programme's effectiveness based on endorsement from institutions such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Home Office of the United Kingdom, Sure Start (UK), Head Start (US), and the US Centre for Substance Abuse Prevention and Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention (The Incredible Years®, 2013a). They are mutually beneficial to each other. IY is justified as a privileged/effective programme, therefore it continues to reinscribe the scientific truth of parenting and child development that endowed these institutions with authority.

Paradoxically, this self-referring relationship between knowledge and power strengthens the system, but is also its weakness. The psychological and developmental truth in IY validates credibility by being objective, scientific, and evidence-based. What is often overlooked is that the ideas of Piaget, Vygotsky and other preeminent psychologists are selectively interpreted and implemented through the screening of Anglo-US and Anglo-European contexts, to serve the mechanism of power (Burman,

2008). In addition, there is no precise correlation between the evidence provided to justify the need for intervention and the actual childrearing practice, which is contradictory to its claim to be scientific and evidence-based. If what IY claims is true (i.e. that parents' education level, income, language, race, relationship status, etc. are important factors in good parenting, and all children go through the universal stages of development, which should be supported with behaviour management skills and *warm and nurturing* verbal interactions etc.), then it leads to the conclusion that those who do not comply with these standards and performance measures are inadequate parents who risk exposing their children to "predictable negative consequences" (Borden et al., 2010, p. 223). This argument raises more questions and confusion than the answers and credibility it provides. Has the older generation who were brought up in a strict parenting style and without the support of behaviour management skills, been shown to have been involved in a higher rate of crime? Are all individuals who are brought up with methods other than psychological truth in their own contexts living a life full of violence and immorality? Even measuring against the given outcomes of IY (e.g. academic achievement, compliance to the social codes, a lower rate of crime), it is highly unlikely that *all* individuals outside the norm will definitely suffer less than desirable consequences.

2.2 Medicalisation of non-conformity

The entanglement of judicial and medical apparatus ensures a heightening of the status of psychiatric knowledge. Until the 19th century, psychiatry functioned as a division of public hygiene rather than medical knowledge, a social protection against any kind of dangers that might arise as a result of illness. This, however, has changed due to the need for a new technique of power to unblock the jamming of two penal mechanisms mentioned above. To legitimise the role of disciplinary power to judge and intervene, psychiatry needed to find a way to cover up the absence of reason, as well as reinforcing its expert status. The answer was to reinvent psychiatry as a medical discipline, organising an area of "perversity" in scientific and medical discourses (Foucault, 2003, p. 32). By taking advantage of the endowed position of knower, the psychiatry expert cloaks trivial and illogical connections between non-conformity and social dangers with scientific discourse. Psychiatrists are endowed with the power to define and judge what is normal or abnormal, and in return, they

(re)produce medico-legal discourses that justify the disciplinary power to intervene and cure the defects in their subjects:

> With expert medico-legal opinion we have a practice concerned with abnormal individuals that introduces a certain power of normalisation and which, through its own strength and through the effects of the joining together of the medical and the judicial that it ensures, tends gradually to transform judicial power as well as psychiatric knowledge and to constitute itself as the authority responsible for the control of abnormal individuals (Foucault, 2003, p. 32).

As the question of establishing the intelligibility of the offence relies on psychiatry to provide a medical explanation for senseless crimes, its position as a reliable and scientific intervention expert is secured. Psychiatric knowledge, the science of madness, has become "both its effect and also a condition of power's exercise." (Foucault, 2003, p. 42). Psychiatric knowledge is entrusted with the responsibility to detect and to diagnose the madness that all individuals who are a danger to society must be hiding. The danger that seems incomprehensible in the eyes of law is not only recognisable through psychiatry's expertise on madness, but also predictable. This brings strength to the knowledge of psychiatry and justification for its position in the system.

Medicalised discourses presented in IY are a good illustration of this. Children with "conduct problems (or misbehaviour)" and their parents are associated with medicalised terms such as "mental health (depression)", "diagnose", "oppositional defiant disorder and ADHD", "prevention and therapeutic process" and "clinic populations" (Foucault, 2003, p. 52). Medicalised discourses subtly identify those who do not perform according to the norm as 'high risk' and 'aggressive' populations (The Incredible Years®, 2013b; Webster-Stratton, 2013), justifying the need for disciplinary power to intervene and transform their lives. With the help of scientific and psychological knowledge, the control of modern disciplinary power over families is validated, and its effectiveness in micro-governing the conduct of subjects is increased. This, in turn, endorses the privileged status of psychology and the credibility of expert opinions for their unique ability to *detect* and to *predict* the dangers that lurk underneath these individuals.

IY's before-participation survey is also saturated with medicalised discourses, and is carried out with the form itself resembles a clinical chart. It situates individuals under the gaze of surveillance, collecting a permanent corpus of knowledge about the subject (Foucault, 1977). Upon this process of objectification and subjection, each individual becomes a 'case' to be known and analysed, so he/she can be "described, judged, measured, and compared with others in his/her very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalised, and excluded" (Foucault, 1977, p. 191). Personal details of parents and children gathered through the survey are used as tools and evidence to control and subjugate. They mark the gap that individualises the person as different, defective or abnormal, and designates the norm as the reference.

In spite of its claims to be beneficial and supportive of children and parents, the discourses produced in IY illustrate that the programme is inherently exclusive and discriminatory, condoning inequality and the marginalisation of 'the Other'. It is ironic that IY, a parenting programme endorsed by the New Zealand government, with an official objective to support families and children, actually exacerbates inequality and oppression. Compared with the norm, families and children with different values and beliefs are most likely demonised and pathologised as dangerous abnormal, thus being further excluded and suffering pressure to conform.

This chapter continued the discussion of the scientific discourses presented among colonising discourses in Chapter 3. The analysis in both chapters has shown that discourses (re)produced in IY regulate and dominate modern parents' and children's souls and bodies to conform to the norm of the modern colonising and scientific regime of truth. This is problematic considering how broadly and deeply the modern colonising power has spread across the globe. In combination with the growing influence of globalisation and neoliberalism in the world, the power and authority of the scientific knowledge has increased in broader contexts and sectors, which will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter. As modern colonial power extends its reach to the souls of the individuals, the notion of scientific knowledge subsumes all other forms of knowledge, leaving only the discourse of *universal truth* in their place.

CHAPTER FIVE:
THE ECONOMIC/NEOLIBERAL SOUL

Being well entrenched within modernising and colonising assumptions, neoliberal ideology has grown steadily alongside the advance of colonising power (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Kincheloe, 1995; Moss, 2014; Smith, 1999). It has operated as a justification for the more efficient advancement of colonising power to wider contexts, consequently fortifying its privileged position in modern society. Over the last 30 years, neoliberalism has become a new metanarrative across the globe and contexts (Kaščák & Pupala, 2011).

The ideology of neoliberalism has become a much contested field of enquiry, not only for its extensive authority in modern society, but also because of the often oversimplified use of the term (Foucault, 2004; Kaščák & Pupala, 2011; Lather, 2012; Perez & Cannella, 2010). Contrary to the commonly generalised application of the phrase as a simple monolithic type of market relations in society, neoliberalism in the present day denotes more than a revival of traditional economic theories (Foucault, 2004; Kaščák & Pupala, 2011; Moss, 2014; Nxumalo, Pacini-Ketchabaw, & Rowan, 2011; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Perez & Cannella, 2010; Roberts, 2007). Neoliberal ideology has taken various forms of manifestation, been combined with other theories and adapted into different contexts (Roberts, 2007). For this reason, Foucault (2004) argues that it is helpful to approach neoliberalism as a trajectory of market principles influencing the art of government, rather than limiting our understanding of neoliberalism to it being merely a study of market economy.

As discussed in Chapters 3 and 4, many of Foucault's studies explore the inextricably interlocked relations between power and knowledge, and how they sustain each other (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1988a, 2003). His analysis of a penal system and a mental institution reveals the way that psychology has been privileged over other types of knowledge, and in return it has operated as an apparatus of power (Foucault, 2003). In *Bio-politics*, it is the relation between the neoliberal truth and the mechanism of power that captures his interest: the singularity of neoliberal ideas within modern society, and "how far and to what extent the formal principles of a market economy can index a general art of government" (Foucault, 2004, p. 131).

Following on from Chapters 3 and 4, in which the colonising and scientific discourses of modern parenting in IY were explored, this chapter examines subsequent questions: What are the neoliberal assumptions embedded in IY, and how do they support the system of power? How does the neoliberal ideology of IY recodify the soul of individuals and govern their bodies in the milieu?

Using Foucault's lectures at the College de France on Bio-politics (Foucault, 2004), in conjunction with his other works (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1991, 2003), as the principle tool of analysis, the author unpacks neoliberal assumptions manifested in IY, and probes the intimate relations between these taken for granted beliefs and the modern disciplinary power. Various works from early childhood researchers and educational theorists are also explored to lend insights into the way these discourses affect children's and parents' lives in early years.

The author acknowledges that neoliberalism is an extensive domain of study that deserves substantial consideration in itself as it takes multiple forms in different contexts. However, due to practical constraints, this chapter applies the term neoliberalism, rather than the plural form 'neoliberalisms', and focuses on the particular scope of this study: ways in which neoliberal discourses dominate the modern parenting pedagogy, and how they govern the soul and body of children and parents in early years.

1. The metanarrative of neoliberalism in modern parenting

The principle of neoliberal ideology shares the same premise as the colonising power, presupposing that all human beings are the same. According to this perspective, the ultimate goal in life is to produce, consume and grow in an economic sense (Kaščák & Pupala, 2011; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Roberts, 2004, 2007; Roberts & Peters, 2008). The premise relies on the assumption that a responsible and capable citizen of society will naturally seek his/her self-interest of growth and production, and consequently each individual's monetary actions will encourage economic development for all. Regardless of one's beliefs and values, all 'normal' individuals must pursue what is considered to be a productive and economic outcome by Anglo-European and Anglo-American epistemology (Moss, 2014; Perez & Cannella, 2010; Smith, 1999).

This neoliberal rhetoric places economic growth at the centre of truth, framing desirable subjects as "enterprising and competitive entrepreneurs" in the market economy (Olssen, as cited in Perez & Cannella, 2010, p. 146). Because the role of the state is to ensure an economically advantageous environment for all, those who do not demonstrate the specific norm of productivity are considered to be a risk or a burden on society, and thus punishable (Foucault, 1977, 2004). Applying statistical techniques, this 'populational reasoning' normalises the binary categorisation of normal/abnormal (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995). Through this view of the world, the 'unmotivated' must be punished and made to conform by state intervention (Perez & Cannella, 2010). 'The Others' with different socio-economic, cultural, and gender backgrounds are "constructed as the abnormal and in need of monetary and/or social, psychological, or educational intervention, assistance, or redemption" (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995, p. 15).

The effects of neoliberal principles are not restricted to those evident in market relations, but go beyond monetary exchanges. The persistent advance of neoliberalism around the world ensures that the market economy has become "the organising principle for all political, social and economic conditions", in other words, a governing manual to the subject's conduct (Moss, 2014, p. 64). Parallel to the process by which psychology has extended its reach into other sectors with the support of disciplinary power, Foucault's (2004) analysis illustrates the pervading dominance of neoliberal ideology even in non-economic domains. He argues that the problems of neoliberalism arise from this "inversion of the relationships of the social to the economic", the paradox of justifying the intervention of the state in non-economic fields using economic assumptions (Foucault, 2004, p. 240). In particular, Foucault critiques the way that American neoliberals apply market economy to understand non-market relationships such as education, marriage and mother-child relationships despite there being little relevancy between them. Due to their entanglement with the overall exercise of power, the principles of market economy are projected in the art of government, generalising the form of 'enterprise' in the social bodies (Foucault, 2004). Everything in both economic and non-economic spheres is measured or calculated in the economic cost-profit/investment-return grid. This mechanism of power analyses social fabrics to arrange and reduce individuals, so that the subjects and their lives can be managed as a permanent enterprise within a network of multiple

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enterprises. Their private property, social relationships (e.g. marriage, and reproductive functions), and their *worthwhile* aptitudes are compared with the norm, ranking each individual by economic value. All subjects are individualised as economic units, and distributed for the effective exercise of the totalising power of neoliberalism.

Many of these neoliberal discourses are present in IY, naturalising the economic calculation of parents' and children's performances. Resonating with the previous chapters, the analysis in this section of the project illustrates that IY (re)produces and reinforces a particular or rigid norm of parenting while other values and beliefs in childrearing practice are ignored. This chapter seeks to determine how neoliberal discourses identify and reinforce a 'desirable' norm of knowledge. It also asks: What are the functions of these neoliberal discourses of parenting in the mechanism of modern disciplinary power?

2.1 Knowledge as a commodity

Since 1984, neoliberal ideology has been a relentless force of governance throughout various sectors in New Zealand (Roberts, 2007). To adapt to the unique environment of New Zealand, different elements of theories such as Human Capital Theory, monetarism, Public Choice Theory, Agency Theory and Transaction Cost Economics were combined with market principles (Olssen, as cited in Roberts, 2007). The following statements provided by a Tertiary Education Advisory Commission clearly illustrates the firm grip of neoliberalism on the New Zealand policy direction (as cited in Roberts & Peters, 2008, p. 44):

> Education provided by tertiary education providers, businesses, and community groups is vitally important to New Zealand in building a true knowledge society and achieving the economic benefits for such a society. The quality of our knowledge and skills base will determine New Zealand's future success in the global economy and as a cohesive society.

The report emphases the importance of building the knowledge society and strengthening educational system for a more confident and prosperous New Zealand (Roberts & Peters, 2008). Under the notion of 'user pays', many policies in education

have undergone the reform process that has reconstructed knowledge "as a commodity: something to be sold, traded and consumed", promising a higher status for New Zealand in the world economy (Roberts, 2007, p. 351).

Educational institutions (e.g. early childhood settings, schools, universities and other forms of tertiary organisations) have turned into purchasable services that users and consumers can pick and choose for the highest return. In exchange for their investment, students (the users and consumers of educational commodities) expect and demand these services to equip them with skills and knowledge that will provide advantage over others in a competitive employment market. The dominant discourses of knowledge in the last two decades' educational policies are merged with information and skills (as cited in Roberts & Peters, 2008), restructuring education as a training ground that arms individuals with 'expert' knowledge and aptitudes for employment.

It is this policy climate that brought about the implementation of IY in New Zealand. In spite of the innovative production and implementation of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), the early childhood curriculum document with a socio-cultural framework, the progress of neoliberalism has not ceased in early childhood sectors. The introduction and implementation of IY is a good illustration of the growing effect of neoliberal ideology in early childhood education. Although Atawhaingia te Pā Harakeke (Ministry of Education, 2001), a whānau training and support programme based on Kaupapa Māori philosophy and the bicultural context of New Zealand, had already been developed and implemented by the Ministry of Education since 2001, the New Zealand Government decided to scrap the programme, and introduce IY in its place.

The significant issues concerning the implementation of IY derive from its incongruent contexts (i.e. American and clinical background) as well as the way in which it embodies the neoliberal notion of knowledge as a commodity. The programme is registered under a Trademark, and marketed in the fashion of a consumable service that prevents and reduces potential risks in individuals' lives and in society as a whole. All programme materials are owned and strictly controlled by The Incredible Years, Inc., USA, limiting any modification of the content (The

Incredible Years®, 2013i, para. 4). According to the official website, prices for each resource (e.g. DVDs, fridge magnets, handbooks, posters, T-shirts and stickers) range from US$ 800 to $ 2,000 per programme, and can only be purchased through 'the owner of the service', The Incredible Years, Inc. (The Incredible Years®, 2013g). The implementation of IY in New Zealand came at the substantial cost of NZ$ 7.6 million (Robertson, 2014). However, this considerable figure is rationalised with language and terms such as 'cost-effective', 'evidence-based', 'school readiness', 'quality' and 'universal outcomes' (Sturrock et al., 2014).

Under the guise of these ambiguous terms, neoliberal assumptions have flourished and progressed throughout other New Zealand education sectors and policy decisions. For example, National Standards, the standardised assessment for primary and secondary children, was introduced in 2010 by the Ministry of Education. This policy change in higher education has meant an increased tension and pressure for children, parents and educators in early years, as they must regulate their own and/or others' performance to satisfy the homogenous learning outcomes. The ripple effect from this policy change in higher education has accelerated the progress of neoliberal discourses in the domain of early education, authorising the scientific and colonising values and assumptions within IY. Even though there is an evident conflict between the early childhood curriculum and IY, parents and early childhood educators are expected to foster and train children's 'school readiness', and prevent 'predictable negative consequences' such as violence, delinquency, and substance abuse by these children in adolescence and adulthood (Borden et al., 2010, p. 223). Children and parents living in poverty and with conduct problems are associated with language such as 'high risk', 'target population', 'aggression' and 'treatment', while promoting and justifying the IY's psychological and scientific techniques in nurturing school readiness, academic skills for success later in life (The Incredible Years®, 2010, p. 1).

This discursive shift in policy direction has overturned the values and beliefs that *Te Whāriki* places on co-constructing knowledge with children and parents, replacing them by (re)producing and circulating the commercialised and commoditised norm of knowledge as the regime of truth. According to this understanding of learning, the truth, the only worthwhile knowledge is waiting out there to be found, to be transferred from the experts to novices, to be mastered and to

be purchased. The following statements in *Te Whāriki* and IY highlight a stark contrast between the norm of knowledge that is valued by each policy document:

Te Whāriki, Principle: Family and Community – Whānau Tangata
The wider world of family and community is an integral part of the early childhood curriculum. Children's learning and development are fostered if the well-being of their family and community is supported; if their family, culture, knowledge and community are respected; and if there is a strong connection and consistency among all the aspects of the children's world. The curriculum builds on what children bring to it and makes links with the everyday activities and special events of families, whānau, local communities, and cultures. Different cultures have different child-rearing patterns, beliefs, and traditions and may place value on the different knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
(Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 42)

The Incredible Years® **evidence based parenting programs** focus on strengthening parenting competencies and fostering parent involvement in children's school experiences, to **promote children's academic, social and emotional skills and reduce conduct problems.**
(The Incredible Years®, 2013g, para. 1)

Incredible Years, Content and objectives of the Attentive Parenting programs
Program One: Attentive child-directed play promotes positive relationships and children's confidence.
•Responding to children's developmental readiness

Program Two: Attentive academic and persistence coaching promote children's language skills and school readiness.

Program Three: Attentive emotion coaching strengthens children's emotional literacy.
(The Incredible Years®, 2013j, para. 2)

Te Whāriki acknowledges various values and beliefs of children and parents, and encourages collaborative and fluid processes of knowledge production. On the contrary, the norm of knowledge in IY is somewhat rigid: only academic, evidence-based, scientific, and developmentally appropriate knowledge is acceptable. Knowledge production is described as a one-way transfer process of knowledge from experts (e.g. teachers, IY team leaders, adults) to novices (e.g. children, parents) that will prepare children for higher education and consequently a better chance in life. This difference in knowledge discourses in *Te Whāriki* and IY indicates that early childhood education in New Zealand has regressed from its innovative approach to learning back to an outcome-based notion of learning (Farquhar, Gibbons, & Tesar, 2015). It represents how fast and how far the colonising and neoliberal regime of truth has become a governing rationality for the subjects in New Zealand early childhood sectors.

This neoliberal discourse of knowledge is highly problematic because it appropriates and exacerbates the current hierarchies within the system of power. In the modern neoliberal society, where everything is economically calculable, the values of various knowledge system may be converted into a cost-benefit/invest-return grid (Farquhar et al., 2015). For example, all IY team leaders must purchase training programmes run by the Incredible Years, Inc. and be certified by IY. The developers of the programme argue that the "initial investments will eventually pay off in terms of strong family outcomes and a sustainable intervention programme" (Webster-Stratton, 2014, p. 8). This regime of truth provides "a condition of the formation and development of capitalism" (Foucault, 1980, p. 133). Those who possess the commodity have control over the knowledge economy, ultimately securing their dominant position in the system as well as fortifying the existing mechanism of power.

In this way of making sense of the world, knowledge is simply another currency with which to differentiate and dispose of subjects, and forms part of the disciplinary mechanism used to justify the imbalance and the inequality in society (Foucault, 1977, 1980, 1991). Only profitable knowledge in the monetary grid becomes visible, ensuring that the holder of this knowledge has an advantage over others. For example, by placing 'school readiness' in a central position among key competencies and

learning outcomes for children, the discourses in IY implicitly depreciate early childhood education to a mere training ground for the 'more important' learning that will take place during higher education. Because the only knowledge recognised as worthwhile for children in all contexts is an academic form of knowing, other forms of learning experiences in early childhood settings are either dismissed, or need to be recodified closer to the norm of knowledge (e.g. literacy, science, and mathematics). The common and persisting perception of the early childhood educator as a 'glorified nanny' or 'kind, child-loving lady' illustrates this point clearly. Both implicitly and explicitly, early childhood educators are often compelled to defend their position as educators (Osgood, 2012). To prove professional knowledge and competency as educators and teachers, early childhood educators are pressured to demonstrate expertise (i.e. school-relevant skills) in their pedagogy and assessment processes, interpreting or recoding children's learning experiences in relation to the set of skills and knowledge that is valued in higher educational settings.

Another problem with this approach to knowledge and knowledge production is that it masks and validates the singularity of the neoliberal notion of knowledge and the imbalanced power dynamics in the system. As Foucault observes, the main objective of the modern governing rationality is a seamless exercise of power, "a universal assignation of subjects to an economically useful life" (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 12). Throughout recent educational and social policies, including IY, the shared goal of the population is presumed to be economic prosperity with state intervention as a vital apparatus to achieve this (Roberts, 2007). These discourses conceal the fact that knowledge construction is fundamentally discriminatory and political, and the way in which it operates as a part of the mechanism of power "to assure the security of those natural phenomena, economic processes and the intrinsic processes of population" (Foucault et al., 1991, p. 19). Whether one possesses a particular type of knowledge determines the position of that person in societal hierarchies, while justifying or endorsing the privileged status of those with the knowledge. The challenges that individuals face are framed as the end product of their own incompetency, rather than the issues of inequality in societal structures. Therefore, it is parents and children who need to invest their own resources to overcome these difficulties.

A useful example of this is the manner in which Māori children are represented in the Ministry of Education's evaluation report in IY (Sturrock & Gray, 2013). This pilot study points out the higher rates of conduct problems in Māori children, identifying them as a target group for intervention programmes to reduce "substantial costs in the education, health, justice and welfare sectors" (Sturrock & Gray, 2013, p. 7). Instead of questioning whether or not the current societal structure provides effective support for children and parents with different backgrounds, these discourses diverts our attention from the power dynamic to the non-conforming and abnormal aspects of individuals, correlating these with risks and dangers. The discourses in IY associate 'conduct problems', 'drug problems' and 'delinquency' later in life with parental deficits such as parental depression, insufficient parental knowledge, and low socio-economic status, claiming that the completion of the course can eliminate these predictable negative outcomes (The Incredible Years®, 2013a).

2.2 Child and parents as a commodity

Foucault (1977, 1980, 2003, 2014) approaches the modern governmental rationality as a study of what it means to be governed or governable in a particular society. His studies address the way in which subjects are constructed by the mechanism of power either as the normal/economically-useful or the abnormal/burden of society, and what is or can be regulated and controlled by the techniques of power (Foucault et al., 1991). Once more, Foucault is fascinated with the effect of a particular norm of knowledge becoming a regime of truth, and how this dominant norm of knowledge pervades different areas. In *Bio-politics* (Foucault, 2004), he explores by what means the notion of *Homo œconomicus*, economic man, is naturalised as the governable subject in modern neoliberal milieu. Foucault's analysis of this governable subject in modern disciplinary society demonstrates that the economic model of the normal and useful body has saturated both economic and social domains alike. Through the media (in Foucault's terms, public opinion), polices and institutions, the discourses of *Homo œconomicus* present a desirable citizen of society, and rationalise the state intervention that subjugates and reforms the body of the population (Foucault, 2004).

Foucault (2004) explains this norm of desirable/economic subject, *Homo œconomicus* in his lecture (p. 270):

> *Homo œconomicus* is someone who pursues his own interest, and whose interest is such that it converges spontaneously with the interest with others…With regard to *Homo œconomicus*, one must *laisser-faire*; he is the subject or object of *laissez-fair*…that is to say, the person who accepts reality or who responds systematically to modifications in the variables in the environment, appears precisely as someone manageable, someone who responds systematically to systematic modifications artificially introduced into the environment.

These governable, self-interested individuals respond to environmental variables in systematic, scientific and rational ways, and in so doing achieve "an optimal allocation of scarce resources to alternative ends" (Foucault, 2004, p. 268). The definition of the term constructs the economic analysis equivalent to any strategic and purposeful conducts that accomplish optimal effect with a determinate end. Following this logic, *all* rational conduct can be an object of economic analysis. Hence, not only the body of the subject in the market domain, but also non-market forms of conducts, as well as the past, present and future of one's life, are placed under the scope of the modern disciplinary power (Foucault, 2004).

This school of thought utilises the science of the modern human capital theory to calculate and classify every aspect of human life as a measurable commodity. Based on the assumption that all human beings seek the self-interest of economic prosperity, the modern human theory constructs the subject as capital itself, and education and training as a crucial component to ensure advantage in a competitive global market (Fitzsimons, 2015; Kaščák & Pupala, 2011). Once each individual is evaluated in relation to cost-benefit market values in this neoliberal schema, she/he is categorised and positioned as either of two opposite values: economically active subject as a useful body on one end, and those who are not on the other end. Because this way of thinking constructs the body, the life and the history of subject as calculable resources or commodities for economic progress, people with mental and physical disabilities are likely to be considered a liability to society, and labelled as broken or damaged goods. Disparities between these groups of individuals and the norm are magnified and described in deficit terms, and moral values are attached to these perversities. Even the efficiency of government intervention on the marginalised

groups is measured in terms of market economy rather than social justice (Fitzsimons, 2015).

The desirable, right and proper way of being parents (re)produced by the discourses in IY resonates with this model of the economic individual. The before and during the programme surveys collect the information about the parents' and children's history of mental illness, criminality, economic and marital status, and education levels, which, in turn, is applied to identify their economic worth and the degree of intervention required for their reform. When the assumptions of neoliberalism and modern human capital theories are believed to be true, normal and responsible individuals are expected to continue self-improvement and persist with their journey as a life-long learner (Roberts & Peters, 2008). Whether it is at the individual or institutional level, these discourses position 'the knower' with privileged and unchallengeable status, normalising the dichotomous and binary worldview (Foucault, 1980, 1991, 2004). Because the subjects in the power mechanisms are identified and recognised for who they are in terms of their status in hierarchies and what is expected of them (e.g. experts/novice, parents/teachers, adults/children dichotomies and binaries), it becomes increasingly challenging for subjects to question and to resist what is presented as the truth by the system. The result is that it double-binds parents who are referred to participate in IY from opting out from this supposedly non-compulsory programme for so-called high-risk children and families. The individuals' choice to attend IY or not is only illusionary, since the deficit labels that are associated with them, as well as the offers and the opportunities for corrective training to overcome these shortcomings impart a subtle yet powerful pressure to take part in the programme and to conform.

This is exemplified in the experiences of children and families with non-dominant cultures in educational sectors. Being subjected to multiple layers of subjugation and oppression techniques by the modern disciplinary power, the complexity of immigrant parents' and children's lives is reduced and categorised according to a one dimensional and linear economic schema, and they are labelled as *incomplete, yet-to-be developed/underdeveloped,* and *abnormal* beings. Their economic, cultural and political status as 'the Others' (strangers in a foreign land) and as passive receivers of knowledge, diminishes the validity of their own heterogeneous

worldviews and further complicates their ability to challenge and resist the *indisputable truth* given by the dominant power. Therefore, having been identified as a novice, a stranger in a foreign land, and a *yet-to-be master* of the knowledge, challenging what is presented as important skills and knowledge by the experts or the knowers (e.g. teachers, IY team leaders, and educational institutions) becomes unthinkable for some children and parents from different cultural heritages.

The insistence that education is bound to economics produces a new way of thinking in early childhood. Because each subject is a unit of human capital in a knowledge society, a child is constructed to be a future entrepreneur and consumer (Vandenbroeck, 2006). The role of teachers and parents is, therefore, to assist, nurture and train the child to be a governable subject, a responsible and productive citizen. This discursive construction of early childhood (re)generates a simplified version of education and parenting pedagogy: producing skilled technicians, or rather, automatons, who perform economic efficiencies with minimum costs/investments (Lather, 2012; Mitchell, 2005; Moss, 2014; Nxumalo et al., 2011; Osgood, 2012; Perez & Cannella, 2010). As many pre-eminent scholars (Farquhar & White, 2014; Olssen, 2004; Osgood, 2012; Roberts, 2005, 2009b, 2014; Roberts & Codd, 2010) have noted in their studies of tertiary education, teacher training and policy production in the modern neoliberal society, one's critical, inquisitive and reflective abilities are unrequired and even undesirable in this approach to education as these skills are considered as excess in terms of the cost-benefit grid.

2.3 Calculable/measurable relationships

Using the metaphor of governing a ship, Foucault describes how government in modern society is more than ruling over territory (Foucault et al., 1991). Managing a ship involves not only being in charge of sailors, but also establishing relations between people and things (e.g. cargo, the beat of sailors' labour, storms, rocks, winds). It is rather, "men in their relation to that other kinds of things, customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking" (p. 93). One's resources, aptitudes, fertilities, illness and death are the object to be dominated and utilised for maximum economic performance in the system of disciplinary power.

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Foucault (2004) refers to this type of power as biopower, and provides a further example of this in American neoliberal analysis using the child-mother relationship. The quality of time that the mother spends with the child (i.e. psychological benefits), and the care she provides for the physical development of the child (e.g. providing food, a specific way of arranging and imposing eating patterns) are understood and examined in terms of investment. One of the key resources of IY, the Piggy Bank Poster (The Incredible Years®, 2013k) depicts a palpable embodiment of this notion. The poster urges parents to 'remember to build up your bank account' with a certain type of interacting such as 'talking', 'encouraging', 'attentive', 'praise', 'play', and 'touch'. This approach to understanding and distinguishing different kinds of relationships and to examining time as invested capital is supported throughout the programme, (re)constructing a distinctive norm of how 'quality time' with your children should look. IY also provides evident instructions that misbehaviour must be identified and dealt with through behaviour management techniques, for example, actively ignoring the misbehaving child (The Incredible Years®, 2013c). Does this mean that parents who do not engage their children in lots of verbal interactions, child-directed play, and physical contacts are falling short of investing their time capital into their children's development, and consequently impoverishing them?

What is also often overlooked is that understanding parents' and children's lives through the unrestricted and exceedingly generalised market principle provides inadequate perspectives because it disregards the complex dynamic between individuals and contexts. This is evident in the case of modern parenting. Families have become smaller (there is now a higher percentage of nuclear families in the population) and the support that these families have access to is reduced, as more people live in separate households and church culture has declined. Therefore, the pressure and stress of childrearing are increased when compared with the past, when town or village culture provided a kind of support system around church and kin. Globalisation has intensified the pervasive dominance of capitalism in an effective manner across the globe in recent decades putting active economic engagement of the subject on a pedestal. This imposes further pressure on parents to have two incomes as well as performing the norm of the positive parenting pedagogy. While modern parents are provided with less support, they are expected to deliver more, thus generating optimal productivity for society with the least investment.

This chapter has examined the economic recodification of the mind and soul of the subject within the discourses of desirable/positive parenting. The discourses in IY (re)produce an ideal image of the useful citizen and of early childhood education, while masking the singularity of the neoliberal regime of truth across the globes. Signs of the normal and abnormal are (re)presented clearly throughout the system "like an open book", strengthening and extending the trajectory of power (Foucault, 1977, p. 128). This norm of desirable/positive parenting gives us added insight into the "scene, spectacles, sign, discourse" of the system of power, and how the characteristics and relationships between people and things, "the imbrication of men and things" are applied to elicit the maximum effect of modern neoliberal power (Foucault, 1977, p. 128).

CHAPTER SIX:
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Using Foucault's (1977, 1980, 1991, 2003, 2004, 2014) notion of governmentality (i.e. governing of soul and body) and discursive normalisation as a lens, this thesis has explored the following questions:

1. What is the norm of parenting presented as 'desirable/positive' in the early childhood education policy, *Incredible Years*?
2. What are the values, beliefs and assumptions that underpin the discourses of parenting in *Incredible Years*?
3. What are the implications of these discourses in the lives of children, teachers and parents in the New Zealand early childhood?

Examining the discourses of 'desirable/positive/normal' parenting in IY has provided insight into the technologies of power that enable modern disciplinary power to govern the body of subjects in the milieu. The analysis of IY given in the previous chapters illustrates the ways in which the disciplinary power subjugates the body of the individual by transforming the soul of the subject in the field of modern parenting practices. Through the carefully structured mechanisms of power, the "conception of who they are and want to be" is recodified and disciplined, constructing the *normal* way of life using concealed values and assumptions (Duncan & Bartle, 2014, p. 21).

In this study, three themes stand out among the types of soul that the modern disciplinary power aims to mould the subject into: the colonised soul, the scientific/colonised soul, and the economic/neoliberal soul. These discursive notions of parenting practice presented in IY are not mutually exclusive, or exactly 'cause and effect', but are connected, or entangled together in a seamless operation of power (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). Each layer is cast/created (as a web) to catch not only the individuals' actions, and speeches, but also the way that they think of themselves and others. This finely interwoven web of power obstructs the political nature of knowledge as it normalises a homogenous way of knowing and being as the only

worthwhile knowledge – *the normal* way of parenting. By so doing, this mechanism of power ensures (re)producing the useful and intelligible bodies that serve the existing system and sustain the current societal hierarchy.

As Foucault (1977, 1991, 2003, 2004) and many Foucauldian scholars in early years (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Burke & Duncan, 2015; Cannella & Swadener, 2006; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Davidov, Grusec, & Wolfe, 2012; Duncan & Bartle, 2014; Gunn, 2009; Kincheloe, 1995; MacNaughton, 2005; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2006) point out, family and education policy have become a "site of intense regulation", a part of this circular/self-sustaining machine of power (Baez & Talburt, 2008, p. 25). By exploring the norm of parenting presented in IY, this project has shown how modern disciplinary power utilises the experiences of parents and children in early years for the effective subjection and objectification of the population.

This chapter revisits the norm of 'desirable/positive' parenting identified in the analysis of this project (i.e. the three moulds of the subject's soul in IY), and the values and beliefs veiled within this norm. It also provides an overview of the previous chapters, which discussed the implications of these discourses of parenting in relation to wider literature in the field of parenting. This project summary is followed by the author's critical reflection on the limitations of this project, and recommendations for possible future studies and alternative approaches to this topic.

1. The norm of 'positive/desirable' parenting

The discourses produced in IY portray a distinctive norm as to what desirable/positive parenting practice should look like, and provide clear instructions for how to achieve this ideal. Every part of an individual's life, past, present, and future, is examined and dissected in microscopic detail, so that the subject can be differentiated, distributed and, if need be, corrected and cured in the most effective manner (Foucault, 1977). Through binary division and branding (e.g. normal/abnormal, a responsible citizen/a burden of society, sane/insane), the disciplinary mechanism has increased its reach and efficiency towards individuals. Foucault (1977) explains the way in which the system of power brands and alters how the subject perceives her/himself; how she/he is to be recognised; and what to expect from others with such a branding.

The discursive norm of parenting in IY clearly illustrates this point. The programme generates this particular norm of parenting as universal truth for *all* families in *all* contexts. The complexity of parents' experiences is overlooked, and their backgrounds, skills and attitudes are compartmentalised or broken down to micro-levels so that calculating and utilising one's worth or capacity can be constant, and they can be monitored under the network of gazes (Foucault, 1977). This simplified and generalised view of childrearing enables the *normal* way of being parents to be instantly recognisable, marking the gaps between the norm and the performance of the individual as a parent. The discourses in IY establish a standard (*the truth*) for 'good' parenting, articulating and normalising a specific type of knowledge and the way individuals should conduct themselves and with others as *the truth*.

Knowledge and skills

As discussed in Chapters Three and Four, the premise behind IY is that there is a universal principle of parenting, which can be found by logical and scientific thinking. This way of understanding the world presupposes that all human beings are the same, thus, once this absolute truth in parenting is found, it should be applicable and relevant to *all*. Various clinical trials of the programme across different contexts and sectors are presented as evidence of IY's universal applicability and success at increasing 'parenting competence' and 'child social competence' within 'high risk' families (Borden et al., 2010; Sturrock & Gray, 2013; Sturrock et al., 2014; The Incredible Years®, 2013g; Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2010).

Drawing from these clinical trials as evidence, the programme consistently authorises the scientific/clinical knowledge, the privileged knowledge of 'the West', in the terminology of decolonising studies (Mazzei, 2008; Nxumalo et al., 2011; Oliver, 2004; Smith, 1999) as *indisputable* truth that encompasses *all* human lives. This is evident throughout the content of the programme, as well as its theoretical backgrounds. For example, IY accentuates behaviour management techniques and linear progress of child development as the crucial knowledge and skills for competent parenting practice, naturalising and masking the singularity of Anglo-European and Anglo-American perspectives in learning. The programme's proactive discipline techniques (e.g. effective limit-setting, increased monitoring) and 'Positive

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Parenting Principles' (e.g. developmentally appropriate coaching, verbal praise) generate a corpus of knowledge and discourses that position behavioural science and developmental psychology at the centre of parenting, determining and regulating the forms and possible domains of knowledge. As the scientific/clinical ways of understanding children's learning are strongly associated with scientific and reasoned civilisation, there is little room for individuals to deviate from this totalising *truth* of parenting without associating themselves with deficit terms (e.g. not competent, not functioning, harsh, uncivilised). Consequently, the dominating presence of child development knowledge in early childhood is sustained, making it difficult for parents and educators to "imagine how to think, act and feel in any other way" (MacNaughton, 2005, p. 33).

The developers of IY claim that transferring and training parents with these skills and knowledge will increase 'parental competence' and 'child social competence' in 'high risk' families, preventing 'predictable negative consequences' such as violence, delinquency, and substance abuse in society (Borden et al., 2010). The subtleties and the messiness of real life are smoothed over, reducing the multifaceted challenges faced by families to a simple problem that can be fixed by a set of behaviour management techniques and child development knowledge. Whether or not one possesses and demonstrates these skills and knowledge operates as a part of the apparatus of disciplinary power to differentiate, to distribute and to treat or cure the subject. Those who do not abide by this 'truth' of parenting are labelled as burdens on society, therefore *the civilised* members need to step in to prevent the behaviour of the burdensome or teach them to be more *competent* and *responsible*.

Interactions with others

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault (1977) examines the ways in which the modern penal system regulates movements, rhythms and gestures of bodies for more efficient and precise distribution. The movements of the subject are broken up into infinitesimal details, defining the right way to conduct one's body. Foucault (1977) points out the way in which this division and micro-management of movements clears up confusion among the multiple, and increases the utility of the populations.

This idea is examined in the analysis of IY in Chapter Four of this study. The discourses of IY encapsulate those which qualify as good, positive interactions between children and parents in modern parenting, and how these can be achieved. Consider the following statements from IY:

The foundation of the Incredible Years programs focuses on building warm and nurturing parent-child and teacher-child relationships through children directed play, social and emotion coaching, praise and incentives. (The Incredible Years®, 2013d)

The Program Content and Objectives
Program Two: Using praise and incentives to encourage cooperative behavior
  Part 1: The art of effective praise and encouragement
  ■ Modeling self-praise
  ■ Promoting positive self-talk
  ■ Getting and giving support through praise
  ■ Recognising social and academic behaviors that need praise
  ■ Building children's self-esteem through praise and encouragement
  Part 2: Motivating children through incentives
  ■ Recognising when to use the "first-then" principles
  ■ Understanding how to "shape" behaviors
  ■ Understanding how to develop incentive programs that are developmentally appropriate
  ■ Understanding ways to use tangible rewards for problems such as dawdling, not dressing, noncompliance, fighting with siblings, picky eating, messy rooms, not going to bed, and toilet training
 (The Incredible Years®, 2013c)

According to these discourses, good/normal parents should foster 'warm and nurturing' relationships through child-directed play, and 'shape' children's behaviours by verbal, explicit responses. Competent parents are portrayed as individuals who are in full control of their children's behaviour, placing those who are not as failed or irresponsible citizens in society. Using 'developmentally

appropriate' incentives and consequences, parents 'negotiate' with children to elicit the *right* responses from them (i.e. complying with adults' commands). During the sessions, the certified programme facilitators correct and train parents to talk and play with their children in the *right/proper* way, and determine the types of behaviour that warrant recognition and verbal praise (e.g. academic and social skills). There is no mention of different forms of engagements between children and parents, while verbal and explicit responses are associated with terms such as 'competence', 'proactive' and 'positive'.

Performances and responsibilities in society
Another aspect of the normal/desirable parenting practice promoted in IY is one's productivity in society. In Chapter Five, this study investigated how the metanarrative of neoliberalism has pervaded the field of modern parenting. As neoliberal ideology has grown steadily across the globe and contexts, the market economy has become "the organising principle for all political, social and economic conditions", a governing manual for conduct (Moss, 2014, p. 64). The pervading dominance of neoliberalism and market principles has even extended to non-economic domains, in particular, education and parenting pedagogy (Foucault, 2004).

Under the same premise as colonising power, the principle of neoliberal ideology presupposes that all human beings are essentially the same, naturally seeking the self-interest of economic prosperity (Foucault, 2004; Kaščák & Pupala, 2011; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Roberts, 2004, 2007; Roberts & Peters, 2008). According to this perspective, a responsible, competent, normal citizen of society must produce, consume and grow in a narrowly economic way.

These neoliberal assumptions are clearly demonstrated in the IY's norm of desirable/positive parenting. In the programme, the economic activeness of individuals and their ability to assist, nurture and train their children to be governable subjects, are characterised as key competencies of a responsible and productive citizen. The discourses in IY portray 'competent' parents as those who are actively involved in school and their children's learning to ensure the production of skilled technicians, equipping children with academic and social skills for future job markets.

For example, parent participants are asked to fill out a detailed demographic form and an intake form at the beginning of the programme. These surveys are designed to provide comprehensive overviews of each parent's economic, medical and educational status including: gross annual household income, marital status, social security number, highest level of parental education, occupation, whether they receive financial aid from the government, and their child's past use of a special services, mental health treatments or social services (The Incredible Years®, 2013h). These survey particulars do not necessarily represent the individual's parental aptitude or inaptitude, yet once the data are compiled by experts, they possess the credibility and authority to operate as a tool to divide the subjects into different groups. The economic activeness of an individual and the factors that influence his/her participation in a competitive market are measured and attached to the positive or negative labels, (re)producing the neoliberal beliefs that *all* 'normal' individuals must pursue what is considered to be a productive and economic outcome. Through this social screening process, the disciplinary power identifies those who fail to perform these competencies, and builds up the case against them, portraying them as morally defective and incompetent parents. While there is no direct connection between the economic engagement and parental aptitude, IY surveys measure parent the economic competencies of parents participants and use the data against them as an evidence that they *need* the intervention.

2. The implications of this norm of parenting

This project has explored how the modern disciplinary power has increased its effective control over the subject's bodies by governing or transforming the individual's soul in parenting. By constructing and reinforcing the definitive norm of 'good/desirable' parenting, the disciplinary power recodifies the subject's sense of self and who he/she wants to be (Duncan & Bartle, 2014), thus successfully regulating and transforming the movement of bodies to serve the system.

Invisible/pathologised bodies

Throughout his studies of disciplinary power, Foucault (1977, 1980, 1988a, 1991, 2003, 2004) draws attention to the manner in which the binary division and normalising judgement practices make only a certain way of being to be true. As these mechanisms of power mask the political nature of knowledge and qualify the West's

scientific way of knowing as the only possible domain of knowledge, all other forms of understanding the world become invisible, irrelevant and inconsequential (Foucault, 1980). For example, the dominant status of psychology across various sectors and contexts is often justified by the claim that it supports the understanding of human nature. However, in reality, psychology operates as an apparatus of power to (re)produce and reinforce a particular parenting practice as signs and modality of the normal/good way to be, while disregarding or overlooking other worldviews ,or pathologising the differences and non-conformity of individuals (Burman, 2008; Foucault, 1977, 2003; Kincheloe, 1995). The individuality of a person is compared, differentiated and hierarchically ordered merely to mark the gaps and to find the point at which to intervene and correct. The non-conforming, abnormal subjects "exist only to disappear" (Foucault, 1977, p. 182).

The discourses of parenting in IY parallel this. Throughout the programme, IY explicitly characterises a competent parent as an economically active individual who has a good command of child development progression and behaviour management techniques. This good/positive parent is fully involved with his/her child's academic learning, and is verbally interactive with the child. With no consideration of different parenting styles, beliefs or worldviews, those who do not fit into this norm (e.g. parents with different values and beliefs, indigenous families, immigrant parents, single parents, families with disabilities, families with non-dominant sexual and gender identities) are represented either not at all, or only by deficit terms such as 'predictable negative outcomes', 'violence' and 'delinquency'. The differences and non-conformity of individuals are recognised simply to correct the defects of the abnormal, and to exclude them. Without any regard to the intricacy of challenges that families experience, the programme's social quarantine process pathologises non-conforming subjects, and justifies intervention for these 'high risk' families. These parents are categorised as uncivilised, abnormal, ignorant and incompetent by experts, therefore their status in the knowledge hierarchy is designated as passive receiver of the knowledge, silencing and nullifying their voices.

As indicated in this thesis, a large volume of existing early childhood research provides a clear illustration of the way in which the modern disciplinary power silences and pathologises 'Otherness' (Dahlberg & Moss, 2004; Duncan & Bartle,

2014; Jones & Osgood, 2007; Kincheloe, 1995; Lenz Taguchi, 2007; MacNaughton, 2005; Miller, 2006; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006; Soto & Kharem, 2006; Swadener, 1995; Viruru, 2006). In particular, Miller's (2006) study of Mexican immigrant children in America, and the critical review of bilingual/bicultural education conducted by Soto and Kharem (2006) examined in Chapter Three of this project articulate this effect of power. Miller showed that immigrants, especially people of colour, are depicted in derogatory terms in policies and the media (e.g. threat, terrorist, societal burden, drug dealer), establishing an animalistic and violent picture of 'the Other'. By so doing, the system of power generates and reinforces the prejudiced belief that 'the Otherness' is at the centre of the problems in society. Immigrant families and children are constructed as "the problem in need of fixing" by the civilised West (Miller, 2006, p. 46). The study conducted by Soto and Kharem (2006) presents a similar result. Even the bilingual/bicultural programmes established to support children with various cultural and linguistic backgrounds produce the subtexts that associate 'Otherness' with academic challenges in the mainstream education sectors. The richness of their heritage languages and various worldviews are ignored, and these children's 'deficient' academic English skills are accentuated, justifying the need for experts' intervention to correct or cure them.

Objectified and oppressed bodies

Another consequence of the disciplinary mechanism can be explained by Bentham's Panopticon (Foucault, 1977). Each inmate in a Panopticon cell is individualised and constantly visible; just as each person in modern society is examined, marked and differentiated by his/her individuality, and placed under the continuous gaze of power. Being examined and documented in a complete archive of bodies, the subject is presented only as "the object to the observation of a power" (Foucault, 1977, p. 188). This constant visibility guarantees the meticulous control of the disciplinary power over the subjects, situating them in a network of surveillance to capture and correct them.

IY's before, during and after programme surveys are useful examples. The analysis in Chapters Three, Four and Five of this thesis describe the way in which these surveys operate as a means of control and domination, measuring and documenting the *abnormality* of 'high risk' families. This process of examination and

the documentation of the individuality of each parent constructs him/her as an analysable and knowable object, a 'case' under the gaze of power (Foucault, 1977). Through this objectification and subjection, the participating parents in IY are only recognised in relation to how far or close their education and income levels are from or to the norm (e.g. stable single or double income, and being equipped with behaviour management skills and child development knowledge). Once this gap is marked, it is used to judge the parents for their non-conformity, abnormality or defects, and to pressurise them to conform to the norm. In the case of IY, these problem families are trained and corrected to talk to and engage with their children in the right way so that they can produce the right type of future citizens; future entrepreneurs. Moral values and assumptions (e.g. responsible, competent, effective, nurturing) are attached to the norm of desirable/positive parenting in the programme. Thus, parents who do not fit this norm either risk being judged and labelled with deficit terms (e.g. failure, incompetent, lazy, 'does not even try', negligent or indifferent to children's future, irresponsible), or to give in to the pressure to conform to the norm. Regardless of their individual beliefs, values and circumstances, parents and children are forced to perform according to this totalising, absolute and universal truth in their everyday lives.

The oppressive impact of the normalising judgement in society is highly criticised by various researchers in the field of early childhood education (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Burke & Duncan, 2015; Cannella & Swadener, 2006; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999; Gunn, 2003; Jones & Osgood, 2007; Kincheloe, 1995; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2007; Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006). Although these studies cover a variety of aspects and contexts of early childhood education, the consensus among them is that the objectification of children and parents normalises and reinforces inequality in the milieu. For example, in a society where breastfeeding is a dominant norm of childrearing practice, a mother who cannot or does not breastfeed her baby may experience both internal and external pressures that categorise her a 'bad, selfish, lazy mother' (Duncan & Bartle, 2014). Being placed under such intense regulation and oppression, this mother is subjugated to conform to society's hegemonic and homogenous norm of parenting to avoid being marginalised and penalised. The problem arises from this approach's lack of attention to the socio-economic aspects involved in breastfeeding. Normalising breastfeeding

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as the norm of good parenting does not take account of the difficulties regular feeding may pose for mothers in the lower socio-economic classes at work places, which at times force working mothers to choose between employment and continuous breastfeeding. While the system does not provide adequate support for these mothers to breastfeed their children, failure to do so is considered to be a reflection of personal incompetency as a mother, and a citizen.

A Canadian study of immigrant families (Pacini-Ketchabaw & De Almeida, 2006) also critiques the discourses on language learning, which normalises English as the only worthwhile language to learn and to speak. Because these discourses establish families' heritage languages as the defects or obstacles that obstruct children from learning the only worthwhile knowledge, bilingual children and parents experience the pressure to concentrate solely on learning English. In spite of the risk of losing their heritage languages, bilingual children and parents are pressured to adapt to the dominant language and culture, otherwise they will be subjected to negative categorisation and exclusion. Their rich cultural and linguistic heritages are used to identify and construct them as risks of the society, justifying the marginalisation and discrimination of immigrant children and parents from privileged status in the social hierarchies.

Scholars of decolonising theories share a similar concern in relation to the way that disciplinary power reduces individuals to objects to be examined, manipulated and shaped (Asher, 2009; Oliver, 2004; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2007; Smith, 1999; Viruru, 2006). In modern disciplinary mechanisms, nothing but what is named as 'the Other' (e.g. uncivilised, savage, exotic, inferior, not fully human) by the colonising power is readily recognisable, alienating subjects from the self and others. It pressures 'the Other' to detach from their own worldviews and values, forcing them to examine themselves as an object through the eyes of the coloniser (Asher, 2009). To move from the periphery to the centre of imposed hierarchy, people of colour need to prove how different they are from their native selves. The success of these people in the colonised context depends on the distance that they have moved from their own heritage, and how well they have adjusted to wearing white masks.

Using their research on American bilingual education as an example, Soto and Kharem (2006) discuss how education reproduces the colonising power by reinforcing the cultural hegemony of colonial context. The researchers argue that the hegemonic position of Anglo-American culture is indoctrinated through the education system, educating children to be more 'American', and to devalue their heritage culture and language. The home languages of indigenous children are only used as a marker of inferiority, a tool to keep them out of the privileged status. As a result, the subjugated children and families are pressured to discard their own language and culture and to "wear the white mask" (p. 25). The complexity of their identity is condensed into simplistic and fragmented stereotypes and their world is carved up to serve the needs of the colonisers.

A study on standardised testing in the current Canadian education sector (Viruru, 2006) exemplifies this. Standardised testing dominates the field of educational assessments due to its ability to assess children's progress *objectively*, producing a large volume of research with which to find the best way to implement and conduct the test. Rather than questioning the medium and the content of the assessment, the lower test results of indigenous children are utilised to crystallise their deficit representation, legitimising the restricted opportunities and oppression imposed on them.

3. Limitations of this project

The challenge of this type of study is that no one operates in a vacuum, free of power dynamics and cultural constructions in the milieu. Whereas Foucauldian researchers may strive to look underneath what is taken for granted as 'the truth' in the context, it is misleading to express certainty of their ability to reveal every layers of the subtle yet powerful mechanism of power. How can one be certain that he/she is thinking/seeing/imaging what is made unthinkable/invisible in its entirety while he/she is still within it? As Foucault (1977, 1980, 1991, 2003) points out, all are both products and producers of these discourses. All are the agents and the subjects who produce and are produced by the dominant power. This renders one's understanding of the world inextricably entangled with power-knowledge relations of the context, obscuring us from recognising and realising different types of knowing.

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For this reason, some poststructural researchers examine their own privileges, and acknowledge the influence that these privileges may have on their analysis (Burke & Duncan, 2015; Burman, 2008; Osgood, 2012). Similarly, it should be noted that the analysis in this project represents the author's critical interpretation of the topic through the lens of her class (middle class), professional and educational backgrounds (higher education both in Korea and New Zealand, former early childhood teacher in New Zealand, and receiving mentorship under a Foucauldian researcher, and a scholar with expertise in philosophy of education and educational policy studies), cultural and racial values and beliefs (Korean living in New Zealand), and gender (female in a heterosexual relationship). These aspects will inevitably affect the author's analysis of the topic. In an effort to overcome this limitation of the study, the author has engaged others to provide rigorous reviews of her own interpretations, and has participated in critical dialogues on her analysis with other scholars in the field.

Foucault's own studies on power reflect the difficulties of recognising and working with these challenges. Many poststructural feminists claims that his status as a white, middle class, privileged male obscures the gender and sexuality dimensions in the system of power, which can lead to complete disregard for the matter in his studies (McLaren, 2002; McNay, 1992; Osgood, 2012). The overly deterministic approach to the subjects as docile and mouldable bodies in Foucault's earlier works also creates further tensions between Foucauldians and poststructural feminists (McNay, 1992; Osgood, 2012). Although this issue can be resolved when his ideas of agency are applied in later work and used as a part of lens to address these issues (McLaren, 2002; McNay, 1992), the author of this project noticed that it was an inadequate tool for this project to unpack the multifaceted aspects of gender and sexuality in parenting. Having Foucault's (1977, 1991, 2003, 2004) notion of 'governmentality' and 'discursive normalisation', which are predominantly discussed in his early works as a theoretical framework, inherently accompanied the limitations of his perspectives mentioned above. The author suggests this may be adequately addressed in a larger scale study in which Foucault's concept is taken up and extended in conjunction with other poststructural feminist theories.

Another limitation of this study derives from the constraint of time and a length of this Master's thesis project. While the author realises the values of including the voices of children and parents participants in the IY programme, it was not practical to do so in a meaningful way for families within the given time frame. Building up rapport with parents and children alone would require a significant amount of time, not to mention the extensive time entailed in co-interpretation of the data with the participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton, 2001).

4. Recommendations for further research and alternative approaches to parenting

This thesis explored the norm of desirable/positive parenting in the New Zealand early childhood sector, and how this norm operates as an apparatus of power to (re)produce docile bodies in this context. In particular, Chapters Three, Four and Five critiqued the way in which the modern disciplinary power has utilised 'discursive normalisation' and 'the governing of the soul' to increase its efficiency. The analysis shows that the dominant discourses of parenting in early childhood policies such as IY construct a colonised, scientific/clinical, and economic/neoliberal norm of parenting as the absolute truth, limiting the understanding of early childhood and regulating parenting practices in New Zealand. The copious research in the field of early childhood studies and parenting pedagogy which demonstrate concern for the current construction of childrearing practices was investigated throughout this thesis. These researchers, working across a variety of sectors and contexts, point out that normalising a specific modality of childrearing practice as the only worthwhile knowledge reinscribes inequality and exacerbates social injustice in the milieu (Bloch & Popkewitz, 1995; Burman, 2008; Cannella, 1997; Cannella & Swadener, 2006; Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Duncan & Bartle, 2014; Farquhar et al., 2015; Kincheloe, 1995; MacNaughton, 2005; Moss, 2014; Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2007; Smeyers, 2008; Suissa, 2006; Swadener, 1995). This signifies the need for different approaches to parenting, which consider the various detrimental effects on families and children's learning suggested by these studies.

It is not the author's intention to find an ultimate parenting truth to replace the current practice, but she rather agrees with that which Foucault articulates in the following:

Maybe the target nowadays is not to discover what we are, but to refuse what we are. We have to imagine and to build up what we could be to get rid of this kind of political "double bind," which is the simultaneous individualisation and totalisation of modern power structure (Foucault, 1982, p. 216).

By disrupting the norm of parenting in IY, this thesis has sought to disrupt the static place where only a particular way of being is considered to be true or normal, and aimed to dismantle the associated taken for granted assumptions. In so doing, the author hoped to have made space for what was unthinkable or unimaginable within the existing approach to parenting, opening up the possibilities for future.

The last two points of the previous section of this thesis provide a direction for further investigations and alternative approaches to the way in which we understand early childhood and childrearing practices. Foucault's deterministic view on bodies in his earlier works, and his lack of consideration of gender have created much tension between Foucauldian scholars and poststructural feminists. Together with the constraint of time being length of this project, the inherent issues of Foucault's earlier perspectives and this investigation have explored the limitations, and the possible direction for further investigation. As noted by McLaren (2002, p. 116),

Resistance comes from the struggle and contestation of competing claims of power, rather than the ability to get outside of power. Resistances may be counter-disciplines that challenge normalising power and produce transformation in individual bodies or the social body.

Drawing from Foucault's concept of agency, which appears in his later works such as *Technologies of the Self* (Foucault, 1988b), in conjunction with other poststructural feminists' ideas on the matter, may offer us more than the overly deterministic perspectives of passive subjects in the current, dominant mechanism of power: a will to resist and hope for a different future. Co-constructing and co-interpreting the meaning of the parenting norm (re)produced by the existing power relations with children and families not only enables them to realise the subjugation imposed on them, but also provides points of resistance. It shines a light into those places where

individuals were previously not able to see and elucidates the point at which they can make a different choice, a choice to resist, a choice to make a difference.

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