ENHANCING SECURITY:
A GROUNDED THEORY OF CHINESE SURVIVAL
IN NEW ZEALAND

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the
University of Canterbury
by
Beven Yee

University of Canterbury
2001
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT .......................................................</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. INTRODUCTION ...............................................</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction ..............................................</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Bounding the Study ..........................................</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Theoretical and Practical Significance ....................</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Definitions ................................................</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Overview of Chapters .......................................</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS ...................................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction ................................................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Methodology ................................................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) An Overview of the Method ..................................</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Underlying Philosophies .....................................</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Glaser versus Strauss .......................................</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Unit versus Process Analysis ................................</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) The Utility of Grounded Theories .........................</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Details of Analysis ........................................</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) How are Grounded Theories Evaluated? .....................</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Methods ......................................................</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(1) Doing Grounded Theory .................................. 36
(2) Putting Theory into Practice ............................. 39
(3) Sample Selection ......................................... 42
(4) Procedures ................................................ 43
(5) Reflections on Grounded Theory ....................... 68

4. Summary .................................................... 73

3. OVERRIDING CONDITIONS ................................ 77
   1. Introduction ............................................... 77
   2. The Insecurity Context .................................... 77
      (1) Historical Insecurity ................................ 78
      (2) Political Insecurity ................................ 79
      (3) Economic Insecurity ................................ 81
      (4) The Discrimination Context ......................... 83
   3. The Tight-Knit Community ............................... 97
      (1) Permanent Settlement ................................ 97
      (2) Urbanisation .......................................... 98
      (3) Homogeneous Community ............................. 99
      (4) Lack of Anonymity .................................. 100
   4. Non-Belonging ............................................ 101
      (1) Non-Belonging and Detachment
         from Chinese Society ................................ 102
      (2) Non-Belonging and Cultural Alienation .......... 102
      (3) Detachment from New Zealand Society ............ 103
   5. Summary .................................................. 107

4. ENHANCING SECURITY ..................................... 108
   1. Introduction ............................................. 108
      (1) Content versus Emotive Insecurity ................ 109
      (2) Social and Ethnic Identities ....................... 111
   2. Enhancing Security as Process ....................... 112
   3. Placating ................................................. 114
1. Introduction.............................................. 182

5. CONCLUSIONS........................................... 182

(1) Showing Commitment...................................... 118
(2) Blending In............................................... 119
(3) Distancing............................................... 131
(4) Role Plays............................................... 135
(5) Creating Understanding................................. 141

4. Placating and Situational Psychological Coping........... 141
   (1) Absorbing............................................ 143
   (2) Forgiving............................................ 143
   (3) Denying of Self...................................... 144

5. Coordinating Performance................................ 146
   (1) Dramaturgical Loyalty............................... 147
   (2) Dramaturgical Discipline............................ 149
   (3) Dramaturgical Circumspection....................... 151

6. Who Placates Most?...................................... 153
   (1) Community Immersion................................. 153
   (2) The Critical Juncture............................... 154
   (3) Power and Status.................................... 155
   (4) The Master Placater................................ 156

7. The Consequences of Placating............................ 157

8. Affirming.................................................. 161
   (1) Association Affirmation............................. 162
   (2) Cultural Affirmation................................ 165
   (3) Intellectual Affirmation............................. 173

9. Challenging................................................ 174
   (1) Equality.............................................. 175
   (2) Belonging............................................ 176
   (3) Identity.............................................. 177
   (4) Conditions.......................................... 177

10. Summary.................................................. 180
2. Substantive Theory and the Extant Literature ................. 183
   (1) The Assimilation Perspective ......... 183
   (2) The Primordial Cultural Perspective .... 187
   (3) The Structural Perspective ........ 190
   (4) The Cultural Ecological Perspective .... 194
3. Elaborating the Theory ...................................... 201
4. From Substantive Theory to Formal Theory .................. 207
5. Implications .................................................. 210

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................. 218

REFERENCES ..................................................... 219

APPENDICES ...................................................... 236
   A. Interview Request Letter ...................... 237
   B. Letter to Informants Regarding Interview Transcript ........ 238
   C. A Brief History of the Overseas Chinese ............ 239
   D. Mapping "Interpretation Shifts" .................. 250
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIGURE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Threshold Tolerance System</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A Model of How Chinese Enhance Security</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. &quot;Showing Commitment&quot; Typology</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. &quot;Blending In&quot; Typology</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2c. &quot;Distancing&quot; Typology</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d. &quot;Role Play&quot; Typology</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2e. &quot;Creating Understanding&quot; Typology</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2f. &quot;Situational Psychological Coping&quot; Typology</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2g. &quot;Coordinating Performance&quot; Typology</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2h. Aspects that Increase the Likelihood of &quot;Placating&quot;</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2i. &quot;Affirming&quot; Typology</td>
<td>162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2j. &quot;Challenging&quot; Typology</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This study examines how an ethnic minority group copes under conditions of adversity. It follows in the tradition of a wide body of qualitative work that has investigated racial minorities and their everyday experiences. Much of the existing work, however, focuses on merely describing thematically and/or conceptually what goes on. The current study aims to construct an integrated conceptual understanding of how a minority group engages in the coping process. More specifically, this study seeks to develop a substantive theory that can explain and predict human behaviour. Grounded theory methodology was used in aid of the theory development process (see Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Put simply, grounded theory is an inductive methodology that attempts to understand action from the perspective of social actors (Brooks, 1998).

To uncover the coping process, the "local" Chinese community in New Zealand were used as the main data source. Other ethnic and minority communities were also used for comparative purposes. Data was obtained by a number of means; this included interviewing, participant observation, and documentary analysis. The collected data were analysed over an initial four-year period using constant comparative methods and theoretical sampling.

The discovered core process was one of "enhancing security". There are two types of insecurity that Chinese are concerned about: first, insecurity can be seen as "content", which relates to material factors, and second, insecurity can be seen as "emotive", which
relates to psychological factors. Ultimately, Chinese are seeking to resolve both content
and emotive insecurity and they do this by "placating", "challenging" and "affirming".
"Placating" refers to various strategies used to pacify the host population and encourage
tolerance. Hegemonic structures are acknowledged but not challenged. "Challenging"
involves a confrontation with hegemonic structures in an attempt to secure tolerance and
hence content and emotive security. "Affirming" is the means by which Chinese seek
solace from their ethnic identity. Chinese engage in the processes of placating,
challenging and affirming in many different ways. Some engage in all three processes,
others only one or perhaps two. Whatever the case, various factors can be identified that
enable prediction of the type of coping process(es) that individuals may employ as they
seek to enhance their security.

This study contributes to three areas of research. First, it adds to the small but growing
body of work relating to the New Zealand Chinese. Second, it contributes to research in
the area of ethnic relations, especially work that focuses on interaction. And finally, it
adds to the formal theoretical literature on stigma and its management.
Chapter 1: Introduction

1. INTRODUCTION

In the last 15 years, minority communities around the world have begun to experience increasing insecurity in the face of massive global shifts. Ethnic nationalism\(^1\) has been rekindled around the world as old empires and ideologies collapse (e.g., the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the late 1980s); new political entities emerge (e.g., again, the old Soviet states and Eastern Europe, but also the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997); and the strategic realignment of economic cooperative boundaries are formed.\(^2\) Such global shifts are nothing new. They are part of the ebb and flow of world history. Likewise, insecurity amongst minority communities is also a common phenomenon. But for physically distinctive minorities, the problem has always been somewhat greater: escaping their stigmatised status is made more difficult. Even after generations of cohabitation, such minorities can still be singled out for special attention; attention they seldom desire. Significantly, it is during moments of major social transition that they often become the targets of intolerance.

In New Zealand, the impact of these global shifts was to force a realignment in its

---

\(^1\) Ethnic nationalism differs from political nationalism. The scholarship on nationalism views "political nationalism as civic, integrative and constructive while ethnic nationalism is dangerous, divisive and destructive." (Shin et al, 1999:465)

\(^2\) We need only think of the ethnic struggles in Kosovo (see Vickers, 1998); the rise of the neo-Nazi movement in Germany (see Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 10 Mar 1997); the reemergence of Welsh, Scottish and Irish ethnicity after devolution in the UK (see Luhnow, 1999); the referendum in Canada for the separation of French speaking Quebec (see Lusztig & Knox, 1999); ethnic struggles in Rwanda (see Seyoum, 1997); race riots and nationalism in Indonesia (see McCarthy, 1999) - the list is seemingly endless. The relative ethnic calm of the post war years has been turned on its head.
economic positioning. This occurred in reaction to changes from its traditional trading partners (i.e., the UK and the US) who were beginning to establish more localised trading blocks. Consequently, New Zealand began to form closer economic ties with the Asia-Pacific region. After 150 years of being firmly established as an outpost of Britishness in the South Pacific, New Zealand was now set to become increasingly "Asian" (Palat, 1996). To solidify this newly formed relationship with Asia, New Zealand administrations have made attempts to minimise economic, political and social cleavages; all in aid of freer trade. Indeed, "free trade" was the means by which New Zealand was to ensure it did not fall behind in the global market place. Commodities began to move more swiftly and efficiently than ever before, and this movement in goods has been matched by the movement of people (ibid).

The impact of the global shifts, in New Zealand and around the world, was to initiate a new series of diasporas. Like the diasporas of old, migrants are seeking opportunity and security within their new nation states. In the South Pacific, Chinese are without doubt the dominant diasporic group (Seagrave, 1995). Following in the footsteps of earlier Chinese migrants, many Chinese from Southeast Asia are now calling New Zealand their home.

For the established Chinese community, the new Chinese diaspora has done little to enhance their security or opportunity. Resistant nationalisms have become manifest through the rejection of these new migrants; consequently, the established Chinese have become caught in the crossfire (McLauchlan, 1991). The conflation of race and migrant status has seen "old" and "new" Chinese communities treated alike; both are targeted by those opposed to immigration (See Ip, 1995, 1996). In many respects, the cultural and

---

3 In the past two decades, the US has been forming closer ties to the Americas; the UK has been realigning itself with Europe (see Palat, 1996).
4 That is, those Chinese who have been in New Zealand for several generations.
racial mismatch between New Zealand and Southeast Asia has increased the potential for conflict. Yet Chinese have experienced periods of intolerance before (see Price, 1974); they have been settled in New Zealand for over 130 years. Without doubt, the history of the Chinese in this part of the world is a history of survival, of dealing with difficult circumstances, and of coping under adversity (see Appendix C). Yet, in spite of all the discrimination they have faced, the Chinese have come through relatively unscathed. How have they managed to endure? This study deals with precisely this question. It takes a microscopic look at the everyday circumstances Chinese face in order to reveal the various ways of coping.

It is a study of the process of survival. The question that is answered most generally is, "How do Chinese survive?"; and more specifically, "What strategies do they employ?" and "What conditions shape these strategies?". The study deals with the intricate details of social interaction; more specifically, the form of interaction. This contrasts with the majority of studies that investigate Chinese in the South Pacific (see Ip, 1995, 1996; Ng, 1993; Sedgwick, 1982; Price, 1974). Here, the focus tends to be on the substance of interaction. This study, therefore, is not so much an investigation of Chinese per se, but rather, it is a study of the process(es) in which they engage.

To uncover these processes, a grounded theory approach has been employed (see Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). Grounded theory is an inductive methodology that attempts to construct theory from data in a rigorous and systematic fashion (Glaser, 1978). The emergent theory accounts for the actions of participants as they attempt to resolve an overriding concern (ibid). Grounded theory differs from "traditional" methods in that a problem statement is not outlined at the start of the investigation. The aim is to discover the problem as participants define it and explicate the ways in which they seek to resolve it (Brooks, 1998). Grounded theorists, therefore, enter the research domain with
an unspecified agenda. They remain open to whatever may emerge. At the outset, then, only general statements can be made about the research focus. In this study, of course, the goal is to understand how Chinese survive as a minority in everyday life.

2. BOUNDING THE STUDY

The study was conducted within the New Zealand context. More specifically, it focused heavily on the Chinese in one city: Christchurch. The selection of the study location (i.e., New Zealand) and its confinement to a specific locale (i.e., Christchurch) was based on pragmatic as well as theoretical criteria. Practically, easy access to the ethnic community and limited financing made the study location ideal. Theoretically, the Chinese in Christchurch are indicative of the Chinese throughout New Zealand. They are a combination of "new" and "established" migrants, young and old, professional and working class and so on. Many emergent sampling categories, I supposed, were thus likely to be found within this locale.

3. THEORETICAL AND PRAGMATIC SIGNIFICANCE

This research project is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it fills a void in theoretical understanding. There has been a plethora of research investigating the positioning of ethnic minorities and the specific difficulties they encounter (e.g., Banton, 1987; Bonacich, 1973). There is a dearth of literature, however, concerning how minorities "manage" their circumstances. The intricate details of ethnic-host interactions are often glossed over in favour of imposing structural models on ethnic relations (e.g., Bonacich, 1973). Within these models, ethnic communities are often seen as homogeneous entities. The variation within communities is never accounted for (e.g., Ogbu, 1983). Research that seeks to understand the perspective of minorities, their communities, and the variation within these communities, without the imposition of preconceived structures serves a useful purpose. It offers the potential for the emergence
of new theoretical perspectives. It acknowledges the role of ethnics as active agents rather than as passive recipients of overarching structures. Moreover, it offers insight into the dynamics of ethnic communities, and the role they play in the "management" exercise.

Another reason why this research is significant lies in the nature of the ethnic community being researched. Although the focus of the study is on processes and less concerned with the group that actually carries those processes, it is still evident that this study adds to the literature on the New Zealand Chinese particularly, and the Overseas Chinese more generally. In regards to the former, Sedgwick (1982) has noted an amazing lack of literature. He found only "three books, thirty-one theses and thirty-five assorted articles" on the New Zealand Chinese (pg. 1). In the past two decades since Sedgwick's comments, the literature base has expanded somewhat, mainly due to the work of Manying Ip and James Ng. In spite of the excellent work that has been published by these writers, research on the New Zealand Chinese remains slight, especially when compared to the mass of literature on North American Chinese communities. This project, then, adds a little more substance to the less than substantial New Zealand Chinese literature.

Finally, this study is significant for its general applicability. As stated, globally, ethnic conflicts are on the rise. Struggles in Europe, Africa and Asia are matched by struggles in the South Pacific. Indeed, New Zealand ethnic concerns can be seen as reflective of international tendencies. Globalisation goes beyond the transportation of mere goods and services - it also sees the transportation of social trends, issues and movements. Struggles in one part of the world can initiate or influence struggles elsewhere. In regards to ethnic concerns, the processes involved are likely to be similar; they may vary only by degree and intensity. A study that attempts to uncover processes that relate to ethnic concerns can be seen to have far wider application than the localised units from which they were discovered. Studies of process, therefore, are studies of general applicability.
4. DEFINITIONS

A number of definitions need to be made at the outset; this should clarify the use of certain terms and labels as they can be found throughout the study. I start by defining "local" and "migrant" Chinese; I then define the New Zealand understanding of the term "Asian". These definitions are important because they identify the "critical boundaries around which [a]...grounded theory can be seen in its substantive context" (Gibson, Personal Correspondence, 2001). The use of "local" and "migrant" labels identifies the distinctive histories of these groups. In terms of migration and settlement in New Zealand, these histories have largely been shaped by strictly controlled immigration rules imposed by various administrations. Murphy (1998b), in fact, argues that no other migrant group in New Zealand has been so strictly controlled. New Zealand governments can be seen to have almost handpicked the Chinese population. To define Chinese the way that I do is to highlight the impact of structure on the shape of this community.

Similarly, to use the New Zealand definition of "Asian" identifies a power relationship that Chinese must deal with in everyday life. This is very much an imposed definition and thus indicates the context of powerlessness (see chapter 3) and indeed the struggle Chinese go through for self-definition (see chapter 4, the sections entitled "The Consequences of Placating", "Affirming" and "Challenging" in particular).

These definitions also identify a dualism within the research itself. Such imposed labels can be seen as etic definitions; that is, universalistic labels presumed by researchers. Such definitions were seen as important in research disciplines like anthropology when there was a movement away from merely describing communities to comparing different types of communities (Patton, 2001). Quite simply, etic definitions allowed easy comparison and therefore connects to an important aspect of grounded theory - to be generalisable beyond the substantive unit. This contrasts with emic definitions, which refer to the self-
definitions of the group under study. These are culturally relevant to groups but have limited utility outside of the cultural context. Within the research itself is revealed the interplay between self-definition (emic) and imposed definition (etic) and the process by which informants deal with this problem. Both points of view are reflected in this study, but the etic definitions define the boundaries of the substantive study and are thus presented in this introduction.5

(1) Who are the "Local" Chinese?

The "local" Chinese are defined as those who arrived or grew up in New Zealand prior to 1987. After this date, immigration guidelines changed dramatically and many Southeast Asian Chinese began to enter the country.6 The "local" Chinese can be distinguished by being mainly Cantonese and English speaking. They can trace their heritage to the early goldminers, or those who came as war refugees or on the basis of family reunification. This group often has firm connections to the New Zealand Chinese Association. Also, although they are an ethnic community, it is not necessarily primordial notions of "Chineseness" nor language that bind them together. Rather, they form a bond through common experiences. As one "local" Chinese stated:

It is very hard to pin down...what it is like to be a [local] Chinese New Zealander. There is a tacit, unspoken sort of thing...You have similar backgrounds, you know what the market-garden is like, you know what it is to serve customers...You are sons and daughters of laundrymen and greengrocers. The work ethic is still very strong. Our generation is being well educated and entering professional careers, but still they are not part of the monoculture...it is a biological fact. (From Ip, 1996:29)

5 It would be somewhat redundant to identify emic definitions to define the boundaries of a study because everyone has different notions of what being Chinese is, what constitutes the Chinese community and so on.
6 "Traditional" source nations were eliminated from immigration policy. Migrants were now selected on the basis of personal merit, qualifications and availability (see Palat, 1996).
(2) Who are the Recent Migrant Chinese?

Recent migrant Chinese contrast sharply with the "local" Chinese. They are the products of immigration policy changes that took place in 1987 (see Appendix C). These changes saw the removal of privilege to "traditional" source countries and the introduction of criteria based on merit. Most recent Chinese migrants come from Southeast Asia and are highly educated professionals (Statistics New Zealand, 1995). They tend to speak Hokkien, Hakka and Mandarin as well as English (ibid). They also tend not to belong to the New Zealand Chinese Association, but rather, have formed their own associations related to country of origin and dialect group.

(3) Who is "Asian"?

The "Asian" label may seem self-evident but it too requires clarification. Unlike the UK where "Asian" refers to Pakistani, Indian, Sri Lankan, and those generally from South Asia, "Asian" in New Zealand refers mainly to East and Southeast Asian peoples. Indians, Pakistanis and Sri Lankans tend to be referred to by their national labels, whereas Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Indonesian and so on are lumped together as "Asian". In this study I adopt the New Zealand standard of the term.

5. OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

The chapter that follows this one, chapter 2, deals with methodology and methods. It gives both a philosophical account of grounded theory and a description of how the research was actually conducted. A step by step account of procedures is given, from the collection of data through to the final write-up of the report. Comparisons are made throughout to identify the differences between conventional, deductive research and less

---

7 This being the case, any quantitative data used prior to 1987 is more or less representative of the "local" Chinese. After this date, quantitative data relating to the Chinese tends to be merged. The "local" Chinese are captured in broader categories of "Chinese" or "Asian". It is therefore less reliable.
conventional, inductive work. An attempt is also made to differentiate grounded theory from other types of research methodology, which are often considered to be "qualitative". Statements are made about the problems encountered in the research process, the role of the researcher, how "faithful emergence" was ensured, and some reflections on the grounded theory process are also given.

Chapter 3 is the first of the theoretical chapters. It attempts to establish the context and overriding conditions that gave rise to the emergent processes discussed later in the thesis. Relevant historical accounts are given, the unique circumstances of Chinese are discussed, and the "problem" - as Chinese perceive it - is revealed. It is suggested that the circumstances Chinese find themselves in elicits an "insecurity consciousness" that permeates all aspects of everyday life. Chinese feel excluded, insecure and bound by an "unspoken contract" with the host nation. Abiding by the "unspoken contract" insures a degree of tolerance. Concurrently, Chinese are also bound by the rules and regulations of a tight-knit ethnic community. This chapter sets the scene for the ensuing core chapter.

Chapter 4, entitled "Enhancing Security", details the problem solving strategies Chinese engage in. It presents the emergent theoretical framework as discovered through grounded theory analysis. The chapter is organised around a core variable, which is referred to as the "Enhancing Security" process. Properties and relationships of this core variable are explicated and aspects of the relevant theoretical literature are incorporated to increase the explanatory power of the theory.

Chapter 5 concludes the thesis. Here, the emergent grounded theory is compared and contrasted with the extant literature to show its place and contribution to more general areas of research. It is suggested that the emergent framework contributes to the substantive domain of race relations and also the formal theoretical domain of stigma.
management. The emergent theory is elaborated to indicate its potential for further development and implications from the study are indicated.

Appendices contain various documents used during the course of the study (e.g., letters to informants), a brief history of the Overseas Chinese and the Chinese in New Zealand, and a figure, indicating the dynamic nature of host tolerance as it relates to the Chinese.
Chapter 2: Methodology & Methods

1. INTRODUCTION

This is both a chapter of methodology and of methods. The former is the theory behind practice, and the latter the practice itself. I divide the chapter into two parts. The first half begins with an overview of the methods used, followed by a philosophical and theoretical discussion. The second half is mainly descriptive, outlining the practical aspects of methodological implementation. In essence, the first part of the chapter is a justification for the second. As the methods used are far from what may be considered the "norm" in sociological practice, I have decided to compare and contrast with "traditional" methods throughout to clarify understanding. In layman's terms, what you are about to read is a chapter that describes what I did and how I did it in minute detail. Its purpose is to prepare the reader for what is to come in ensuing chapters and provide a general framework from which one can judge the quality of the research itself. Here, I expose the mechanics of the research process. I let the reader see not only how I did things but why I did things.

2. METHODOLOGY

(1) An Overview of the Method

I chose to use a grounded theory method of research in this project. This method emphasises the discovery process in theory development as opposed to logical elaboration, which uses preestablished theoretical frameworks for guidance (Charmaz,
The general aim of grounded theory is to generate "new" theory, driven by constantly emergent data, while the data collection itself is dependent on continually emergent hypotheses. It is a cyclical motion. Ultimately, grounded theory projects tend to produce substantive theories that explain how a perceived problem is resolved. The theory tends to be psychosocial in nature and reveals social processes, strategies, types and the like. These in turn describe, explain and predict human behaviour. Grounded theories often provide a new twist on an old problem, or open up entirely new areas for study (Glaser, 1992).

The method is inductive. Simply put, grounded theories are built from the ground up. At the start of a grounded theory study, there is no theoretical structure to interpret data. The analyst builds theory by engaging the data and attempting to understand it. Inductive approaches lend themselves to qualitative data and theory generation (although not exclusively). Deductive approaches, however, work in the opposite direction. Here, established theory imposes itself on the data. It provides a framework for interpretation. Deductive approaches lend themselves to quantitative data and theory testing (although not exclusively). Large data sets tend to be the norm with an array of elaborate statistical instruments to verify established hypotheses. A deductivist means of theorising occurs through logically elaborating from existing theory, logico-deductivism.

Although grounded theory is inductive, it differs from the descriptive inductivism of ethnography, life history and phenomenology. These methods attempt to capture the world through "thick description". Such methods deal with people, places and events, and explanation tends to be conceived through the extant literature. Theorising is not their primary focus. By contrast, grounded theory is aimed at discovering theory. The explication of processes, strategies, types and the like is its purpose. Thus, people, places and events are seen as the agents that carry processes, reveal strategies and indicate types
(Glaser, 1978).8 Grounded theory aims to conceptualise9 data, lump these concepts into broad categories, and integrate all through emergent hypotheses. The discovery of general patterns, relationships and the conditions under which these vary is what grounded theory is all about. Grounded theorists want to know what is going on. They look at areas that have either never been studied before or those that are inundated with disparate theories.10

The discovery process in grounded theory is an elaborate one, it requires a different logic to that which drives verificational studies. In verificational studies, there is a linear movement from question development, sample selection, data collection, to data analysis. Once analysts have established their theoretical framework, they know what questions to ask, whom to ask them of, and generally, when they are going to analyse the data. In grounded theory, however, these stages occur simultaneously, so questions are constantly changing, the sample selection (at least at the start) is unpredictable, and the analysis is constant throughout. Grounded theorists do not know what they are looking for. There can be no problem statement a priori. Grounded theorists want to understand how informants see the world. They want to know how they define the problem and how they seek to resolve it.

This is indicative of one of the key components of grounded theory - emergence. Everything emerges in a grounded theory study. There is no preconception. The research problem emerges, the sample emerges, concepts emerge, the relevant literature emerges, and finally, the theory emerges. A grounded theorist simply cannot say prior to the collection and analysis of data what the study will look like. The transformation is a remarkable one.

---

8 There are myriad theoretical codes; these are only three.
9 Concepts allow us to explain a lot with a little. It is this parsimony that makes grounded theories powerful and useful.
10 The multitude of unconnected theories is an indication no one understands the area correctly yet, for if reality is integrated then so too should the social theories that attempt to explain it.
It is a transformation achieved through an extremely tight connection between data and the emergent theory. The data drives the emergent theory, but the emergent theory also drives data collection. As the theory becomes more refined so too does the data collection. An underlying assumption grounded theorists make is: the data is always right. The theory, therefore, is in a constant state of flux as the analyst attempts to find an emergent fit between data and theory. In this way, grounded theories are never really finished. They are in constant need of minor modifications as new data continue to emerge. But grounded theories are not representations of a universal truth. Rather, they are part of a process to understand reality. And given that reality is in constant motion, then so too should social theories.

(2) Underlying Philosophies

The philosophical basis of grounded theory is not well conceived. Clearly it does not abide by the traditional canons of positivist research, but neither does it abandon many of positivism's general assumptions. Similarly, it can be seen that grounded theory incorporates elements that are phenomenological, while also maintaining elements of pragmatic utility. So how can grounded theory be philosophically conceived? I suggest grounded theory incorporates all the philosophies mentioned above and each perspective is dependent on the research phase. These consist of: a) the discovery phase, which employs phenomenological principles, b) the conceptualisation phase, which employs positivistic understandings, c) and the assessment phase, which employs pragmatic criteria. Of course, these phases are not distinct. They occur simultaneously as the analyst collects, analyses, conceptualises and slowly discovers the emergent theory. In the end, however, the theory is judged by criteria such as "fit", workability, modifiability and relevance (Glaser, 1978) (the issue of evaluation is dealt with in more depth later).

This curious blend of seemingly contradictory philosophies is a product of its authors'
academic experiences. Influenced by Robert Merton and Paul Lazarsfeld, Glaser and Strauss (1967) managed to generate an approach that maintains aspects of positivistic durability combined with phenomenological richness, underpinned by pragmatic utility. I will outline each phase briefly and work in how the philosophies apply.

(a) Discovery

The discovery phase is concerned with the meaning making capacity of humans. People's feelings, attitudes and emotions are what guide their actions. Through studying the "lived experience" of participants, the analyst gains insight into how they see the world. And so, s/he also begins to understand their behaviours. In this sense, grounded theory is phenomenological. The researcher is trying to get inside the heads of his/her participants; to see what they see, feel what they feel, and to understand why they feel this way. So deep immersion in the study environment is necessary for the researcher to gain an accurate understanding of their world. This stands in stark contrast to the demands of positivism which requires an aloofness from the researcher to ensure objectivity.

Remaining aloof at this stage would be the worst form of bias. Citing Becker, Ackroyd and Hughes (1992:142-3) write of the analyst,

...because he operates, when gathering data, in a social context rich in cues and information of all kinds. Because he sees and hears the people he studies in many situations...he builds an ever growing fund of impressions, many of them at the subliminal level, which give him an extensive base for the interpretation and analytic use of any particular datum. The wealth of information and impressions sensitises him to subtleties...and forces him to raise continually new and different questions, which he brings to and tries to answer in succeeding observations.
To try and catch the interpretive process by remaining aloof as a so-called 'objective' observer and refusing to take the role of the acting unit is to risk the worst kind of subjectivism - the objective observer is likely to fill in the process of interpretation with his own surmises in place of catching the process as it occurs in the experience of the acting unit which uses it.

(b) Conceptualisation

The next research phase requires the conceptualisation of data. Here, the analyst must step back from the data that s/he was previously immersed in. The generation of concepts immediately distances the analyst from his/her subjects and social domain. Through the constant writing of memos (theoretical notes), the analyst aims to move steadily away from his/her informants and begins to work solely with memos. It is in memos that tentative hypotheses are stated. These serve as a guide to where future data may be collected and what types of questions can be pursued. So whereas the first phase of a grounded theory is to gain immersion in the social milieu of participants, the second phase is to create distance and become "objective" researchers again.

(c) Assessment

The third phase of a grounded theory is where the analyst assesses the emergent theory. It is judged by pragmatic standards. If the emergent theory has concepts that fit the data, has conceptual grab, and ultimately, if the theory works, the theory is seen as valid (Glaser, 1978).

(3) Glaser versus Strauss

As stated above, grounded theory was discovered and formulated by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss. Since the writing of their book, "The Discovery of Grounded Theory"
(1967), however, Glaser and Strauss have gone on to develop two distinct strands of grounded theory methodology. The divergence started with Strauss' 1987 book, "Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists". The later publication of "Basics of Qualitative Research" by Strauss and Corbin (1990) further solidified this divergence. In reply, Glaser (1992) published "Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis" in which he outlines the major differences in approach. The two approaches are so different that they can hardly be considered the same methodology. Glaser was so incensed with the direction Strauss and Corbin had taken grounded theory that he decided to relabel their method "Conceptual Description". In essence, Glaser (1992) suggests that "Conceptual Description" abandons the core element of grounded theory analysis - emergence. "Conceptual Description" "forces" data into preestablished frameworks. There are other, more intricate, differences between these methods. I make no attempt to go into these differences however. Indeed, it took an entire book by Glaser to even make such divergences evident. All that needs to be said is this study adopts a Glaserian understanding of grounded theory and not that espoused by Strauss and Corbin.

(4) Unit versus Process Analysis

An important component of Glaser's method is BSP (Basic Social Process) sociology (see Glaser, 1978). In short, BSPs are social processes that have stages. "Cultivating" is a BSP because cultivation relationships have at least two stages (see Bigus, 1972). These processes are referred to as "Basic" and "Social" because they occur generally in society. For example, although Bigus' study of cultivating was discovered by investigating milkmen, the process is relevant beyond this substantive community. Indeed, most people in business "cultivate" to ensure custom. The BSP thus transcended the unit under which it was discovered. Not all grounded theories contain a BSP however (Glaser, 1978). Grounded theories can explicate mere strategies, types and myriad other theoretical codes. BSPs are, however, the most powerful aspect of grounded theory generation. They are
also a good way to demonstrate the difference between conventional research and grounded theory. What conventional research tends to do is focus on social units and preconceive an issue for investigation. Grounded theories, however, often focus on processes which are contained within the social unit. Thus, whereas the former adopts a unit analysis, the latter adopts a process analysis. Glaser (1978) demonstrates the difference between unit and process analysis by reference to a study on "whorehouses". I restate his example as follows.

The study started out as a unit analysis. The obvious starting point from this perspective was to examine "whorehouses" as a form of deviance. The researcher conducted interviews along these lines but soon realised he was not getting the data he desired. People were not interested in talking to him. They were not interested in the issue of deviance for this was not their main concern. The shift to a process analysis revealed what was going on: the workers were most concerned about the issue of "servicing". They wanted to know how they could keep customers returning; how they could increase customer satisfaction; and how they could boost daily turnover. The issues they were worried about had nothing to do with deviance. The "whorehouse" had more in common with a gas station or any other servicing industry than it did with gangs, drug dealers, or whatever else people may consider as "deviant" (ibid).

Clearly, the unit analysis missed the point. It preconceived the problem. This was not the problem the workers were most concerned about: the core process was "servicing". What typically happens in a grounded theory study is to start with a unit focus with preconceived issues and shift to a process focus based on the concerns of the people under study. What the researcher concentrates on is the BSP that occurs within the sociological unit. Thus, although,
...the research is conducted within particular units, one is not studying the units per se; incumbent process(es) is the focus. Therefore, that which does not relate to the BSP does not relate to the study. (Glaser et al, 1994:51)

Thus, factors such as gender, ethnicity and class, the holy trinity of traditional sociology, may not have any relevance in a grounded theory study (Glaser, 1978). Like deviance, the importance of these issues are often preconceived, products of a unit analysis. Their impact on the BSP may be minimal.

The ability of BSPs to transcend the social units in which they were discovered differentiates grounded theory from other "qualitative" approaches. Most qualitative methods demand "immaculate description" of the social unit (Glaser, 1978). An ethnographic study, for example, would attempt to describe in minute detail the happenings within a small community. It captures what is going on in a certain locale and time. But once the study is over, its relevance can be eroded. The social units ethnographers study are typically unstable. They are subject to constant change. Thus there are no notions of universality. The discoveries made within the unit have limited utility outside of it. Grounded theorists, however, study the processes that transcend the unit and thus see the world as integrated. BSPs can be universally applicable. The core process of the "whorehouse" was the same as a gas station or hotel (Glaser, 1978). Studying processes and not units allows the grounded theorist to produce theory that is lasting. Even if the community under study disappeared the day after the research was completed, the processes uncovered would be applicable in many other areas. In this

---

11 The groups studied are highly dynamic, they change quickly and can even disappear. In the 1980s, for example, there was a mini economic boom; this produced the "big-swinging-dick", a high rolling stock trader. They were typically young college graduates who dressed in designer suits, carried cell phones and frequented debutante balls. The stock market crash that followed essentially eliminated this community. They were only in existence for a short period of time and could only be studied in that time frame. New groups however have emerged in the late 1990s, the "internet junkies" for example, people who live their lives through a computer network. No doubt this group will disappear also.
way, grounded theory has more in common with positivistic research than the phenomenological focus of most qualitative work. Grounded theories are useful in other ways too.

(5) The Utility of Grounded Theories

Grounded theory's midrange focus fills the void between the micro and macro. The micro theories of psychology and grand theories such as Marxism are useful at the level for which they were designed, but there is a need for specific theories at different levels of social interaction. Macro concepts, for example, do not always map neatly onto mid-range substantive domains, leaving the macro theory open to accusations of reductionism. This is typical of Marxist analysis where the researcher may be studying a mid-range issue but makes huge theoretical leaps, citing class and economics as the solution to the problem. Similarly, micro theories seldom scale-up adequately. Theories about dyadic interactions, for example, may not apply when dealing with larger groups. Group dynamics can be quite different to the dynamics of one-to-one interaction. It may well be the case that extant concepts are relevant at different levels of analysis, but they are not always the most important. By imposing their importance, the researcher misses the opportunity of discovering new concepts and how these may ultimately connect to their "pet" theories.

Grounded theory is powerful; not only does it produce a theory that can stand on its own, it also provides a means where existing theory can be further expanded. It is typical in a grounded theory study to uncover "hints" at existing concepts, such as class. And this can provide insight as to how these concepts work at a mid-range substantive level. Given that grounded theories do not privilege any theoretical framework a priori, the emergence of extant concepts like class is powerful evidence for their authenticity. No one can claim you were gathering data to fill preestablished theoretical holes. A Marxist could use the "whorehouse" study, for example, to show how the concern for profit permeates all
aspects of the work environment and dehumanises workers. By seeing grounded theory in this way the emergent theory remains open and continuous with extant frameworks. This was Layder's (1982) main criticism of the method: that grounded theorists made no attempt to discover continuity in the theoretical landscape. But his understanding of the method seems flawed. Connecting grounded theories to existing frameworks is easily achieved.

In particular, grounded theories can unite the substantive theoretical domain under investigation - that is, those theories that relate to the social unit being investigated. This occurs because grounded theories transcend the unit focus and concentrate on processes as revealed by informants. As informants see the world seamlessly, then theorising their accounts should also produce seamless theory. In this way, grounded connections can be made amongst disparate theories that fill the substantive domain. Grounded theory thus validates conjectured theory if similar concepts and ideas emerge through grounded analysis. Thus grounded theories are ideal in a study domain that is filled by disparate substantive theories, each claiming to have the ultimate answer to a problem, each carefully ignoring other theories that may contradict their own.

It is this integrative capacity that makes grounded theory useful. In the end, the theories produced should be fully integrated simply because reality is fully integrated (Glaser, 1978). Any "forcing" of concepts and their connections is indication that an analyst has ignored the most important component of the research: the participants. And as already mentioned, participants have an in depth understanding of their reality, it is seamless in its connectivity. They see the world holistically, not in component parts, the way many theorists do. Seams, evident as contradictory explanations, only emerge when theorists portray a reality that is opposed to how people actually experience it.

---

12 "Forcing" is a term Glaser (1992) uses to describe Strauss's work. It stands in opposition to "emergence". "Forcing" simply refers to preconception in theory development.
(6) **Details of Analysis**

Now that I have presented an overview of what grounded theories are all about, I will now go into detail about the theory development process. Where applicable, I shall indicate how these methods differ from conventional positivistic approaches.

(a) **Constant Comparison**

Grounded theory employs a constant comparative means of theory development. This involves four stages: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory, and; (4) writing the theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967:105). These stages can occur simultaneously, but each eventually leads onto the next as they become developed. The constant comparative means of theory generation also incorporates four key components; these are, a) coding, b) memoing, c) theoretical sampling, and d) theoretical sorting. I will detail each of these components in turn. Emphasis is given to theoretical sampling because it is here that grounded theory diverges most from "conventional" research. Criteria for the evaluation of grounded theory will also be stated.

**Coding**

Coding is the fundamental building block of a grounded theory study.\(^{13}\) Codes are conceptualisations of data. Coding is not description or a mini presentation of the data; it involves capturing the meaning of a particular data "chunk". Coding organises data and delimits the theory. If I were coding an interview, for example, the process may proceed as follows. I would read through the interview and try to conceptualise particular data "chunks". Each "chunk" or incident is given a label or "code". Each occurrence of an "incident" is recorded. I then compare these to discover higher levels of abstraction. A series of incidents may be united under a categorical umbrella. These incidents are similar,

---

\(^{13}\) That is, fundamental in the sense of actual theoretical development. The "incident" can be seen as perhaps the smallest and simplest component in grounded theory analysis (see Gibson, 2000).
in that they can be lumped together, but they may be different in that they represent divergent aspects of the given concept. These divergent aspects of a given concept are referred to as its "properties". The theory is delimited as I compare incident with incident, and/or incident with concept (Glaser, 1992).

Two general types of coding can be identified whilst dealing directly with data, these are a) open coding, and b) selective coding. Open coding involves coding line by line or sentence by sentence, conceptualising what is going on. The question grounded theorists keep in mind during this process is: what concept or property of a concept does this incident indicate (Brooks, 1998)? As stated, comparison of incidents generates higher level concepts and categories (a category is a higher level concept). Incidents can now be compared with properties and concepts. During open coding it is important to code incidents in as many ways as possible; this allows the emergence of codes that "fit" the data. Eventually, an appropriate code for a series of similar yet dissimilar incidents will be discovered. Selective coding begins once a core category has been identified. The core category is a concept of the highest order. It organises all other categories because it accounts for most of the data variation. Selective coding simply means coding for those variables that relate to the core or near core categories. The core category guides theoretical sampling (discussed below).

**Memoing**

Throughout the process of coding and sorting (discussed below) is the writing of memos. Memos are theoretical notes about the data; they connect concepts and ultimately connect the entire theory together. The theoretical nature of memo writing means that it raises the conceptual level as the analysis proceeds. Data leads to memos, which lead to concepts, which leads to more memos, which leads to categories. Memoing never stops; it is constant throughout. Within memos are the theoretical accounts of the data. Through
memoing, theoretical codes diminish as they become grouped under ever abstracting concepts. Thus, as Brooks (1998) has noted, as codes decrease, conceptual memos increase.

Glaser (1978:83) refers to memoing as "the theorising write-up of ideas about codes and their relationships as they strike the analyst while coding". Citing Glaser (1978), de Burca and McLoughlin (1996) summarise the function of memoing as follows:

1. It raises the data to a conceptualisation level.
2. It develops the properties of each category which begins to define it operationally.
3. It presents hypotheses about connections between categories and/or properties.
4. It begins to integrate these connections with cluster(s) of other categories to generate the theory.
5. Lastly, it begins to locate the emerging theory with other theories with potentially more or less relevance.

Theoretical Sampling

Theoretical sampling is the process of collecting data for comparative purposes. Although preconceiving sampling categories is not permitted during the study, gross preselection is obviously necessary at the start (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). For example, given my initial interest was the Chinese, it is obvious that I will at least sample within this group to start with. After this preselection has been made, however, further sampling choices are guided only by the emerging theory. That is, the emerging theory reveals theoretically relevant categories that are then used for comparative purposes.
Theoretical sampling can be seen as the means by which the emergent theory is checked against data to see if it works, fits and has relevance (Glaser, 1978). In this exercise, the analyst seeks to confirm as well as disconfirm the emergent framework. In the latter case, the theory is reconstituted for better fit and workability. It can be seen, therefore, that theoretical sampling involves deduction as well as induction. "Deductive work in grounded theory is used to derive from induced codes conceptual guides as to where to go next for which comparative group or subgroup" (Glaser, 1978:37-8). Deduction, however, "is in the service of further induction and the source of derivations are the codes generated from comparing data, not deductions from pre-existing theories in the extant literature" (Glaser, 1978:38).

It is not uncommon to start a grounded theory project by talking to the wrong people and asking the wrong questions. After analysing the initial data, our error may become obvious. Sampling categories and the questions asked thus change as tentative hypotheses emerge. It is typical in a grounded theory study to inadvertently preconceive a problem, based on our initial understanding of the research area. But this problem may not be the problem that concerns informants most. This is the central issue in a grounded theory study. Grounded theorists want to know what their informants' main concern is and how they seek to resolve it. As Einstein once said, nine tenths of the solution to a problem is to ask the right questions. If the analyst does not know the problem as informants perceive it, s/he can hardly ask the right questions of the right people.

Initially, the aim of theoretical sampling is to generate the basic categories from which to build the emergent theory. The first step in achieving this requires the analyst to minimise the differences between comparative groups. This is easy to do since it simply requires sampling the most obvious group. Thus, if I were conducting a study on doctors in general practice, I would sample them first. I may go out and interview a number of GPs
(general practitioners). I would then compare the data. By minimalising the differences among comparative groups: (1a) the analyst verifies the usefulness of a category; (2a) s/he is able to define the conditions under which a category exists; and (3a) the basic properties of categories are revealed (Conrad, 1978). Following the example above, I may find that GPs use cultivating\textsuperscript{14} strategies in their daily practice to ensure the maintenance of custom. A GP may give a free consultation or perhaps hand out drug company samples to patients (following point 3a). These cultivation strategies may only occur during office hours, not during emergency call-outs (following point 2a). This may be the core category as it relates to the daily life of a GP (following point 1a).

The next step is to maximise the differences among comparison groups. Following the example stated above, I may go and interview surgeons and emergency room doctors, or perhaps even dentists to discover differences and similarities. The maximisation of comparison groups leads to: (1b) the dense development of the properties of categories; and (2b) the delimitation of the scope of the theory (ibid, 1978). I may find that all health professionals in highly competitive environments use cultivating strategies; while an army doctor does not, his clientele is predetermined and he is most likely on a preset salary. So, now the analyst knows the boundaries by which cultivation operates (following point 2b) and the different ways it may occur (following point 1b).

**Theoretical versus Random Sampling**

It should be obvious by now that theoretical sampling has very little in common with random sampling. The two are used for different purposes. Theoretical sampling is used to discover categories and their properties, and to reveal the interconnections in a theory. Statistical sampling is used to "obtain accurate evidence on distributions of people among

\textsuperscript{14} Cultivating was a phenomenon discovered by Bigus (1972), where people in highly competitive environments fight and maintain customers. Bigus' study of milkmen showed how customer loyalty was maintained through giving people free samples, doing favours like putting the milk directly into people's refrigerators to prevent spoiling, and so on.
categories to be used in descriptions or verifications" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967:62-3). Furthermore,

[the] researcher who generates theory need not combine random sampling with theoretical sampling when setting forth relationships among categories and properties. These relationships are suggested as hypotheses pertinent to the direction of relationship, not tested as descriptions of both direction and magnitude. (ibid, 1967:63)

It is only when the analyst wants to describe the magnitude of a relationship within a particular group that s/he needs random sampling (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Given that grounded theorists are only interested in the direction of relationships and under what conditions these may vary, there is no need for large samples. In fact, sample size is not a pertinent issue. Sampling categories are selected for their potential to yield theoretically relevant material (ibid). The more selective the analyst is with their sample, the less data redundancy they generate.\textsuperscript{15} It may be the case that only one person is available who can provide the theoretically relevant material required. But this person is not selected because there are no others, s/he is selected because of her/his ability to enhance the theory. S/he must be incorporated for the purposes of theoretical completeness. Data collection continues until all critical categories and their interrelationships have been theoretically saturated. The criterion for saturation is that no new data are being discovered that further enhances the theory (ibid).

\textsuperscript{15} A smaller sample size is actually an indication that the study was done extremely well, given it is sufficiently saturated. Large samples, as judged in relation to the scope of the theory, are indicators that the study was poorly conducted - that sampling categories were chosen that did not advance the theory. Hence more data needed to be collected to achieve a point of saturation.
the generation of theory. Representativeness is not an issue in grounded theory since the sample is emergent. Grounded theory is about presenting an integrated set of hypotheses. This is achieved through sampling on the basis of theoretical relevance only. In short, it is the quality of the data that counts, not the quantity. Verificational studies, however, preconceive the importance of various sampling categories, based on the theory being tested. Representative samples are thus possible and desirable.

**Slices of Data versus Triangulation**

Another important aspect of theoretical sampling is the use of *slices of data* as opposed to *triangulation*. Triangulation is a concept where various data sources are used as a test of one another. It only works, however, when the data used are generated through the same epistemological stance.\(^{16}\) It is only one mode of knowing. Evidence that is contradictory is often labelled as aberrant and left unanalysed. Using slices of data is different; it demands the inclusion of all data as different modes of knowing, which must be integrated and explained theoretically. The following example demonstrates the difference. A magician cuts a lady in half for a thousand spectators to see, but the lone stagehand behind the curtain sees the trick in its entirety.\(^{17}\) Triangulation would ignore the account of the stagehand as a mere aberration given the weight of evidence to the contrary. Using slices of data, however, I must attempt to explain all accounts. The so-called aberrant accounts are often the most revealing.

Using slices of data usually means a diversity of data collected through equally diverse means. Everything is data for the grounded theorist: interviews, the extant literature, various media reports, fiction, movies, even the lived experience of the researcher, and so

---

\(^{16}\) If, for example, you are doing a study that is underpinned by positivistic understandings, logically, you can only triangulate with data that hails from a similar stance. To mix in data from a phenomenological study is philosophically inconsistent. Positivism and phenomenology have different understandings of what knowledge is.

\(^{17}\) This example comes from Merriam (1993), though she used it to illustrate a different concept.
on. Also, in contrast to conventional methods where the type of data required and the means of collecting it are known at the start, in grounded theory there is a constant redesigning of the research as new variables emerge. As each slice of data is collected, it adds to the theoretical understanding of a given phenomenon. The more diverse the data, the more complete the theory is likely to be. Grounded theory thus does not reject quantitative data the way other qualitative methods do (e.g., Bogdan and Biklen, 1985). Quantitative data is just another data slice to be theoretically incorporated into the mix. The mixing of data collection methods and their underlying philosophies is of little concern for the grounded theorist, for it is by pragmatic criteria that the theory is ultimately judged.

**Theoretical Sorting**

Theoretical sorting occurs once the core and near core categories become saturated. The aim of the sort is to identify relationships amongst concepts. This is achieved through theoretical coding. There are myriad theoretical codes that can be used to identify relationships, Glaser provides a general fund of coding families in his 1978 work, "Theoretical Sensitivity". These codes can be used to guide the analyst as s/he attempts to understand connections, relationships and associations amongst concepts. What is actually sorted are the memos. Memos contain all the conceptual material discovered through open and selective coding. Through sorting, more memos are generated increasing the conceptual level and integration of the emergent theory. It is at this stage that the literature related to the theoretical piece can be incorporated. These, like emergent memos, are sorted as well. Once memos are sorted the write-up can begin.

**Writing Grounded Theory**

Grounded theories are written up according to the ordering of memos. The piles of memos can be seen as a first draft (Glaser, 1978). All the analyst need do is begin to write. Integration is already achieved through memo sorting. Writing merely clarifies and
increases the density of the theory. The general aim of a grounded theory write-up is to highlight concepts and their relationships. Thus, a grounded theory write-up differs from more conventional qualitative write-ups where ordering is usually based around definable social units, e.g., cliques, families, and the like, or issues. The logic of how grounded theories are written up reflects its underlying purpose; that is, to "explain with the fewest possible concepts, and with the greatest possible scope, as much variation as possible in the behavior and problem under study" (Glaser, 1978:125). In short, theoretical completeness and parsimony are its aims.

The write-up should highlight the core category as it was discovered. As this category organises all other concepts within the study, so this ordering should be reflected in the write-up. Generally, the core category is presented first followed by the near core categories and their properties, and perhaps sub-properties. Each chapter or section of a chapter is structured so as to deal with properties of the core category.

It should be evident from this explanation how different this method is to "the norm". The logic is turned on its head, and this shift in logic finds its way into all aspects of the write-up. Thus, instead of presenting a literature review at the start, the related literature is incorporated into the presentation. It can either be merged within the presentation of the theory or presented within the conclusion. "The aim is to show the place of the newly generated theory among the work of others who have previously written on the same topic" (Brooks, 1998:68). The literature can also be used to extend the emergent theory where extant concepts have earned their way into the theory.

Finally, the writing of theory should take consideration of those who will read it. Grounded theories are written both for the academic community and the substantive community from which the theory was generated. Considering the substantive community
when writing is important; for if their lives are being researched, then they have as much right to read and understand what is written about them as anyone. This has not always been the case in conventional researches. Often research participants are treated as mere "data cows", milked for information. The study is either never offered for the participants to read, or, it is written in such obscure sociological language only those schooled in the discipline can understand it. Statistical techniques only add to the problem. If informants can understand the writing at all, they are left to believe the researcher's concluding comments. They cannot pass judgment, for the researcher is seen as the "expert" on the matter. This seems odd considering it is the participants themselves who should understand their lives best. Grounded theories get around this problem by adopting the language of the participants; everyday language is used not sociological language. Thus, grounded theories are easy to read and avoid the pseudo-sophistication of pedantic writing. In a way, this leaves the analyst open to scrutiny from the most censormous quarter, the participants themselves. But who better to critique a study than its participants? Other sociologists may critique the implementation of method and the organisation of the written report, but it is the participants who are in the best position to comment on the level of integration, the processes uncovered and the concepts used. Grounded theory is thus an inclusive method. Participants, as the carriers of process, are integral to the theorising process and should be acknowledged as such. The presentation of a readable theory is a good form of acknowledgement.

(7) How are Grounded Theories Evaluated?
This issue has been partly dealt with earlier but perhaps requires more attention at this point in the chapter. Clearly, grounded theory differs from conventional positivistic approaches in regards to research. Not surprisingly, then, it also differs in its evaluative criteria. The "traditional" notions of validity, reliability and generalisability do not apply to grounded theory studies. Validity, in the traditional sense, relates to an internal logic. "If
a, b, c are real numbers, then the argument from 'a is greater than b' and 'b is greater than c' (the premises) to 'a is greater than c' (the conclusion) is valid" (Vesey and Foulkes, 1990:290). In practice, validity is the assurance that what one is measuring is what is intended to be measured (de Vaus, 1991). Given that grounded theory does not concern itself with verification, validity as a means of assessment becomes redundant.

A similar redundancy can be seen in relation to reliability. Reliability occurs when two or more analysts working with the same data achieve the same conclusions.\textsuperscript{18} However, given that grounded theory seeks the perspectives of its participants, and they present a multitude of interpretations which are in a state of flux, "there is no benchmark by which one can take repeated measures and establish reliability in the traditional sense" (Merriam, 1988:170). For the grounded theorist, the issue is not one of reliability, but rather, one of "consistency" (ibid). This will be elaborated below.

Finally, grounded theory does maintain an understanding of generalisation, but it differs slightly from traditional renditions. Traditional notions of generalisation suppose that what is found in a study can be applied generally to the unit population being studied. Thus, if a study focuses on New Zealand Chinese, the findings should be generalisable to this population. Grounded theory, however, adopts a process understanding of generalisation. Grounded theorists ask, "how generalisable is the process?". This may apply to a wide variety of groups unrelated to the unit focus (e.g., the blind, who have a lot in common with Chinese in terms of the processes they go through).

Instead of these traditional criteria for assessment, new measures are required. Kerlin (1998) has succinctly summarised the basis on which grounded theories can be judged.

\textsuperscript{18} In actuality, if things are valid they need not be reliable. As Sell (1997) suggests, the existence of quarks in physics was long postulated on purely theoretical grounds. It took over a decade and thousands of experiments until the first trace of one was found. Highly unreliable, but very valid. Likewise, for a long time Dolly the sheep was the only sheep cloned. Again, very valid, but highly unreliable.
She identifies seven areas:

1) *Degree of Fit*. This relates to the categories and codes generated from the data. They should not be forced and anyone reading the theory should be able to see the connection between emergent concept or category and data.

2) *Work*. Given grounded theory's pragmatic underpinnings, it is not surprising that functionality has become an important criteria for assessment. Simply put, "a functional theory explains variation in the data and the interrelationships among the constructs in a way that produces a predictive element to the theory" (Kerlin, 1998 - online document).

3) *Relevance*. If a theory has concepts that fit and it works then it can be seen as relevant (Brooks, 1998). Relevance relates to the self-evident worth of the research (ibid). The researcher need not explain the emergent grounded theory's value. The theory justifies itself by explaining what goes on in immense detail. For informants, relevance is revealed by the "ah ha" phenomenon (Kerlin, 1998). The theory immediately connects to their experiences of reality.

4) *Modifiability*. Grounded theorists see the world in a constant state of flux. As such, the theories they produce must be able to accommodate change. New data must be able to be easily incorporated into the emergent framework. In this way, grounded theories have a lasting quality. Most significantly, data that is seemingly contradictory should be as easily incorporated into the theory as data that is not. If the grounded theory requires a major overhaul of its central premises to account for new data it
can be considered a poor theory.

5) Density. Grounded theories should be parsimonious. They should explain with a few main categories as much variation as possible.

6) Integration. "A systematic relationship between the constructs and propositions is thought to ensure an appropriate fit into a tight theoretical framework" (Kerlin, 1998 citing Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

7) Audit trail. This is a general criterion of all qualitative work. It simply means that there is evidence for the way in which processes are carried out and decisions are made (Kerlin, 1998). In grounded theory, this is captured in memos.

I would also add one more item - immersion in the field by the researcher; that is, that the researcher has lived the experiences of the participants, and s/he has come to be accepted as an "insider", his/her account is thus a credible one (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

3. METHODS

(1) Doing Grounded Theory
Now that an overview and detailed discussion of the method has been presented, the next step is to outline my experiences doing grounded theory and the procedures used. It may seem unconventional to discuss personal experiences with methodological practice because convention demands the researcher remain aloof, that practice is guided only by rational criteria. But as suggested above, subjectivity is an inherent component of qualitative research. A discussion of researcher experiences is thus revealing of the project
as a whole. That is, given the researcher is the sole research instrument, transparency in practice is one means of ensuring credibility.

(a) Learning Grounded Theory

Grounded theory, as Barney Glaser has stated many times, is an experiential process: you can only understand by doing. Schooled in the theories of the "great fathers" of sociology, I was taught, as most undergraduates are taught, to be a theory user and not a theory builder. Theory building was something quite mysterious that only "great" sociologists did. My understanding of doing research was an immersion in the canons of positivistic work: hypothesis testing, representative samples, doing literature reviews, and if I was lucky, to perhaps make minor modifications to already developed theory. There was no notion that I too could be a theorist. The available models for theory development were not encouraging. Most tended to generate conjectured theory, theories that were ultimately products of logical elaborations from existing theory.\footnote{In a way, all theories are grounded in data, but most do not have the tight connection between theory and data that a grounded theory approach demands. The emergent theory drives data collection, and the analysed data drives theory development in a grounded approach.} I wanted something different.

Grounded theory was chosen for a number of reasons, both personal and theoretical. First, I wanted a research approach that would be inclusive and involve participants in the research process. The conceptual and integrating focus of grounded theory produces a workable, usable and relevant theory that fits the research domain. Members of the substantive community can use grounded theories because they are written in everyday language and not sociological language. Second, and related to the first, I wanted the project to reflect the viewpoint of participants so outsiders reading the theory could see how they experienced their world. In other words, the project had to maintain a degree of richness typical of qualitative work. Third, I wanted an approach that would do more than
merely describe what goes on; the approach needed to be conceptual and thus maintain a
generalising aspect. Fourth, I wanted a rigorous methodology that was clearly stated and
laid out. So many qualitative methods are ambiguous, without definitively stated
procedures. Grounded theory, I believed, offered the best opportunity to realise these
general aims.

At the outset, grounded theory's radical departure from conventional positivistic work
meant a lot needed to be learnt, and perhaps even more unlearnt. Reading scores of
methodology books did not help. Like the anthropologist who needs to do field work as
the rite of passage into the discipline, entering the world of grounded theory requires a
similar initiation. As grounded theory is an emergent method, my understanding of it was
also emergent. I learnt as I went. This led to a large amount of fumbling, but there is
nothing better than mistakes and naivety to clarify understanding. As it turned out, the
mistakes I made were good mistakes and proved useful in the theory development
process.

It is a shame that most researches are written up as if they were perfect - as if theory and
practice were the same thing - when anyone who has done empirical work would know
this is far from the truth. By denying imperfections, hiding them from the reader, one
never gets a sense as to how the project was really formed, how the analyst grew with the
project, how concepts were arrived at, and how conclusions realised. Methodological
mistakes are often precursors to serendipity.20 They are one source of constraint that
helps solve a research problem. A systematic way of understanding this process is
through constraint composition analysis.

---

20 Some may object to this stance and say: how can you get it wrong, if even the mistakes were good? My
response to this is simple. It does not matter whether you make mistakes or not. Mistakes are part of research
practice. The issue is: have you produced a theory that works?
(b) Constraint Composition Analysis

Constraint composition analysis is a way of understanding the imperfections in empirical practice. It merely states that constraints are built into research; these accumulate over the course of the project and eventually lead to a research problem being solved (Haig, 1987). Constraints may take the form of methodological errors as mentioned above, or the inability to interview a particular person, lack of financial resources, time constraints, and so on. Whatever the constraint, whether internal to the study (e.g., methodological errors), or external (e.g., lack of finances), the accumulation of these results in a narrowing of the research domain. The theory is delimited through constraint. Studies, particularly qualitative studies, start out fuzzy and big; they end, however, with a sharp focus around a few central concepts. It is the funnel approach to research. As the analyst moves through the research process, the funnel narrows until a point of fine focus is reached. Mistakes, as a constraint, are merely part of the process. They are, in fact, useful and should not be underestimated as an aid to discovery.

(2) Putting Theory into Practice

Glaser (1978) suggests there are at least two ways to begin a grounded theory study. The first approach is to lightly frame the study. The research question may be stated quite broadly, as with Brooks (1998) who sought to investigate the process of organisational change on middle managers. This framing approach focuses the study from the start. The researcher at least knows something of what s/he is going to study. The second approach is to go into a substantive community "open" to whatever may emerge. This approach is more daring. Often, a multitude of processes are in action within a community. It is up to the researcher to pick the one s/he thinks is most likely to yield an interesting study (ibid). In this second approach, if two researchers enter the same community intent on conducting an "open" grounded theory, it is quite possible that they will focus on two
different emergent processes, and thus end up with different theories, dealing with different problems.

My approach was entirely haphazard. Unmentored, I knew little of how grounded theories were done, the logic that lay behind them, and the process of simply getting started. I resorted, therefore, to what I knew. And what I knew was research based on positivistic canons. I decided to do a study of educational achievement amongst "local" Chinese. The first 18 months of this project was aimed solely at this endeavour. I did a literature review of educational achievement, I conducted a demographic survey of the Chinese community and I did initial interviews based on this research focus. Concurrently, I was also reading many of Glaser's books on methodology. I attended a week long workshop, also conducted by Glaser. My understanding of grounded theory began to grow as a result. As it grew, I began to see divergences in what I was doing and what Glaser suggested I should be doing. The more I read, the more I realised something was wrong with my interpretation of grounded theory. Divergences in the grounded theory approach (i.e., Corbin and Strauss versus Glaser) added to my sense of unease. Finally, after a year and a half of research, I came to the conclusion that I was not doing grounded theory at all! I now understood the fundamentals of grounded theory quite well, I realised I had misinterpreted the method. Something needed to be done.

After this somewhat traumatic discovery I decided to go back to the data I had already collected. I reanalysed this data along Glaserian grounded theory lines. This process was akin to starting over, but I hoped by applying my new understanding of the method that the project could be rescued. Thankfully, the reanalysis proved fruitful but yielded a totally new direction for the project. I was no longer doing a study of educational achievement; I was now doing a study of the "Enhancing Security" process. This process, in fact, had little to do with educational achievement; but within the body of data
I had collected was an emergent process that was totally overlooked. Preconception and a misinterpretation of the method had blinded me to what the data were actually saying. So, through inadvertence and naivete, I adopted an "open" approach to the initiation of this research. I was finally on my way to further discovery.

Although my introduction to grounded theory was inauspicious, in hindsight I draw both methodological and personal benefits from it. First, the demographic survey confirmed my beliefs about the level of educational achievement amongst the local Chinese. And although educational achievement was not central to the study, it was a component of the discovered process. More importantly though, the survey introduced me to the community, which sparked interest and made obtaining interviews easier. The data from the survey also aided the initial selection of potential participants for sampling by providing a database. Second, my understanding of grounded theory increased tremendously. The mistakes I made clarified the difference between "conventional" methods based on a verificational logic and that of "qualitative" methods based on a discovery logic.\textsuperscript{21} The notion of emergence also became clear, as well as the process by which emergence aids theory development. I realised that there was nothing mystical or magical about discovering theory, it was simply a matter of being able to conceptualise and implement grounded theory method.

It can also be said that the initial preconception of questions and focus of the study had little detrimental impact on the final theory.\textsuperscript{22} Once the grounded theory approach was properly implemented, the emergent data drove the theory development process. Concepts and hypotheses only integrate if the emergent theory is an accurate representation of the

\textsuperscript{21} Not all "qualitative" researchers adopt a discovery approach of course.

\textsuperscript{22} A priori knowledge does not hinder the study. It can in fact aid the development of theory by increasing the level of theoretical sensitivity in the researcher. It stands to reason that grounded theory does not adopt a naive inductivist view of the world either, as suggested by Bulmer (1979, cited in Charmaz, 1994). Rather, the grounded theorist suspends knowledge; s/he follows the data, assured by its groundedness. And if the researcher’s a priori knowledge emerges as relevant, it is employed to advance the theory.
social scene under investigation. The constant grounding of data concomitant with the developing theory ensures the emergence of an integrated theory. Thus, no matter what questions you start with, whom you interview first, and what literature you have been exposed to, the data tends to push you in the right direction. By maintaining a close connection between theory and data, it matters little where you start from.

(3) Sample Selection

Following the guidelines of theoretical sampling, comparison groups should be selected for their theoretical relevance only. Preselection at the start of the study is permitted, however. With this in mind, initial sampling focused on the local Chinese community in New Zealand. Later sampling groups included recent migrant Chinese; while a number of other subgroups also emerged as relevant (e.g., "ingroup" Chinese and "outgroup" Chinese, the former immersing themselves within the ethnic community, the latter not). Comparison groups were also sampled during the final phase of the research to elaborate the emergent theory and indicate its relevance at a formal theoretical level. 23 Thus, other comparison groups included Pacific Island communities, Maori, Jewish communities in Australia and the United States, European gypsies, a white middle class community in America, and cursory comparison with the blind. 24 The main focus however was on the local Chinese in Christchurch. This is where data collection began and where most comparative categories were discovered.

23 Substantive theory is theory "developed for a substantive or empirical area of sociological inquiry - such as patient care, race relations, professional education, geriatric life styles, delinquency, or financial organizations". Formal theory, however, is "theory developed for a formal or conceptual area of sociological inquiry - such as status passage, stigma, deviant behavior, socialization, status congruency, authority and power, reward systems, organizations or organizational careers" (Glaser, 1978:144).

24 This final category may seem entirely out of place to those unacquainted with grounded theory analysis. The blind are similar to ethnic minorities, however, in that they are a stigmatised group also. At a formal theoretical level, ethnic minorities can be seen as merely one type of stigmatised group. All stigmatised groups experience similar bouts of intolerance, and the strategies they enact to counter intolerance are often similar (see Goffman, 1963).
(4) Procedures

Data collection began with a focus on the local Chinese in Canterbury. Numbering approximately 3500, they are typical of the local Chinese population around New Zealand; that is, being multi-generational New Zealanders, Cantonese speaking, and having strong familial connections to southern China. Although there are no complete lists of this group, the CCA (Canterbury Chinese Association) membership records do provide a good estimation.

Given that I would be collecting the majority of data from within this community, I sought formal approval from the CCA. Gaining CCA support was important for other reasons too. First, they were the main gateway into the community. Second, they provided a means of publicising my research, both formally, through the monthly newsletter, and informally through community gossip. Thus, the CCA provided the ideal springboard to launch this project. I approached a senior member of the CCA committee; he presented my research proposal to the full committee. The committee gave their support based on an informal contract, stating I would keep them informed of progress and present them with a copy of the final report. I was also invited to a community meeting where I handed out flyers and spoke briefly about the intended study.²⁵

The primary data source for this study was derived from interviews. In addition to interview data, a large amount of primary and secondary material was also gathered from other sources. These include: (1) descriptive research literature; (2) the conceptual research literature; (3) published and unpublished reports; (4) newspaper articles and letters to the editor; (5) statistical data; (6) speeches; (7) participant observation notes; (8) personal letters; (9) autobiographical novels; (10) movies; (11) newsletters, and; (12) the

²⁵ As stated, the initial focus of this study was on educational achievement.
lived experience of the researcher. All of these sources aided the theory development process by expanding the scope of comparative data, thus allowing a more complete interpretation of interviews.

(a) Interviewing

Interviewees were selected following the rules of theoretical sampling. Early selection was based on preconceived criteria. Initially, I thought various family types (e.g., professional and small business families) might be a good place to start. The survey database made easy work of this selection as it grouped families in this way. After the (re)analysis of the first ten interviews, new sampling criteria began to emerge. The selection on more varied criteria meant the survey database could no longer be used. Networking became the main source of identifying potential interviewees. Furthermore, I began to use community knowledge as the primary means of selection. This required my insider knowledge of the community, as well as tips from informants, to identify the appropriate people. Indeed, networking was the only realistic option. As the study progressed, sampling categories became more varied and highly unpredictable. The constantly emergent nature of these categories thus instigated the network as the primary selection mechanism.

Interviews were arranged by a variety of means. Early interviews were initiated through letters detailing the project with an invitation to participate (see Appendix A). These were followed-up by phone calls to find out if people were available, and to organise a time and place if an interview was agreed to. In most instances people were willing to participate, some keenly so. Those that refused did so for privacy purposes. Later in the project, a more informal means was used to initiate contact. As selection through networking became more important, contact with potential interviewees was arranged

26 Letters to participants explained the initial focus of the study as one investigating educational achievement.
with the aid of the interviewees themselves. A phone call by them or myself was usually enough to arrange future interviews with new participants. At other times I would be introduced to people at functions or at people's homes. The interview was often arranged on the spot, and sometimes it was conducted on the spot too.

Thus interviews took a number of forms. Some were formally arranged. Others were spontaneous, as stated above, occurring in the middle of functions as I met people who fitted my sampling criteria. Most formally arranged interviews were conducted in the interviewee's home, some were conducted in cafes, and still others at my home. All of these interviews were recorded on audio tape with the permission of the interviewee. Prior to the interview confidentiality was assured as well as anonymity. This was again stated in a cover letter when a copy of the interview transcript was sent to each interviewee for review and editing (see Appendix B). For those interviewed spontaneously, the data was recalled by the researcher immediately afterwards. These interview transcripts were more typical of participant observation notes used in ethnographic work where the researcher attempts immaculate description of the social scene. Although these interviewees were not given transcripts, they were contacted for approval if anything they said was to end up in the final report. Again, confidentiality and anonymity were emphasised.

The analysis of the first ten interviews did not follow grounded theory guidelines.\(^27\) Glaser (1978) suggests the analyst should do a thorough analysis after each interview. Because of the initial methodological errors, however, I was forced to reanalyse the first series of interviews in bulk. In spite of this, I also felt it was not desirable to follow Glaser's recommendations on this point. His approach appeared to risk the premature development of the core and near core categories. Following up on emergent categories

\(^27\) That is, the initial re-analysis after the project changed direction from one studying educational achievement to one investigating the "enhancing security" process.
too early may lead the researcher down blind alleys. How much can one or two interviews tell you anyway, especially at the start of a project? Central categories are much easier to see when you compare across a wide range of interviews and interviewees. Inadvertently, I avoided the problems inherent in this approach. The first ten interviewees were selected on preconceived grounds, varying by socioeconomic status, age, gender and generational standing. After the (re)analysis of this group, emergent categories were discovered, and based on these, theoretical sampling ensued.

Indicative of the funnel approach to theory development, the form interviews took changed as I became increasingly sure of the emergent theory. Although the project started off with a different focus to the end product, the first ten interviews were still loosely structured, took up to 3 hours, and were dominated by the interviewee. This loose structuring was highly beneficial. On reanalysis of these interviews, it was easy to identify the emergent process that was to become central to the study. Once this process was identified, later interviews became increasingly structured. These were shorter, some lasting only 20 minutes, and were directed more by the interviewer. Whereas early interviews were aimed at explicating the general structure of the theory, later interviews were aimed at saturating categories, discovering their interconnections and assessing the applicability of the theory.

Interviews followed similar guidelines. The basic underlying philosophy was to find out what others think and know and avoid preconceiving the importance of themes and concepts prior to their full emergence. Allowing interviewees control over early interviews was thus vital. Based on the assumption people only talk at length and in detail about the things they know about and are interested in, allowing open conversation to take place was one means of ensuring the interviewee's viewpoint came across, rather than
that of the researcher.\textsuperscript{28}

Getting participants to talk was seldom a problem, however. The whole business of arranging and organising interviews is a weeding out process. In the end, only the keenest tend to be willing participants. They want to participate because they have something to say and want to be heard. Informants thus select themselves. Having participants talk easily is a good sign; it means you have probably hit a chord with them.

To each interview I brought with me a general guide, listing topics I was interested in discussing. It was not uncommon to totally abandon the guide and just go with the "flow" of the interview as directed by the informant. This was especially the case during earlier interviews where I had little idea of the processes that were most important and most worthy of following up. During later interviews, as the emergent theory became increasingly clear I followed my guide more closely, but even here, there was room for a reciprocal flow of ideas.

This "flow" or conversational element in interviews induces a creative tension between interviewer and interviewee that leads to discovery. During interviews, new connections are formed as people try to articulate their reality. There is a demand for closure as new topics emerge for discussion. People reflect on their experiences, and in so doing, draw to a conclusion an understanding of their reality that was previously unclear. Here is an example of this discovery process as the informant is asked about her identity.

I'm Chinese. Ethnically I'm a Chinese, obviously. Nationally, I'm a New Zealander. I'm a local Chinese New Zealander. Um but I'm not as local as

\textsuperscript{28} Try having a conversation with someone by continuously asking them irrelevant questions and bringing up irrelevant topics. You will not get much response. But find their favourite hobby and you will never stop them talking. The same notion applies to conversational interviews.
the local-local's, 'cos their parents and generations have been local Chinese.
So we're half...well we're first generation Chinese New Zealanders...

This example demonstrates quite clearly the discovery process in action. The informant is unsure of her identity but eventually concludes she is a first generation Chinese New Zealander. What I wanted was for people to think out loud. What I discovered was that people love to talk about themselves when it is on their own terms. So although it is a conversation, it is a conversation that is dominated by the informant. The researcher merely encourages more talk about issues that are most important to the informant.

The discovery aspect of conversational interviews is a powerful one. An overly formalised approach would have stifled this creative energy. A researcher adopting a traditional interviewing role, asking questions derived from a preconceived theoretical framework in an orderly fashion, forces too much of himself on the research, completely suppressing discovery. The requirement of openness from interviewees is unlikely to occur if the researcher remains closed and impersonal. The aim, therefore, was not to remain neutral, but rather, achieve a level of immersion and empathy sufficient to accurately interpret the meanings informants impose on their world. My role in interviewing therefore was one of "conversational partner", where I, as a researcher, did not merely ask questions but actively engaged in the interviewing process. I responded to informants questions as they did to mine. A one-way direction of question and answers does not create the trust relationship required to get deeply inside the world of your informant. Thus responses tend to be "safe". The investment of sharing information with informants, having a conversation with them, breaks down the researcher/researched dichotomy.
The problems of this approach must be acknowledged, however. Responding to interviewees' questions can have the effect of shifting the interview situation in unpredictable ways, of creating the exact opposite effect to that desired. In an attempt to equalise the relationship, the researcher may inadvertently dominate. The benefits of trust and discovery are thus counterbalanced by the drawbacks of potential "forcing". One way of dealing with this concern is by following the cues of the interviewee. As stated above, people only talk about things they know about and are interested in. It becomes increasingly obvious when "forcing" occurs; the conversation "flow" stops, the interview shifts away from what the informant sees as relevant. Lack of relevance usually means lack of talk, lack of detail, and lack of interest. Being able to assess these cues was vital to ensuring faithful emergence.

(b) "Lived" Experience

Interestingly, I was researching a process I was intimately part of. What was relevant to my informants was often relevant to me also. My personal experiences thus provided important anecdotal data to be used for further comparison and theoretical development. Indeed, when the aim is to understand an evolving process, it seems reasonable to be as close to the people you are studying as possible. The closer you are, the more accurate your interpretation is likely to be. The ethnic researcher studying his/her own group thus has a great vantage point from which to conduct a study. Immersed in the workings of his/her group, s/he has absorbed passively the primal mechanisms that need to be uncovered. Research brings to the surface these passive learnings; the researcher becomes conscious of his/her personal experiences. I was not immediately aware of my experiences until I started interviewing. The commonality and sometimes discommonality of experiences increased my understanding of the emergent process greatly. Things I once thought of as just part of everyday life and unique to me became commonplace when I
compared my experiences with others. I learned to trust my experience as a source of data for opening up new areas for investigation. In many ways, my life has been a passive participant observation exercise. This research allowed me to self-reflect and make sense of other people's experiences and their solutions to problems by making sense of my own.\textsuperscript{29} My personal experiences thus increased my ability to conceptualise \textit{in vivo} categories within the substantive domain.\textsuperscript{30}

It should be noted, however, that "lived experience" is only one slice of data amongst many that must be theoretically incorporated into the mix. It is valuable because it gives the researcher a headstart on the level of immersion required to gain an accurate interpretation of the social scene. But "insider" status is never a simple matter. Much of the conversational exchange, in fact, centred on issues of commonality and difference, the assessment of which was a gauge of how complete my understanding was, of how much of an "insider" I really was. It kept me aware of where I stood in relation to the work, how much I knew, and what I needed to know to complete the project. I needed the complete inside view.

\textbf{(c) The Impact of my Identity on the Research: Commonality and Difference}

My identity influenced the research in diverse and unpredictable ways. Typically, researchers might be categorised as either "insiders" or "outsiders". With this labelling comes the assumption that such categories are easily identifiable and reasonably stable.

\textsuperscript{29} An example of personal experience adding to the generative process can be seen from the following illustrations. I had always been aware of the normative demands within the Chinese community, and how community gossip and status contributed to normative acting. I was not entirely sure, however, of the importance of this process to the emergent theory. I suspected it may be relevant and so I posed questions to informants asking about it. They confirmed for me the importance of "community information" (See page 149) to the emergent framework. For the outsider, this kind of understanding could only have emerged after a significant amount of time within the community. Another example can be seen in the identification of "role plays" as a strategy for "placating". The incident cited on page 135 of this thesis became evident when an informant mentioned a similar type of tactic to me. I searched through interviews for similar incidents, and by comparing my experience with others the concept of "role plays" emerged.

\textsuperscript{30} That is, those concepts derived from "local" terminology. In this study, concepts like "blending in", "showing commitment", and "creating understanding" are \textit{in vivo} codes. Chinese people used these very terms to describe what they do.
Neither of these assumptions proved true. Being a locally born Chinese New Zealander was no guarantee of "insider" status. Informants judged me on far more complex criteria. Sometimes my status was measured along class lines, or perhaps by gender, generational status, age, and so on. Not only did my status vary amongst interviews - it also varied within them. Often topics would arise that I was unfamiliar with; I was definitely an outsider when people talked about medicine or accountancy, for example. Likewise I was an outsider when interviewing certain "cliques" within the community. All these groups have their own micro cultures with meanings and symbols that need to be understood in varying degrees. My status was constantly negotiated at every conjuncture throughout the interview. Insider status was thus highly contextual. Being of similar ethnic identity to my informants was not always enough to achieve a position of understanding. There was one exception however: experiences of racism and discrimination were always assumed to be a point of commonality; this recognition aided the establishment of a trust relationship.

This relationship was established in other ways too. Most of the people in the local Chinese community either knew me personally or knew of someone in my extended family. The local Chinese community is extremely small and tight knit. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that I was a stranger to no one. This was beneficial in that it informalised the relationship and made gaining rapport a relatively easy task. It was not uncommon for people to ask whom my parents were, for example, and then recount how they came to know them or someone else in my family. When interviewing recent migrant Chinese, however, a different set of conditions applied. Insuring confidentiality, anonymity and the option to edit and revise transcripts was far more important.

In those circumstances where my insider status was assumed, informants used probes to

---

31 This kind of banter proved far more important than I had realised initially. It actually provided vital data for the development of concepts in the emergent theory. It indicated the whole notion of "community information" (see page 149).
gauge my level of understanding. They might say things like, "oh, you know what I mean", or "you know how it is in Chinese families". And I did. I often knew exactly what people meant, but this does not provide data for analysis. So when new themes emerged that I already understood, I still asked for elaboration. Taking too much for granted had the potential to derail the entire project. I needed to make doubly sure before I progressed onto other issues.

Interestingly, the initiation of gossip by informants was another sign I had achieved a high level of trust and insider status. As Rosnow (1988) suggests, the spreading of intimate information has the effect of deciding who is "in" and who is "out" in a group. Only those worthy enough to be "buzzed" about the latest news are "in". Likewise, given that you need prior knowledge to make sense of gossip, my understanding of it confirmed my insider status on many issues. Informants not only engaged in gossip, but also encouraged me to participate. I became gossipmonger par excellence.32 There was great curiosity about who was doing what in the community. People wanted to know what careers people had chosen, for example. This information I considered public, so I let people know. Sensitive information was not divulged, however. I had to draw the line between gaining trust and research ethics. Also, to divulge sensitive information about others in the community may have imposed self-censorship on my informants. If I gossiped about others, I might gossip about them too. Gossipmonger was just one of the roles informants expected me to play.

(d) The Mini Contract

There seemed to be a silent agreement struck, a mini contract, between myself and informants. They provided me with their participation but they expected something in return beyond access to the findings of the study itself. Community gossip was only one

---

32 In a real sense, I became part of the theory I was trying to explicate. By gossiping, I was spreading "community information" (see page 149).
of those expectations. Others used me as a role model for their children. Parents would ask me about university, how difficult courses were, suggestions of the best courses to take for certain degree programs, and so on. Likewise, students who intended to go onto university used me as a de facto liaison officer. I fulfilled my end of the contract as faithfully as I could.

Furthermore, many informants used the interview as a vehicle to express their concern about the current anti-Asian climate that was emerging in New Zealand. The constant bombardment of negative media reports, anti-immigrant political campaigns and "street" racism created a highly charged research climate. Participants wanted to "vent". I gave them an avenue for expression that was absent in other quarters. My role shifted in these circumstances from researcher to therapist. I listened without passing judgment. I was seen as a safe person to talk to, offering anonymity and confidentiality. And in a climate where ethnicity was accentuated, I received a degree of trust I believe would not have been offered a non-Chinese. In fact, there was a clear sense of mistrust of those outside of the community, especially non-Asians.

(e) Contextual Implications

The types of narrative to emerge from interviews were thus tainted by the lens of the present. That is, the anti-Asian climate influenced how people responded to questions. There were two types of responses depending on the age of the informant. Older Chinese had a strong sense of 

_ination as they recalled aspects of their lives. The emotive circumstances of the present brought back vivid recollections of childhood experiences with racism. As one informant stated, "I'm getting those feelings again". Of course, "memory is never simply a record of the past but is constantly being reworked into new kinds of sense according to the needs of the present" (Parker citing Dawson 1995:42). Younger Chinese who had not experienced the same degree of racism as those older than
them became increasingly aware of their ethnicity. They became more Chinese. In both cases I was capturing a process of Chinese confronting increased levels of racism. No doubt had this study been conducted in more tolerant times, less emotive and less vivid responses may have resulted. Rather than a limiting factor on the research though, the anti-Asian climate served as a springboard for self-reflection. It made the processes central to the emergent theory salient.

In times of conflict and change, power structures and coping strategies come into sharp focus. It is the ideal time to do research. The pertinent social processes that run people's lives and that have been hidden beneath layers of social relations rise to the surface. It is not unlike moving house and discovering all the things that have been swept under the carpet. The foundations are revealed for all to see. Hence, times of conflict are also times of soul searching. It is a time of individual and community change. The dynamics of communities are exposed as the people in them gain new perspectives, new procedures and form new coalitions (Bogdan, 1972). Likewise, it is a time when past conflicts come into focus; the new conflict provokes memories of the past as people try to make sense of the present (ibid). Times of conflict reveal to the analyst how macro social forces impact directly on people and communities. The strategies people devise to cope are laid to bare.

(f) Participant Observation

Although not a major data source in this study, participant observation was used to a certain degree. During interviews, for example, the majority of communication is of a non-verbal kind, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, and so on. The interviewer is always aware of these cues and is thus a participant observer to a certain degree. Besides interviews, I also attended some Chinese functions run by the Chinese

---

33 Rose (cited in Brown, n.d.) investigated the impact of words and visual cues on communication. He discovered that words only contributed 7 percent of the impact. Body language and vocal cues contributed the remaining 93 percent.
Association. I attended these with the express purpose of observing and testing tentative hypotheses. In ethnographic fashion, after each observation session I wrote up field notes giving immaculate description of what I had seen and heard, and my impressions of the event. These field notes, like the interview transcripts, were analysed and coded.

(g) Language Use
Finally, the choice of language used also structured the interview process. All interviews were conducted in English. Chinese interviewees whose first language was not English were bound to feel less comfortable and less confident in expressing themselves during interviews. The decision to use English however was based on theoretical as well as practical notions. First, many different forms of Chinese were spoken by informants. Most spoke some type of Cantonese, while others spoke Mandarin, Hokkien, and Hoklo. I can barely understand one version of Cantonese let alone all the other dialects. Second, had I attempted to speak Chinese, there is the possibility that informants would have perceived me as disingenuous. Language use, competence, and accent indicates an identity. It tells the informant I am a local Chinese New Zealander with local Chinese experiences. It reveals to the informant my status as "insider" or "outsider". It presents an honest front from which informants can gauge my position in relation to them, and, it offers a position from where I can attempt to establish a trust relationship. Fumbling attempts at speaking Chinese would have damaged communication rather than enhanced it. The use of an interpreter was also out of the question. Not only would an interpreter have disrupted the "flow" desired from interviews, but establishing rapport would have been made more difficult. Third, speaking English creates a research atmosphere that mirrors the context Chinese find themselves in everyday - Chinese people in a European dominated society. Speaking Chinese in a study about the Chinese in New Zealand would have distanced informants from their reality. Most Chinese, however, have a good command of English as their daily lives depended on it, working in catering businesses
which deal directly with an English speaking public, or as professionals, working as accountants, doctors, lawyers, and so on. Also, English is used as a lingua franca within the local Chinese community and between Chinese communities when people cannot communicate across dialects.

The use of English presented only one major drawback. It created a research constraint where I could not get access to Chinese women working in small businesses. Although access to this group was not vital, it was a limiting factor. It was not simply solved by finding English speaking Chinese women either, for this negated the requirements of what I needed. Those who speak English tend also to have wider social relations. People who only speak Chinese tend to immerse themselves deeply within the Chinese community. It was the isolation and immersion factor that I wanted to investigate regarding Chinese women. I solved this concern by using ethnographic data provided by researchers who interviewed local Chinese women using Chinese. Using the literature in this way provided an adequate solution to the problem.

(h) Using the Literature

Besides interviews, the literature was the second major data source. In grounded theory there are three types of literature. First, the descriptive literature. Second, the conceptual literature that relates to the emergent process under analysis. And third, the unrelated conceptual literature, which can be seen as an aid to theoretical sensitivity (Glaser, 1992). All types of literature aid the development of the theory. In general, grounded theorists see the extant literature as data for analysis and not a source of theoretical derivation. A brief look at each type of literature and how it aided the development of this study is perhaps required.
The descriptive literature was diverse and served many functions. As stated above, descriptive literature is derived from descriptive works, such as ethnographies, life histories, autobiographical works, and so on. This data is useful for it allows the analyst to sample multiple sites and a diverse range of people by merely browsing the library shelves. I used this type of data to go beyond the confines of the Christchurch Chinese community; firstly, analysing researches conducted around New Zealand, and then Chinese communities in North America, Australia and the UK. Later, as I became more sure of the central processes involved in the study I began to sample descriptive works from further afield. I looked at Jewish communities, Maori, Gypsies, Indians, the blind and so on. This data was coded along with my original interviews to check the applicability of emergent concepts. By using such a diverse range of data I was able to gauge the scope of the theory and under what conditions certain concepts applied. By maximising comparison groups I delimited the theory.

Some may argue that by using the literature in this way the analyst predisposes himself to hegemonic structures. All researches have hidden assumptions about the world and using other people's data allows these assumptions to creep into the ongoing project. It may taint the analyst's understanding of the world without him knowing it. My response to this is simple: all data sources are merely slices of data. The diversity of data slices, many

---

34 For example, by reading through the work of Manying Ip (1990 and 1996), I discovered many concepts that were already emergent, such as that relating to gossiping and "community information" (See page 149). This entire process of gossip as a control mechanism was found to be quite universal to small communities. The descriptive works of Schultz (1975) and Silverman (1982) confirmed my suspicions. I now knew that gossip was a component of small communities and played a part in maintaining community norms.

35 Expanding on the example given above, I found that gossip was a function of small communities, thus it impacted most significantly on those who were immersed within the community framework. Those who stood outside the community were not subjected to community gossip as a control mechanism. The boundaries of gossip ("community information") became apparent. Also, I had identified two types of people, "ingroup" and "outgroup". These categories were important emergent sampling categories.

36 By comparing to other communities it was possible to delimit the theory, to find out under what conditions it applied. Thus, by comparing Chinese with Maori, I discovered that, for the most part, Maori did not placate (see chapter 4). The conditions for each group were different. "Insecurity" through "non-belonging" and "powerlessness" (the product of historical, political and economic conditions) placed Chinese in a more precarious position (see chapter 3 for more details). Thus, the theory was delimitated. The conditions under which it operated were identified.
seemingly contradictory, must be accounted for theoretically. As each data slice is incorporated into the mix, the resulting emergent theory will only integrate if it is a valid representation of the world. If the world is integrated, then so should theories that represent it (Glaser, 1978). The hidden assumptions in data thus prove irrelevant if the theory integrates fully. If a datum cannot be explained theoretically, the theory is wrong, not the datum. The theory must be fixed.

Yet, some may still argue that a fully integrated theory need not be a "true" theory. It may be the case that the emergent theory neatly maps onto reality without actually being a "true" representation of it. If this is the case, so be it. Theories need not be absolutely true to be useful. Newtonian physics was proven quite limited by Einstein's theory of relativity, yet Newtonian equations for calculating gravitation are still used because they are simple and they work. The calculation results are close enough to be useful. Precision is not a concern; for all practical purposes, it makes little difference. And so too with grounded theories. As outlined above, grounded theories are judged by pragmatic criteria. If they work and are useful, they are valid.

The second type of literature used was the related conceptual literature. This literature has a lateral relationship to the research. If the project is assessed from a "unit" analysis perspective, it may be difficult to see its applicability. This type of literature is emergent and can only be identified once important concepts and themes reveal their relevance. In this study, once the core and near core concepts were clearly identified I sought the related conceptual literature for comparison and extension of the emergent theory. For example, I discovered that "exclusion" was a major theme in this project. To understand more about the "exclusion" process I sought out studies of this nature, watched movies and read books on this theme (everything is data for the grounded theorist). By doing this I was loaded with new areas to investigate in subsequent interviews. The related conceptual
literature increased my level of theoretical sensitivity. I became more aware of the processes involved and the possibilities of where the theory might go.

It is often the case that extant concepts and ideas can be incorporated into the emergent theory. I discovered that my theory transcended all those that preceded it in the substantive domain. By comparing the emergent theory with extant theory I widened the scope of the theory. It was important, however, to ensure that emergent concepts remained grounded and that any adopted concepts from the literature earned their way into the theory. As Glaser (1992) suggests, extant concepts can have the power to derail a project if they have conceptual "grab". As good as extant concepts maybe, they may not be grounded, provide adequate fit or be relevant. This is why the related conceptual literature is only sought after the core and near core categories have been firmly established. It also tells us why no literature review can be done at the start of a grounded theory study.

The final type of literature identified by Glaser (1992) is what he calls the unrelated conceptual literature. This type of literature can be read at any time in the study. Its purpose is to foster within the analyst an ability to think, organise and write conceptually. The unrelated conceptual literature can thus be seen as important in the development of theoretical sensitivity; that is, the ability of the researcher to generate categories, concepts, hypotheses within an emergent theory, and relate these to extant theory at a conceptual level (ibid). With this in mind, throughout the project I continued to read Glaser's grounded theory "Readers", which contain a vast array of grounded theory studies. I also read books and articles written by Goffman, Sartre, and many other conceptual thinkers in social science.
As one can see, the literature is used in many different ways. In short, the literature is not seen as explanation or a proof, as is the case of conventional researches, but rather as data to be analysed, compared and contrasted in aid of developing a better theory. Clearly this approach to using the literature is different, but it gets the analyst away from the pseudo legitimising function it usually serves. Too often, literature is used to justify findings because the analyst cannot explain them any other way. The arguments goes, "listen to me, I know what I'm talking about", and "you should listen to me because other people better known than me have said the same thing". An appeal to authority is no justification at all, however. In grounded theory, the data is the legitimating element. The theory is judged as good if it fits, works, integrates and is relevant to the area under study. And while the researcher maintains authority in the understanding of method, their ability to conceptualise and their ability to generate theory from data, they must be seen as subordinate to how informants understand the emergent process. Researchers are there to articulate the process. Informants, however, live the process in their everyday lives. Thus, they are often the best judge of the emergent theory.

(i) Ensuring Faithful Emergence

Copies of draft chapters were made available for informants to read. This offered them the opportunity to give feedback and assess the readability and applicability of the theory. Although I was reasonably confident in the theory's completeness, this was probably the most important check of them all - a true litmus test. Hopefully what I had written was not too severe - that is, it did not portray the community in overly negative ways. The aim is never to damage a community - even if what you write is truthful. Tact goes a long way. Similarly, I was hoping it would not be too dull either, that is, so dry as to be devoid of richness and detail. There needed to be a fine balance. That the ideas and concepts would "ring true" for informants was a measure of the theory's applicability. Can you relate, I asked? If so, I was sure I was on the right track.
Another method used to assess bias was to keep a running journal of my impressions during the project. The journal was not a separate piece of work; it was incorporated into memos. This was an important aspect of the research for:

If the researcher is the research instrument, the instrument should be "tested" in terms of human resonance with the situations encountered, in terms of past experience, instinct, ethical judgments, etc. After all, who would think of doing quantitative research without testing the instrument for validity, past performance... (Berman, 1997)?

I needed to understand myself in order to understand the project and how I was doing the analysis. As the sole research instrument, the better you understand how that instrument works, the more accurate its measurement will be. You cannot use a ruler to measure if you do not know how it works. The same goes for the qualitative researcher. Thus, included in my memos were notes on how I felt about the data, why I adopted or dropped certain concepts, how and why I selected certain informants, and so on. Just by reading over memos, I was able to see the theory take shape, the logic behind certain decisions, or in some cases, the lack of logic. Being a member of the group I was studying gave me privileged knowledge and access, but it also meant I was exposed to the same social forces that affected my informants. By keeping a journal, I was able to assess my decision making processes in hindsight. Returning to old memos was a valuable analytical exercise. The journal notes served as data for further analysis, an autoethnography of sorts. I was trying to figure myself out in order to figure out my project.

Finally, the amount of immersion in the field was matched by timely respites. Approximately 80% of the time was spent analysing data and 20% of the time collecting
it. After every 3 or 4 interviews I would take time out, 2-5 months, collect conceptual and descriptive literature, and perform an "in situ" analysis of my notes. It was in these periods I developed categories, interpretations, and hypotheses from notes and discovered where the data were weak and where I needed to go for future data gathering. Through this practice, I saturated categories and grounded the theory. I stopped collecting data when I could see a high degree of theoretical integration, and the data that was collected provided no new insights to further advance the theory.

It can be seen that by allowing informants to assess the theory, maintaining close scrutiny of myself, taking timely respites to assess my work, and by the objective measure of theoretical integration, I became confident in the quality of the emerging theory.

Perhaps some examples are necessary to illustrate the process of theory emergence through coding, memoing and theoretical sampling. The following excerpt is an example of the coding exercise.

You used to get Europeans coming in saying, 'oh how much is this', and they'd say 'oh no, you too dear!' (said in an exaggerated Chinese accent). They [were usually] sarcastic remarks. And they (parents) just had to put up with it. They couldn't do anything. They couldn't say, 'oh you get out you', or something like that because they wanted their trade. Most of the Chinese, well, none of them at that stage were in any sense wealthy, they were just trying to make a living. And they knew at that stage that even a shilling, or two shillings, is a big difference, it's another customer, so why should they antagonise these Europeans. You know [they couldn't say], 'you get out you white bastard!' (laughs) you know, they wouldn't do it. So they had to put up with a lot of it and whoever came into the shop. They just had to grin and bear it.
Originally, coding was done by hand, I simply scribbled codes in the margins. Here, I have retyped the codes for readability purposes. It can be noted that this exact paragraph was used on page 156 of this thesis to illustrate the mediating condition of powerlessness. The above example, however, reveals many other codes.

Different analysts will no doubt "see" different codes in the above excerpt. What one "sees" is largely dependent on the process one is trying to explicate. It is also influenced by the level of understanding the analyst has of the process whilst coding. Initially, coding this excerpt led to codes that were more descriptive than analytic, hence the code, "putting up with racism". Later, this same code became "absorbing" and was identified as a "situational psychological coping" strategy (see page 142). Codes become conceptual when they are developed analytically. That is, their relationships to other concepts can be specified, the conditions under which they operate can be stated, and their properties revealed (Charmaz, 1994). "Codes" are turned into "concepts" through the writing of "memos". The following is an illustration of a memo.

**Example 1**

```plaintext
fight or flight (27th Feb 1997)

Interesting that ____ chooses to **fight** against racism. As She states, "I'll give back what I get". This contrasts with what ____ and ____ stated. They were more inclined to **absorb** racism, they cast it off as insignificant. They said, "oh they were drunk and didn't know what they were saying anyway".

**Absorbing** appears more of a trait of those in small business. They can't fight back because they need white custom, they were a **powerless** minority. Professional Chinese have options.
```
This memo hypothesises that "absorbing"\textsuperscript{37} is connected to "powerlessness". It indicates that Chinese in highly qualified professions see "fighting" discrimination as an option ("Fight" later became the emergent category of "Challenging", see page 174).

Another memo (example 2) was written a few months after the one above. Here we can see how the concept of "absorbing" is connected to the "invisibility tactic", which later became "blending in" (see page 119).

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Example 2}

Who does self-effacing (18th May 1997)

\textbf{Absorbing} racism and not complaining about it was part of the \textit{invisibility tactic}. To complain was seen as too dangerous, it might further inflame intolerance. So the Chinese kept their heads down, absorbed the racism and hoped they would just be left alone.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textbf{Example 3}

Defence mechanisms of the powerless (1 June 1997)

The \textit{insecure} position of the Chinese in New Zealand means that their defence has to be as anonymous and as invisible as they are. Thus their defence against racism and racial abuse tends to be a \textit{psychological} one, rather than one which seeks legal redress or public institutional action (see line 155 of ____ interview).

Thus local Chinese \textit{absorb} and use their Chinese \textit{identity}, their \textit{culture}, as a defence mechanism. Their \textit{pride} in being Chinese, their educational achievements, their civility, are the means which Chinese people use to protect themselves against racism (see line 631, ____ interview).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{37} The quote used here actually indicates the concept of "forgiving" (see page 143) but at this stage in the analysis "forgiving" as a concept was yet to emerge.
In example 3 there is further development of the notion of "absorbing", but here it is firmly identified as a psychological coping strategy within the context of insecurity. Furthermore, identity, culture and pride are identified as defence mechanisms, these later become grouped as aspects of "affirming" (see page 161). It can be seen from the coding example above and the three memos that followed that a code that started out as descriptive (i.e., "putting up with racism") has become highly conceptual (i.e., "absorbing"). It has myriad connections to other concepts and its place within the theory is specified to some degree.

In the final example below I identify the category of "placating" and I identify a property of it, "role plays", and two sub properties, the "assimilated role" and the "Chinese role", which later became the "foreigner role" (see page 135). Furthermore, I identify a comparable body of theory which may be of relevance (the assimilation argument); I refer to another memo on the same concept for more comparison and integration; I also suggest more data needs to be collected from a certain informant to fill out and saturate this part of the theory.

**Example 4**

To Placate (22 July 1997)

If the assimilation argument was valid then we would expect Chinese to copy all behaviours of their surrounding society. But as we have seen with _____, (see line 1120, _____) sometimes Chinese play up to white stereotypes, they act more Chinese in order to get by.

So what is actually happening is a **role play**. Chinese are acting in order to **placate** whites. To set them at ease.

But of course this does not mean Chinese don't assimilate in order to be accepted. At certain junctures Chinese do play the **assimilated role**. At other times they play a distinctly **Chinese role** (see memo entitled "playing the role"). I need to discuss this further with _____. What determines usage? Are there any other types?
A Note on Transcriptions, Field Notes and Memos

After each interview, audio-tapes were transcribed using a word processor. They were then printed out for coding. All coding was done by hand; as stated, I simply scribbled in the margins of each page. The use of NUDIST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Index, Search and Theorising), an analytical computer program, was abandoned after the first 6 interviews because of the limits it placed on the emergent theory. NUDIST forces data into preestablished hierarchies; this, I discovered, was highly unsuitable for grounded theory.

Furthermore, I felt it was vital to transcribe all interviews personally in order to get closer to the data. The process of transcribing elicits an array of new ideas, insight, and discovery. These were captured in memos during the transcription process. Allowing others to transcribe my interviews would have both betrayed my guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity and would have created a distance from the data that was undesirable. Hearing data is so much different than reading it. No matter how much information is included in transcripts, the richness of the spoken word conveys so much more meaning than ink on a page. How things are said is as important as what is said, and the "how" is best captured by listening rather than reading a interview, transcribed by someone else.

As much as possible, I included in original transcripts voice inflections, laughs, pauses, and "ums" and "ers". All these were included to provide as much detail as possible during early coding. Inarticulations may not simply be fumblings of speech, but rather an indication of discovery in process, as people try to interpret their reality and put into words seemingly ineffable things. I often found that when the topic of ethnicity and identity arose, so did inarticulations. Ethnicity is not something people think about
everyday; it is a feeling rather than something concrete. It is extremely hard to put into words. So details in transcription were needed to ensure these discovery processes were captured.

Transcript extracts as they are included in this text are edited. Their purpose is to illustrate concepts and their connections, to establish imagery and understanding as vividly as possible when needed; they are not there to demonstrate proof. The credibility of the theory is won by its integration, fit, workability and relevance.

The assumptions of the reader, he should be advised, is that all concepts are grounded and that this massive grounding effort could not be shown in a writing...Also that as grounded they are not proven; they are only suggested. The theory is an integrated set of hypotheses, not of findings (Glaser, 1978:134)

Only that which was pertinent to the meaning of each extract is included. Occasionally, I add a pronoun or article to remove ambiguity. Words that were emphasised by the interviewee are italicised. Three dots (…) are used to indicate my own editing.

A total of 29 people were interviewed in 22 interview sessions, generating approximately 1000 pages of transcript. These were analysed and coded along with a huge volume of primary and secondary data. From this, approximately 15,000 memos were generated over a 4 year period. Not all of these memos were sorted however. The problem I had was simply learning grounded theory, and not knowing enough about grounded theory meant I over-extended the open coding phase of the research. I discovered several core concepts within this mass of memos and codes. It was only after much consultation with other grounded theorists that I was able to focus the study to one core concept. And once
a core concept was chosen, the emergent theory began to saturate through selective coding and theoretical sampling. For the theory that is presented in this dissertation, approximately 2000 memos were sorted and used for the final write-up. This massive undertaking was also aided by the use of the computer data search program "Ultrafind", which made complex hard drive searches possible.38

Finally, I chose not to include a list of participants in this study.39 This again diverges from more conventional, qualitative studies. The reason for this omission is that grounded theories are not about personalities. Grounded theories are about the conceptual elements that penetrate and transcend people's lives. As mentioned, grounded theorists study processes, strategies, types and myriad other theoretical codes. People are merely the agents that carry these codes. Of course, I recognise that without people there would also be no social theories. But I should also state that indicating personalities adds nothing to the emergent theory. It obfuscates rather than clarifies the purpose of grounded theory generation.

(5) Reflections on Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is extremely complex in theory and even more complex in practice. It has become evident to me that grounded theories cannot be completed with much success without a mentor. As Glaser (1978) states, grounded theory is typically conducted in a "minus mentor" situation, which places the novice researcher in a difficult situation. It was only late in the research process that I was able to access expert grounded theorists, both in person and virtually via the internet, for advice and consultation. I do not believe I would have completed the project successfully without their help. In part, the difficulty

38 "Ultrafind" allows keyword and phrase searches with any data stored on a computer. It was particularly useful in finding misplaced files and in making interesting conceptual connections.

39 The names of informants used in this study have been changed except those of public figures, who were interviewed as public figures. Where descriptive data was analysed and used, the names remain the same as in the original document.
relates to what Stern (1994, cited in Brooks, 1998) calls grounded theory's half art and half science approach to theory development. As a creative endeavour, grounded theory procedures are difficult to communicate (ibid). Doing grounded theory requires constant guidance from an expert. Lack of mentorship could result in a less than satisfactory end product; or as Simmons (1995) puts it, if supervised by a non-grounded theorist, no matter how well intentioned, a compromise of the method is inevitable. Mentors, therefore, are required at every stage in the research process, from presenting a research proposal to reworking the final draft. Grounded theory is so different in all aspects of its approach to "conventional" research (both "quantitative" and "qualitative") that such close mentoring is warranted. Mentors, of course, can only be other grounded theorists who have gone through the torturous learning process themselves and have successfully defended a grounded theory dissertation. But the problem of learning grounded theory goes further than the need for mentorship.

There has been a great deal of confusion over what the grounded theory label actually represents. As Simmons (1995) suggests, the grounded theory label has come to represent qualitative methods generally. A novice researcher, entering the field of qualitative research intent on doing a grounded theory can easily become confused when faced with an array of research articles all claiming to have used grounded theory method. The problem of definition is exacerbated by the dichotomy that has arisen between Glaserian and Straussian versions of grounded theory. Both are distinctly different; both claim the grounded theory title. Yet, only an in depth understanding of one can reveal the diverges amongst the two. To the outsider, grounded theory is grounded theory. What is the fuss? Glaser's "Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis" outlines the fuss. They are totally different methods.
As Glaser has stated many times, grounded theory cannot be explained particularly well through writing, it has to be done. Grounded theory is thus an experiential method, more so than other methods. Grounded theory can only truly be understood by movement through the grounded theory process; from the initial entry into the field, the coding of data and writing of memos, the sheer joy of making discoveries, of connecting concepts, and of finishing a grounded theory draft. Its methods, writing style and presentation are unique.

If this were not troublesome enough, the vocabulary grounded theory uses is bound to confuse the novice researcher. Grounded theory has a language of its own; terms like "fit", "grab", "BSSP", "BSPP", "theoretical sampling", "slices of data", and "theoretical sensitivity" can throw the novice researcher into a spin. It takes the conventional approach to doing research and turns it on its head. In fact, it leaves convention languishing so far behind that it is no wonder beginning researchers cannot make head nor tail of it. There needs to be bridges built between grounded theory language and practice and conventional research language and practice. Brooks (1998) goes some way towards this. He outlines some of the terminology grounded theorists use and translates it into everyday English. Grounded theory devalues itself by being so complex. It hinders communication outside of the grounded theory community. In this way, grounded theory hinders itself.

Furthermore, grounded theory has no uniform presentation. Although Glaser suggests the best way to present a grounded theory in his book "Theoretical Sensitivity", the dozens of grounded theory articles in the available readers are anything but uniform (see Glaser, 1993, 1995ab). They range from more conventional grounded theory presentations in
Simmons (1993) "Cultivating" article to the highly unconventional in Bertaux and Bertaux-Wiame's (1995) article on artisanal bakeries in France. The latter appears so far removed from grounded theory conventions that it raises the question of whether it is a grounded theory at all? Obviously, some latitude should be given to presentation, but the sheer divergence does little to inform the novice grounded theorist of "how to do it".

A consequence of grounded theory's complexity, divergence from convention, and indeed, its originality, is the "felt need" by the novice researcher to justify its use. This "felt need" does not appear so evident for other methods. In conventional, verificational work, which is underpinned by positivistic understandings, there is hardly ever a philosophical discussion, for example. The dominance of logico-deductivist discourse seems to make this excusable. But all methods are underpinned by a certain epistemological stance: the questions of "what is knowledge?" and "how can we know?". Why there are no philosophical discussions in conventional works serves to silence the hidden assumptions made. This can lead to situations where advanced graduate students ask, "what is positivism?", as I heard in a graduate seminar not too long ago. If the philosophy that underpins logico-deductivist work is not made salient, then of course methods that adopt differing research philosophies will be considered inferior and indeed invalid by "normal" practitioners. The tendency is to assess alternative methods from within the dominant paradigm. Paradigm shifting is required to see the value in alternative practices. This, I believe, is the why a "felt need" to justify grounded theory occurs.

Perhaps one of the reasons grounded theory is so valued by ordinary people and less so by traditional academics is its "social" rather than "sociological" focus (see Gibson, 2000). Substantive grounded theories, at least, deal with interaction in everyday

---

40 It is unclear if this was indeed the correct author. The article on "cultivating" contained in Glaser's (1993) collection of grounded theories was a reprint of an article published in the journal Urban Life and Culture. In this journal, however, the author cited was Bigus (1972).
circumstances. It is predominantly in the formal grounded theory mode that linkages are made with the "sociological" domain (ibid). Thus, the people who appear to gain the most from a substantive grounded theory study are other grounded theorists and those in the substantive community in which the research was conducted. This, I believe, is because these are the two communities who can relate to the theory on a personal level. It "rings true" for them or they can appreciate the effort that went into its generation. Those outside of these communities require more convincing. Insiders often think when reading grounded theories, "yes, that's it!", "of course that's what happens", "it's so simple, why didn't I think of that" (Brooks, 1998). Outsiders may think, "what is the worth in this?", "it is weak description, there is no theory here", "it seems so trivial". This occurs in part because outsiders tend to be immersed in the logico-deductivist mindset and are not used to informants accounting for their own reality as theory. They see more sense in researchers imposing a reality to explain how people feel and behave. In other words, they see the world from a "sociological" point of view. Another reason for this divergence in perception is grounded theory's "cutting edge" nature. It may be similar to how philosophers and scientific practitioners tried to convince clergy the value of science several centuries ago. Galileo was so unconvincing to his authoritative figures in the face of religious hegemony. Grounded theory comes up against logico-deductivist hegemony in the same way.

Finally, if life is to be made easier for the novice researcher then perhaps an "absolute beginners guide to grounded theory" can be written. This might be similar to the now ubiquitous "For Beginners" series on philosophers and social theorists (see Writers and Readers Publishing, Inc.). It needs to be sufficiently simplified to enhance communication of what is an overly complex method. The "minus-mentor" situation under which most grounded theories are conducted justifies this need. The existing guides by Glaser are immense in their density and worth, perplexing to a complete novice
however. In true grounded theory fashion, a priori, they make little sense. Only after a
grounded theory has been completed does their worth become realised. Surely this
anomaly requires some attention. It prolongs the agony for the novice researcher who
wants to know "how to do it", not after the study is finished, but "now".

4. SUMMARY

Grounded theory is a meta-analytical approach. It incorporates a multitude of data
gathering mechanisms, philosophies, and varied data in an attempt to understand a given
problem. It thus does not fit into simple categorisations of methodological practice, e.g.,
those devised by Church (1997). 41 It is neither "qualitative" nor "quantitative". Nor is it
merely a "documentary" approach as Church (1997) may claim. It is a general method that
deals with mainly qualitative data and can be used in myriad circumstances for myriad
purposes. It is best suited, however, to the study of small groups and tends to produce a
theory that is psychosocial in nature. The theory that is produced is not a "proven" theory,
but rather an integrated set of hypotheses. On the otherhand, it is not mere conjecture
either. The concepts and themes presented are firmly grounded in the data; the theory's
integration is an indication of its validity. To prove a grounded theory, however, requires
different methods, larger data sets, different epistemological understandings. 42

Underpinning grounded theory is a curious combination of pragmatism, positivism and
phenomenology. Each epistemological stance corresponds to a phase in the theory
development process: (a) the discovery phase is underpinned by phenomenology; (b)
conceptualisation by positivism; and (c) the assessment phase by pragmatism. It is this
final phase that matters most, for a grounded theory is ultimately judged by criteria such
as workability, modifiability and relevance. It should also be noted that each phase is not

---

41 Church (1997) categorises research methods into three groups: (a) documentary; (b) social science; and (c) natural science. His approach is overly simplistic and does not, cannot, account for grounded theory in all its complexity.

42 Glaser (1978) suggests that "quantitative" methods are needed to verify a grounded theory.
distinct, but rather occurs simultaneously as the theory emerges. Finally, it should be stated that the research approach emphasised in this report is Glaserian rather than Straussian. Glaser emphasises the emergent side of grounded theory, and maintains that discovery is best achieved through the promotion of creativity in the researcher. And creativity is aided by the asking of simple questions throughout the research; that is, whilst coding the analyst asks: a) What is the main concern of the people within the substantive area, and what accounts for the variation in its processing?, and b) To what category or what property of what category does this incident relate?

Incorporated into grounded theory are a number of important methodological agents. The most important of these is the notion of emergence. Everything is emergent in a grounded theory study. The analyst must not preconceive. To preconceive is to negate the aim of discovery. In practical terms, however, the discovery of concepts and their interconnections is achieved through constant comparison, where incidents, categories and their properties are compared. The constant comparative process involves coding, memoing, theoretical sampling, sorting and writing. The means of coding and memoing are unique to grounded theory.

In terms of "doing" grounded theory, perhaps the most crucial element of the research was my identity as local Chinese New Zealander. Being part of the community you are studying has major benefits and disadvantages. It allowed me to get close to participants, be accepted quickly, and gain a level of understanding "outsiders" would have found difficult to comprehend. Likewise, my identity allowed my "lived" experience to be used as data. Unfortunately, my status as local Chinese New Zealander also presented me with the risk of taking too much for granted, of being seen as a potential gossipmonger par excellence in the community. To counter these problems I adopted the following interview strategies: sharing information, using a conversational type interview structure; the
assurance of confidentiality and anonymity; and the option for participants to edit and revise their interview transcripts. These strategies are reflective of the foundations of grounded theory practice; that participants maintain a central position in the research process. It is with them in mind that the research is written. Thus I used "everyday" language to present the report rather than sociological language. It is acknowledged, however, that these strategies can never fully counter the power dimensions of social research. No matter how much sharing, open conversation or participant editing occurs, once the academic writing begins, the researcher is resituated into the position of power (Parker, 1995).

Such limitations in research practice are somewhat preordained. Rather than see them as a blight on the research, they should be seen as analytical constraints that aid the development of theory. It is this understanding I bring forward when I adopt a constraint composition analysis view of conducting research. All researches are constrained in some way, whether it be methodological limitations, financial restrictions, or whatever. These are inevitable components of conducting any research exercise. And for this reason, mistakes in research should also be seen in a more amiable way. They are part of the exposition exercise too, and can lead to amazing discoveries. Mistakes are precursors to serendipity. So as errors occurred in this study, they should be seen as mere constraints that aid the resolution of a research problem. And they did.

Finally, grounded theory has been much maligned for its supposed production of "theoretical islands". This view I counter. Indeed, grounded theory does the exact opposite in fact. Grounded theory ultimately connects the theoretical domain of substantive arenas which are disparate. It does this by revealing BSPs that exist in many social arenas. These BSPs serve as the building blocks for connecting seemingly unconnected theories. Furthermore, the mid-range focus of grounded theory fills the void
between micro and macro structures. It allows extant theory to be expanded by exposing "hints" at extant concepts such as class, gender or ethnicity. Thus, although grounded theory produces a stand-alone theory, what it does in the process is to form connections along the way. Connections that other analysts can pursue in their own researches. The utility of grounded theory is much underestimated. It is for this reason and the many reasons outlined above that it was chosen for this project.

It is suspected that the emergent grounded theory produced by this study will apply beyond the confines of the New Zealand Chinese community. At the very least, it should apply to the well established Chinese communities of Australia, North America and perhaps even the United Kingdom. Its applicability is hypothesised on the basis of similar histories and cultural environment. In terms of processes, here too, the emergent theory finds relevance beyond the immediate. And it is perhaps the discovery of these new processes, and their relevance in diverse settings, that is the greatest contribution of them all.

In the following chapter I present the conditions and context that override the emergent grounded theory. Its purpose is to set the scene for ensuing chapters that deal exclusively with the processes discovered through grounded theory analysis.
Chapter 3: Overriding Conditions

1. INTRODUCTION
In this chapter the overriding conditions for the emergent theory are discussed. These conditions can be seen as things problematic for Chinese. The resolutions Chinese seek are the focus of ensuing chapters and are the basis of the emergent theory. There are three broad sections to this chapter. The first section deals with the "insecurity context". Here, I discuss various factors that bring about an "insecurity consciousness" amongst Overseas Chinese. That is, I explain why Chinese feel unsafe and vulnerable in spite of their permanent settlement and citizenship status in their adopted countries. The second section outlines the conditions surrounding the tight-knit community structure, a feature typical amongst Overseas Chinese. Here a brief description of how the community structure emerged is given and its general features are discussed. The last section deals with "permanent foreigner status" and "non-belonging"; it outlines how Chinese feel about their position in the host nation, and indeed the world. Although I have made clear demarcations in how these conditions are presented, in reality there is a high degree of interrelatedness; they merge and blend. I present them as distinctly separate simply for the purposes of clarity.

2. THE INSECURITY CONTEXT
This first section deals with the issue of structural insecurity. Structural insecurity is perhaps the single most important feature concerning Overseas Chinese. Four key areas of structural insecurity can be identified; these are, (1) historical factors in China, (2)
political subordination in the host nation, (3) economic positioning of Chinese in the host nation, and (4) the host tolerance context. In many cases, these areas of structural insecurity overlap and interrelate; where possible I indicate where this may occur.

(1) **Historical Insecurity**

The first aspect of Chinese structural insecurity involves memories of China's turbulent past. The history of the Overseas Chinese is littered with examples of escaping conflict, persecution, famine and other social and natural calamities. A combination of domestic and international events encouraged Chinese to relocate overseas from the 1860s.\(^{43}\) Like many other distinct minority groups, the Chinese diasporic experience was characterised by the need for cultural, economic and political survival. For the Chinese who migrated to Europeanised countries, it was economic survival that took precedence (Price, 1974). Many Chinese harboured the hope of eventually returning home. Their relocation overseas was intended as a sojourn (Ip, 1995).\(^{44}\)

Events in China, however, ensured that the sojourn would be permanent. Political, economic and social chaos was the norm rather than the exception. The Sino-Japanese conflict, beginning in 1931, initiated the emigration of families. Many went to British controlled Hong Kong, while those with kin in Europeanised countries travelled there (Seagrave, 1995). The Chinese were transformed from sojourners to refugees. Following the Sino-Japanese war was the communist revolution in 1949. The communist government encouraged Overseas Chinese to seek citizenship in their adopted homelands (Ip, 1990). Essentially, they were asked not to return. Some Chinese still harboured hopes of returning to China; however, the cultural revolution between 1966 and 1976

\(^{43}\) See Appendix C for a detailed discussion.

\(^{44}\) Once China established a degree of stability, the money they earned overseas could be invested in their home villages (Price, 1974). It was the hope of Chinese sojourners to reap great riches and return home as rich men to retire (Grief, 1974). This was particularly the case with Chinese goldminers, who made their way to North America, Australia and New Zealand during the latter half of the 19th century. Unfortunately for them, they seldom made large sums of money (ibid). Indeed, many were destitute, living in squalid conditions.
ended these hopes. Chinese who did return to China were treated with great suspicion (Wong, 1992). The Overseas Chinese became indefinitely exiled.45

(2) Political Insecurity
The second feature that typifies the Overseas Chinese is their lack of politicisation, and to a large degree, a lack of political influence also, which increases Chinese vulnerability. There are few examples of Overseas Chinese gaining political dominance in the nations they have migrated to, despite their relative numerical strength in some states.46 In New Zealand, up to 1996 only four local Chinese had ever run for national political office; one was elected to Parliament.47 This is remarkable considering the Chinese had been in New Zealand for over 130 years and were the largest immigrant minority group in the nation. This pattern of political avoidance is commonplace amongst Chinese throughout the Pacific Rim. It contrasts with European migrants who established political control in almost every nation they settled, even where they were extreme minorities, e.g., South Africa prior to the disbandment of Apartheid. This, of course, is not to say that all Overseas Chinese experienced the same degree of political insecurity. In Europeanised states, the Chinese were largely excluded from nation building and the political arena through varying forms of discrimination. In Southeast Asia, however, the Chinese played a role in nation building and maintained a political presence. For the most part, though, they remained politically subordinate to the indigenous majority and treaded carefully in their political dealings with them.

45 This notion of exile and repatriation refers to early Chinese migrants and not necessarily to multi-generational Chinese, who have become firmly established overseas. Here, I am simply identifying the initial structural conditions that historically led to emigration from China to various Europeanised states.
46 They account for approximately a third of the total population in Malaysia, for example.
47 In 1963 and 1966 Ronald Ng Waishing ran for the Labour seat in Franklin. He failed miserably in this National Party stronghold. Similarly, Mervyn Ah Gee and George Gee were National Party candidates for Mangere and Petone respectively in the late 1960s. Neither were elected to parliament. Gee, however, did become the Mayor of Petone in 1968 (Yee, 1996a). Pansy Wong became New Zealand's first Chinese and "Asian" MP in 1996 under the newly introduced proportional representation electoral system.
Generally, at least four explanations for Chinese political inactivity can be identified; these include: a) the limits imposed by host discrimination, as stated above; b) historical experiences of corrupt governments resulting in a culture of political avoidance; c) political inactivity as a compromise for peaceful interethnic relations; and d) a sojourner mindset. Each of these explanations emerge in an analysis of Chinese settlement throughout the Pacific Rim.

Furthermore, even where Chinese have gained political control their circumstances are dubious. Singapore, for example, lies in the middle of Southeast Asia, a largely anti-Chinese region (see Dwyer, 1990). Taiwan is also an example of a Chinese dominated state, but its classification as an "Overseas Chinese" nation is debatable (Ip, 2001, Personal Correspondence). Its close proximity to Mainland China, however, is a source

---

48 In New Zealand, Chinese were prohibited from naturalisation between 1908 and 1952. This essentially excluded Chinese from voting and representation in government. Also, immigration restrictions have kept the Chinese population small. In 1951, Chinese numbered only 5723 (From Sedgwick, 1982) and increased to 18,177 in 1991 (From Statistics New Zealand, 1995). After the late 1980s the Chinese population increase was due almost entirely to migrants from Southeast Asia.

49 This argument was put forward by Cain (1990, cited in 'Civil Rights Issues Facing Asian Americans in the 1990s', 1992) to explain Asian voting patterns in America. He writes: "Participation in government is often looked on with suspicion by Asian immigrants who fled repressive government. For them government at its best has meant taxation and military service, and at its worst, oppression, persecution or death."

50 This has been the case in Malaysia where "In exchange for peace...social stability, cultural breathing room and a certain allowance for individual pursuits, Malaysia's relatively wealthy minority ethnic Chinese surrendered a degree of equality to uplift the largely impoverished indigenous ethnic Malay[s]. In addition, the Chinese...tacitly agree[d] never to seriously challenge the political dominance of...Malay[s]; such an attempt triggered the 1969 riots in which several hundred died." (Olojede, 1998: A04).

51 The sojourner mindset is typified by high mobility. Concerned with ultimately returning to China, many early Chinese migrants avoided political involvement, except where it concerned their welfare directly, such as petitioning governments when faced with discriminatory legislation (See Sedgwick, 1982).

52 Singapore's emergence as an independent nation state was certainly not by preconceived design, in contrast to New Zealand or Australia for instance. Originally, Singapore was a British colony from 1824, and then part of the Malaysian Federation from 1963. Chinese dominance (approximately 77%) in the city, however, led the central government in Kuala Lumpur to expel Singapore (Dwyer, 1990). And so Singapore emerged as an independent nation in 1965. Sitting in the middle of a largely anti-Chinese region, Singapore has no reason to feel secure. Likewise, its dependence on Malaysia for natural resource needs added to its insecurity. As Singapore's patriarch and founder Lee Kuan Yew writes, "people should understand how vulnerable Singapore was and is, the dangers that beset us, and how we nearly did not make it...effective government, public order and personal security, economic and social progress did not come about as the natural course of events" (cited in Richardson, 1998, Online Reference). So even where Chinese have gained political dominance, it was tempered by regional circumstances.
of insecurity in itself, especially considering the historical and ideological differences between these states.

The reasons why Chinese are, relatively, politically passive is not the main issue though. The issue is: Chinese have not used the political arena as their primary source of security and coping when most other minority groups have.\textsuperscript{53} This is the phenomenon of major interest, explanations of "why" are merely secondary. The result of Chinese absence or minimal presence from the political arena is increased vulnerability. This in an environment where minority status already denotes diminished influence.

(3) Economic Insecurity

Economic insecurity relates mainly to those Chinese in Europeanised states. It results from three main factors; these are, a) economic subordination - lack of economic influence, b) commodification - connection to state governments and economic fortunes, and c) occupation of an intermediary position - they are caught between labour and capital. Let us take a brief look at each factor.

(a) Economic Subordination - A Lack of Economic Influence

In Southeast Asia, the Chinese control the economic basis of the entire region (Dwyer, 1990). It is this economic control that gives them a degree of security.\textsuperscript{54} To expel the Chinese is to risk economic collapse. In Europeanised countries, however, the Chinese do not possess such economic dominance. The Chinese in the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are mainly petty bourgeois capitalists. Originally, they were confined to

\textsuperscript{53} We may compare Chinese with groups like African Americans (leaders such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Stokley Carmichael, the Civil Rights Movement), Maori (Kotahitanga Maori Parliament in the 1800s, the formation of the Young Maori Party in the mid 1890s, the establishment of the Maori Parliament in 1892, the Ratana Movement in the 1920s, etc) and Jews (who make up 2\% of the US population but account for 4 times their percentage in the House of Representatives (From Ginsberg, 1993)).

\textsuperscript{54} Of course economic control alone does not give security unless it is protected and guaranteed by the rule of law (fp, 2001, Personal Correspondence). In this sense, economic influence is tightly connected to ideology where the rule of law protects private property.
small family run firms, e.g., market gardens, laundries, fruitshops and Chinese catering businesses (See Hirschman and Wong, 1981; Ryan, 1995; Ip, 1995). Most arrived as goldminers, labourers, war refugees, or on the basis of family reunification (ibid). Later generations became highly educated and entered the professions (see Chung & Walkey, 1988; Pang, 1990; Rong and Grant, 1992; Sanchirico, 1991; Slaughter-Defoe et al., 1990), yet their movement into this world did not earn them a dominant economic position. They have not become the industrial capitalists like their Southeast Asia counterparts. Rather, their social mobility was a move from the "old" petty bourgeoisie to the "new".  

(b) Commodification - Connection to State Governments

To further complicate matters, the Chinese in the Europeanised states maintained a connection to government and capital that placed them in a precarious position; they were "commodified". Governments at varying junctures have used Chinese as a means to boost or revitalise national economies (see Ryan, 1995). They were seen as mere human capital. Because Chinese immigration tended to be justified by governments on economic grounds, Chinese presence became conflated with national economic fortunes and the success or failure of government policy in that regard. Tolerance of Chinese thus tended to reflect economic and political change. In New Zealand, for example, Chinese were first invited in as goldminers to rework abandoned mines and revitalise regional economies in the 1860s (Ip, 1995). Later, Southeast Asian Chinese were encouraged to enter New Zealand as entrepreneurs during the late 1980s; again, the aim was to revitalise the economy (Palat, 1996). In both cases, economic downturns or the inability of Chinese to revitalise led to anti-Chinese and anti-Asian movements (see Ip, 1995; Palat, 1996).

---

55 This is a Marxian concept describing a group that exists above the working masses but below the capitalist elite. They are characterised by fierce individualism and drive. They may be wealthy, but they work for their money; in contrast, the speculative capitalist's wealth is made through speculating the market.
(c) Intermediary Position - Caught between Labour and Capital

Another problem for Chinese has been their location above the working masses and below the power elites. They occupy an intermediary position. This understanding is captured by Bonacich (1973), who calls the Overseas Chinese "middlemen minorities". She suggests "middlemen minorities" are caught between divergent class interests, the capitalist elite from above, and the working masses below. This position, she suggests, lets Chinese deal "objectively" with both groups. But the "middleman minority" position is problematic. Because their precarious position encourages group unity, "middlemen minorities" tend to form an eth-class of their own. Self-preservation is their instinct. Middlemen minorities tend not to side with the working masses, for this is where they experience much discrimination. Instead, they side with the power elites; for it is to this group they owe some loyalty. It was they who invited them in as workers, offered them a degree of protection against hostility, and are perceived to adhere to a similar petty bourgeois philosophy: hard work leads to success. In times of major social, political and economic transformation, it is the "middleman minority" who forms a "buffer" between the capitalist elite and the working masses. They are used as "rate busters" by the former; the Chinese are thus perceived by the latter to increase competition with no aim for the betterment of the working classes. The precariousness of the Chinese position should be obvious; as middlemen minorities, they make easy "scapegoats" during times of economic, political and social transition.

(4) The Discrimination Context

The fourth feature that typifies the Overseas Chinese is their experience of discrimination in their adopted countries. In the sections above, discrimination on the part of the host nations has already been indicated. The New Zealand example mirrors that in North

---

56 The concept of eth-class simply refers to the combination of ethnic group and class. Thus, middle class Chinese may form one type of eth-class and working class Chinese another.

57 See Appendix C for a detailed discussion.
America, Australia, and to a certain extent in the UK as well. Throughout Southeast Asia and the Pacific Rim, the Chinese have become known as the "Jews" of the region (Bonacich, 1973). They have experienced pogroms - violent mob attacks on Chinese neighbourhoods involving rape, murder, looting and destruction (Dwyer, 1990). Institutional barriers have also been erected where Chinese immigration was restricted, their entry into certain professions limited, and educational opportunities curtailed (see Sandmeyer, 1991; Ip, 1990, 1995, 1996). They have also suffered more discreet forms of discrimination such as subtle gibes and insults - discrimination that may appear harmless but in fact can have life-long consequences (see Parker, 1995).

The discrimination context in Europeanised states is perhaps the most important component of all. This is because unlike the Chinese in Singapore where security is maintained through political and economic control, and unlike the Chinese throughout the rest of Southeast Asia where security is assured through economic dominance, the Chinese in Europeanised states rely on host tolerance alone. It is this aspect of Chinese existence in Europeanised states that perpetuates "insecurity consciousness". Insecurity is the product of uncertainty. Chinese in Europeanised states cannot ensure that they will not be expelled, interned, or treated harshly. They have no tangible guarantees.

The discrimination context in which Chinese exist can be understood through a series of general conceptualisations. The first concept relates to ethnic lumping. This is a conceptualisation of how minorities can get caught up in the ethnic struggles of other groups. The second of these is the notion of interpretation shifting. This concept captures

58 This label is only correct in the sense that both groups have faced extreme discrimination and persecution. It is perhaps inaccurate in that, unlike Jews, Chinese have largely avoided the political arena as a defence against discrimination.

59 Of course, economic control does not guarantee good treatment. Indeed, it could be argued that Chinese economic control in Southeast Asia exacerbated host discrimination. But if Chinese did not possess economic dominance in this region, the likelihood would have been expulsion long ago. Their presence in the region is only assured through their economic role. And certainly, the existence of pluralistic societies throughout Southeast Asia, the ability of Chinese to remain distinct, is indication of politically powerful indigenes to compromise for economic cooperation.
the constant changeability in host acceptance of minority groups. It is the concept that lies behind Siu's (1993) assertion that Chinese fear omnipresent racism. Siu did not state what omnipresent racism actually meant, although she identified it as a core concern. The third major concept is the unspoken contract. This contract outlines a set of conditions established since the 1960s by which Chinese must abide to ensure host tolerance. It indicates a conditional acceptance of Chinese. Many ethnographic works have captured this very same idea (e.g., Lee, 1996; Ip, 1996). The idea has not, however, been conceptualised in a systematic fashion. Let us look at each of these concepts to better understand the discrimination context Chinese exist in.

(a) Ethnic Lumping

At the fundamental level, the discrimination context tends to confuse and conflate minorities. Racialised discourse remains the commonsense means of understanding ethnic difference (see Parker, 1995; Wetherell and Potter, 1992). Thus, ethnic groups (and individuals) tend not to be seen as unique. Divergent cultures, languages, and national origins are ignored when minority groups "look" the same. Thus, "local" Chinese have become subsumed under the gross ethnic label "Asian". No distinctions are made between recent migrant Chinese and "local" Chinese, or for that matter, Japanese, Korean, Thai and so on. As one of Ip's (1996:138) informants stated about a journalistic colleague, "One feature writer asked, 'Aren't Koreans Chinese?'". The problem is a profound one for "local" Chinese as they get caught up in events that do not relate to their community. Ip (1996) has detailed examples where "local" Chinese began to experience increasing discrimination because they were mistaken for new Asian migrants.

---

60 This concept is well understood and has been conceptualised extensively in the literature.
61 That is, the notion that physical characteristics define personal characteristics.
(b) Interpretation Shifting

*Interpretation shifting* refers to the changes in host assessments of Chinese over time. There are two types of interpretation shift: a) *negative shifts* and b) *positive shifts*. "Positive shifts" are represented by positive host assessments of Chinese, "negative shifts" are the opposite. And whereas the former invites host tolerance, the latter invites intolerance and its consequences. Interpretation shifts are constant and tend to occur in cycles. The cycles are related to changes in the economic, political and social environment. A war against China, for example, could easily spark a negative interpretation shift towards Chinese in New Zealand. In the US, Americans of Japanese descent were interned after Japan bombed Pearl Harbour. It need not be so dramatic as warfare though. Economic crises or political crises are enough to initiate a shift.62 Interpretation shifts are typified by economic, political and social sanctions against minorities when the shift is negative, and the lifting of sanctions when the shift is positive. Minorities recognise interpretation shifts with relative ease. They account for their experiences of discrimination and of tolerance. As one informant stated:

...the 60s, the 70s and 80s were the three decades where I felt the least conscious [about being Chinese]. Up till then you were made to feel conscious because you'd get cheek. But over the last five or six years there's been a bit of a return of racist comments.

---

62 This conceptualisation has been indicated by many theorists, but it has not been systematically formulated. It can be seen in Lyman's (1977:199) work when he writes, "Race prejudice, as Herbert Blumer has reminded us, is a sense of group position. It arises out of the belief, supported and legitimated by various elites, that a racial group is both inferior and threatening. Such a belief may lie dormant beneath the facade of a long-term racial accommodation, made benign by a minority group's tacit agreement to live behind the invisible wall of an urban ghetto. Then, when circumstances seem to call for new meanings and different explanations, the allegedly evil picture and supposedly threatening posture may be resuscitated to account for political difficulties or social problems that seem to defy explanation."
Negative Shifts

A negative shift for a minority group tends to be characterised by certain features. We often see negative stereotyping of the minority in the media; the emergence of institutional barriers; and an increase in "street racism". The recent issue over "Asian" immigration highlights many of these characteristics. Negative media imagery was captured in articles like "The Inv-Asian" (see Booth and Martin, 1993). The article portrayed "Asians" as a clandestine threat to society. Immigration restrictions were tightened with the introduction of an English Language test. And "street racism" became more apparent. Informants commonly reported being told to "go home" by complete strangers, being treated rudely by shop assistants, and people giving "evil stares" (see Ip, 1996 "Dragons on a Long White Cloud", Chapter Seven, for many more examples).

Positive Shifts

During positive shifts, the minority group becomes relatively invisible. Experiences of discrimination may still be evident, but these are often silenced. The minority group tolerates the less frequent racial gibes and insults, they realise things could be much worse. Similar to how negative shifts are recognised with ease, so too with positive shifts. An informant in this study stated:

---

63 Headlines in local newspapers also reflected negative imagery, e.g., "Wealthy Asian Students Out of Control" (Press, 1995, April 12, pg. 1); "The Dangerous, Murky Underworld of Triads" (Press, 1997, Aug 9 pg. 4). These were the modern day equivalent of headlines in the 1880s (another negative shift period), e.g., "The Chinese Problem" and "Mongolian Filth" (from Ng, 1972).

64 Murphy (1998a) suggests the test was aimed specifically at Chinese migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan, and was implemented to restore New Zealand's "exclusionist pro-European" policy. Furthermore, Goh (1996:9) compares the test to the Poll Tax of the 1880s, and writes: "This is a compelling analogy. Like the Poll Tax, the English test together with other measures were introduced to curb the influx of Asian immigrants amid public and political outcries of too many Asians and "Asian invasion" in the 1990s similar to the fears of the "Yellow Peril" in the 1880s. Furthermore, not unlike the Poll Tax, the language bond involves the collection of a tax, although refundable in theory, but mostly not in practice." Similar to the 1920 Immigration Restriction Amendment Act, the 1995 English test did not make specific mention of Chinese or Asian migrants, but its effect was the same.
Straight after the war the Chinese started to become quite well respected. Whereas just prior to the second world war the Chinese were looked down upon by most Pakehas.65 Young kids would say, 'oh look, there's a Chinaman, there's a chink, there's a pigtail'. That was quite common. But after the second world war that didn't seem to happen. I think the fact that the Chinese were in China fighting the Japanese...the Japanese were our [common] enemy, you know.

The proliferation of negative media stereotypes and institutional barriers also tend to be reduced; often, a complete reversal occurs. For example, from 1880 to 1920 a plethora of anti-Chinese legislation was introduced in New Zealand.66 However, when the Japanese invaded China in the 1930s and New Zealand became embroiled in the Pacific War, an interpretation shift occurred. Many of the anti-Chinese immigration laws were dropped; Chinese refugees were invited in;67 and as the quote above illustrates, "street racism" became less common. Likewise, negative imagery tends to be reversed. For example, during the 1880s recession, Chinese were seen as too frugal, too hard working and too industrious. They could "live off the smell of an oil-rag" (from Beatson and Beatson, 1990). During the post WWII era however, Chinese industriousness became interpreted as a "model minority" trait (Chung and Walkey, 1988). It was an interpretation reversal.68

65 "Pakeha" is the Maori term for European.
66 See Appendix C for a discussion of these.
67 See Appendix C for further details.
68 The mapping of interpretation shifts is shown in Appendix D.
(c) The Unspoken Contract

Between 1960 and the early 1990s the Chinese in New Zealand have been interpreted positively. In part, this was because Chinese adhered to an unspoken contract. The contract stipulated that Chinese should be model citizens. Four main clauses to this contract can be identified, a) that Chinese assimilate, b) that Chinese "know their place", c) that Chinese do not become social derelicts, and d) that Chinese act normatively. Each clause interrelates with the others. Adherence to this contract entailed a peaceful cohabitation. Chinese were tolerated. The breaking of the contract was to be reflected in host intolerance. I will briefly outline each clause below.

The Demand for Assimilation

The demand for assimilation is in fact a misnomer. Assimilation for Chinese did not mean an adoption of "actual" cultural norms, but rather, an adoption of "idealised" cultural norms.\(^{69}\) That is, the Chinese were to reflect New Zealand's egalitarian spirit, its meritocracy through education and occupational success; they were to be law-abiding, family-oriented, self-sufficient and hard-working. Chung (1983) referred to these as "protestant ethic" traits. Chinese success on measures of education, occupation and their invisibility in the law courts established them as "whiter than white" (Chung and Walkey, 1988). They were a "model minority". Chung (1983) found that Europeans rated Chinese highly on these "protestant ethic" traits; in fact they rated Chinese higher than they rated themselves. This situation mirrors the US, where Chinese were praised by whites for their "model minority" behaviour (see Lee, 1996). Such praise from the majority reinforces the demand for acting in accordance with idealised norms. Praise from the host equals tolerance.

---

\(^{69}\) Ember & Ember (1973:192-3) state that, "to illustrate the difference between ideal and actual culture, consider the idealised belief long cherished in America, that doctors are selfless, friendly people who choose medicine as their profession because they feel themselves "called" to serve humanity, and who have little interest in either money or prestige. Of course, many physicians do not measure up to this ideal. Nevertheless, the continued success of television programs that portray the average American M.D. as a paragon of virtue indicates that the ideal of the noble physician is deeply rooted in our collective psyche."
"Know Your Place"

The "know your place" clause is the second in the contract. That is, Chinese could meet all the ideals of New Zealand society but they were not, under any circumstances, to challenge the established hegemony. Thus, the Chinese were allowed to be successful, but not too successful; they could be rich, but not too rich; they could be hard working, but not too hard working. Or as Manying Ip (1996:124) put it, Chinese live with "contradictory expectations: to be motivated but not assertive, to excel academically but not be competitive with mainstream New Zealanders, to 'know one's place'". There are clear upper limits on how much Chinese can achieve before Chinese achievements are perceived as a threat to host dominance. Too much success could result in an interpretation reversal.70

An example of this can be seen with recent Asian migrants excelling in education.71 Large numbers of migrants began to excel at school. This tipped the balance from tolerance to intolerance. Education was the cornerstone of the meritocracy myth. Through education all could defy the limits of class, gender and ethnicity. The problem of course was that success in education was perceived as a zero-sum game; as one Pakeha student stated, the "[Asians are] stealing all the good grades" (Hemming, 1994:34). In short, Asian success was seen to be at the expense of others. Asians were perceived as a threat. This perception was captured particularly well by the now infamous "The Inv-Asian" article published in an Auckland newspaper (see Booth and Martin, 1993). The title tends to speak for itself. In part two of the article, a list of schools and degree courses were given

---

70 Fong's (1994) study of a white middle class community in the US found that once Asians became highly successful they no longer received high praise. They were seen as a threat to white dominance.
71 In 1993, Auckland Medical School's student base was 20.7 percent Asian (Harbour News, April 16, 1993). Asians made up 3.4 percent of New Zealand's total population in 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, July 1995). Asians therefore were 6 times over represented in the field of medicine. In 1994 almost 20 percent of Asians gained an A bursary, compared to around 15 percent for Europeans and around 7 percent for Maori (Sunday-Star Times, June 5, 1994:A6). In 1996 42% of Asian school leavers had an A or B bursary or National Certificate at L3, compared to 23% of Europeans and 4% for Maori (New Zealand Official Year Book 1998).
showing the high percentages of Asian students. Both articles insinuated an Asian takeover.72

For Chinese, an understanding of the "know your place" clause can be captured through comments like, "[there is] a great deal of tokenism [in New Zealand], overt racism doesn't exist, but could you envisage Air New Zealand chaired by an Asian?", (From Yarwood, 1987:37), and "I think [it would] be difficult for a predominately white society to accept a Chinese Prime Minister..it's possible but I can't see it happening". Chinese are well aware of how thin the veil of tolerance is when it comes to Chinese over-achievement. Chinese achievement must stay within bounds of what is considered acceptable, it cannot pose a threat to hegemony.

The Avoidance of Social Dereliction

The third clause in the contract, closely related to the first, stipulated that Chinese should avoid social dereliction. That is, they should not be seen as relying on welfare, as performing poorly in education, nor as common occupants of New Zealand's prisons. If Chinese "failed", the myth of meritocracy and New Zealand's idealised notions of

72 "The Inv-Asian" article (Booth and Martin, Central Leader, Friday, April 16, 1993:8-9) contained the subheading, "disoriented drivers a new threat on Kiwi roads". Further on it reads, in bold print, "What lies behind the image of crowds of Asian children coming out of the best schools, the buy-up of expensive homes, slow, erratic drivers in big new Mercedes and migration figures which suggest Auckland is becoming the Taipei/Hong Kong/Seoul of the South Pacific?" It contains pictures of Chinese business signs captioned "sign of the times". Part two of the article (Booth and Martin, Central Leader, Friday, April 23, 1993:8-9), "winners and losers in immigration Jotto" shows real estate signs written in Chinese, and a subheading reading, "A new life at the top downunder".
egalitarianism would be exposed.\textsuperscript{73} It was the Chinese who upheld these myths through their success.\textsuperscript{74} In short, Chinese could not be under-achievers.

This understanding manifested itself in the form of ethnic competition with Maori and Pacific Islanders. When talking to Chinese, comparisons were never made with Pakeha, Chinese always compared themselves with Maori and Pacific Islanders. Pakeha held a neutral ethnic position, they were the norm. Maori and Pacific Islanders, however, were distinctively "ethnic", as Chinese saw themselves also, and hence represented logical comparison groups.\textsuperscript{75} The nature of the "unspoken contract" meant that Chinese were placed in competition with other minority groups for most favoured minority status. Chinese competed for second place on the racial hierarchy below the dominant group.\textsuperscript{76} This placing was crucial, for it entailed a position of tolerance.

\textsuperscript{73} Indeed, as Chen (1993) argues, the egalitarian myth is deeply entrenched in the New Zealand psyche. Quoting the Minister of Justice in 1977 she writes: "I hope I am not too bold when I say that one of the attractions of New Zealanders in the world abroad is their sense of value of individuals around the world. They can walk and talk with a duke or a dustman without distinction or discrimination; and this, I believe, has come to us from our beginnings" (Chen, 1993:13-14). These beginnings obviously do not include the plethora of anti-Chinese laws passed during the latter half of the 19th century (see Appendix C); nor the fact that racially-based immigration exclusion was only repealed in 1964 (ibid). Chen (1993:15) suggests that much of the egalitarian myth stems from the invisibility of New Zealand's discriminatory practices in the history books. She writes on the silence of anti-Chinese laws: "It receives scant mention in the general histories of Professors Sinclair and Oliver, and none at all in R. M. Burdon's detailed study of New Zealand between the two world wars. These omissions seem particularly curious when similar policies adopted in Australia drew extensive criticism from Australian historians. [These omissions have] resulted in an incompleteness in New Zealand's self-image which allows New Zealanders 'to believe that the national character is freer from racial prejudice than is that of benighted Australians'.

\textsuperscript{74} In 1989, Asians received the highest percentage of New Zealand School Certificate higher grades compared to any other ethnic group. Asians also received the second lowest failure rate after European/Pakeha (Education Statistics of New Zealand 1990, Research and Statistic Division, Ministry of Education, Wellington, December, 1990, Table 27, p. 43). For Sixth Form Certificate (Table 30, p. 45) and for achievement of degrees such as Doctorates, Masters and Bachelors Honours at university (Table 65, p. 104) the trend was the same (Cited in Chen, 1993).

\textsuperscript{75} This occurs because racist discourse silences whiteness (Lee, 1996). "Power in contemporary society habitually passes itself off as embodied in the normal as opposed to the superior. This is common to all forms of power, but it works in a peculiarly seductive way with whiteness, because of the way it seems rooted, in commonsense thought, in things other than ethnic difference. The very terms we use to describe the major ethnic divide presented by western society, "black" and "white" are imported from and naturalized by other discourses." (Dyer, 1993:142 cited in Lee, 1996:99).

\textsuperscript{76} Lee's (1996) study of Asian Americans showed how Asians and African Americans fought a silent battle for white acceptance. They wanted to secure second placing in the racial hierarchy.
The group that tops the racial hierarchy often forms *alliances* with the second placed racial group to "gang up" on other minorities.\(^77\) An alliance between Pakeha and Chinese, for example, serves to legitimate the meritocracy myth. Chinese play the role of "model minority" and therefore show that hard work can lead to success. Maori are often told they can achieve too, if only they tried harder.\(^78\) As the secretary of the Auckland District Maori Council stated in response to Asian immigration (from McLauchlan, 1991:121):

> [The Government's] enthusiasm for importing Asians is based on racial stereotypes (albeit positive): the theory is that their hard working, frugality and cunning entrepreneurial brains will drag New Zealand out of the mire...they exaggerate Asians' virtues and at the same time tell us that we are lazy.

Chinese success inadvertently justified Maori and Pacific Islander failure. Chinese played along with the "model minority" image. It was the basis for tolerance from the dominant host group.

When Chinese become too successful or are perceived as a threat the *alliances shift* again, Pakeha and Maori then form an alliance against Chinese. In 1926, the White New Zealand League formed an alliance with the National Women's Council and four Maori organisations, of which the Aakarana Maori Association was the most out-spoken (Wornall-Smith, 1970). The Association made repeated calls for the preservation of race purity amongst Maori and called for a ban on " Asiatic employment" of Maori female

\(^{77}\) This understanding of ethnic alliances is also captured in Bonacich's (1973) theory of "middleman minorities". Bonacich writes: "in middleman-host conflicts...elements in the host society may form a temporary coalition against the middleman minority group...In South Africa, if whites and Africans can agree on anything...it is on their antagonism to the Indians, [for neither group can compete with the Indian small business monopoly]" (pg. 590).

\(^{78}\) M. McLauchlan, "Far Eastern Suburbs" (Metro 116, p. 117) quoting "John" (a Pakeha): "I'd rather have Asians than our cuzzy-bros down the road. At least the Asians are hardworking".
labour (ibid). The alliance forced a government enquiry into the issue (ibid). Similarly, a
temporary alliance was also struck against Asian immigration in the 1990s. Maori saw
immigration as a threat to their placement on the racial hierarchy,⁷⁹ while Pakeha saw
Asians as a threat to hegemony.⁸⁰

Ethnic minorities recognise the consequences of ethnic competition. To lose the
competition is to invite intolerance. To win the competition is to ensure survival. Thus
competing minorities attempt to sell themselves to those in power. The idea is to convince
the dominant group that they are more worthy of "most favoured minority" status. This
battle solidifies positions. Ethnics are forced to side with their own group because this is
how they are identified, they are ethnically lumped. Attempts are then made to alliance the
dominant group by way of a "sales pitch". This "sales pitch" is their attempt to promote
themselves into the position of "most favoured minority".

The debate over Asian immigration in the 1990s saw Maori promote the ideals of
environmental sustainability. This was their "sales pitch" aimed at Pakeha to demote
"Asians". As Ranginui Walker, a Maori academic, (1996) wrote:

...population growth due to immigration [results in] overcrowded countries,
people resort to destroying the environment on order to survive. The
competition for food is so intense that there is no ethic of
conservation...[these] negative outcomes of immigration...impinge on both

⁷⁹ As Walker (1996:192) states, "Government's immigration policy must be seen for what it is, a strategy to
suppress the counter-hegemonic struggle of the Maori." And, as the Auckland Maori Council stated (from
McLaughlan, 1991:121), "we don't want any immigration...Maoris are at the bottom of the heap and don't want
foreign interests stacked on top of that already weighty pile. They're already getting squeezed enough."
⁸⁰ See "The Iny-Asian" article by Booth and Martin (1993), also "Asian children called 'little invaders" (Press,
August 16, 1997, pg. 8). Likewise, during 1997 fascist activity began to increase. See "White Supremacist
Group Casts Net for Recruits" (Press, Aug 19, 1997, pg. 6); "Fascist Union Targets MP's Office" (Press, Dec 16,
1997, pg. 2). Fascist groups, made up of mainly working class youth, see themselves as the protectors of white
dominance (Lee, 1996).
Maori and Pakeha. (pg. 200-1)\textsuperscript{81}

[A] serious threat to marine resources is posed by entrepreneurs exporting undersized and illegally taken pāua to Asia... We need to remind ourselves and the Government that the people we are inviting to share our country are the very people who introduced drift-net fishing to the world. The same people continue to hunt whales against mounting world opinion calling for a ban on whaling (pg. 202)

Gross ethnic lumping can be identified in the latter quote. While Walker is talking about Japanese he nevertheless chooses to make no distinctions. The former quote reveals who the "sales pitch" is actually aimed at.

In response, Chinese were forced to defend themselves. They had little choice but to argue for Asian immigration. Their "sales pitch" was posed in terms of the economic benefits Asian migrants would bring. In essence, Chinese adopted the argument posed by the Government. They were playing up to their "commodified" role. Manying Ip (Auckland Star, June 6 1990), a Chinese academic, suggested Asian immigration should be welcomed, for it gave an opportunity to capitalise on Asian wealth and success. She cited data from the Commerce Ministry revealing that Chinese migrants invested $800 million into New Zealand between 1988 and 1989. Around 200 businesses were created along with 770 jobs and over $13 million in wages.

With constant "alliance shifting", however, those in power can always maintain dominance. Such alliances serve to justify and maintain racial inequality as minority groups go through cycles of isolation when they become too successful or their demands

\textsuperscript{81} Surely they impinge on non-Māori and non-Pākeha too, but Walker's argument is aimed at "alliancing" Pākeha.
too threatening to the established hegemony. The end result is that racial minorities are kept "in their place" by their own quest for "most favoured minority" status. This is just one more component of the "avoidance of social dereliction" clause where minorities fight against each other to ensure, inadvertently, no minorities can be ultimately successful. The hegemonic structure thus remains unchallenged.

**Normative Behaviour**

The final clause is an encapsulation of all the others. It demands *normative behaviour*. It states that Chinese must consciously present a balanced image to the host population. Too much success can be perceived as a challenge to hegemony. Not enough success can expose social myths. In order for Chinese to ensure tolerance, they must stay within the "limits" of acceptable behaviour. These limits may be considered threshold points. Thus there are upper and lower thresholds. This is what I refer to as the *threshold tolerance system*. It is represented graphically in Figure 1. Here, the "achievement level" line runs horizontally with arrows indicating the direction of "low" achievement and "high" achievement. The upper and lower threshold limits are represented by dashed lines running vertically. Inside the dashed lines, where achievement is neither too high nor too low, exists the "zone of security", this is where the host society tolerates the presence of Chinese. The Chinese in this case have fulfilled their obligation as set out in the "unspoken contract". When the contract is broken, such as when Chinese achieve either too high or too low, we cross the "threshold tolerance" limit and head into the "zone of declining security". Here the risk of host hostility towards Chinese is substantially increased.\(^2\) The problem, of course, is that the threshold limits are in constant motion. National and international shifts in economics, politics and culture can widen or narrow the "zone of security".

\(^2\) Note that "achievement" includes factors such as education, business, and so on.
3. THE TIGHT-KNIT COMMUNITY

Thus far I have discussed varying aspects of structural insecurity, be they socio-historical, political, economical and that related to the tolerance context, which embodies the unspoken contract and the notion of threshold tolerance. In the next section I discuss another general feature of the Overseas Chinese typified amongst those in New Zealand, that is, the tight-knit ethnic community. The importance of community should not be understated. The community structure and composition are both vitally important in shaping the processes of insecurity coping. The details of these processes, of course, will be discussed at length in ensuing chapters. Here, I simply wish to provide an overview of the pertinent features of community that are relevant to the emergent framework.

(1) Permanent settlement

The first feature of community that is important relates to the establishment of permanent settlement. Prior to WWII, Chinese communities in New Zealand, and indeed throughout
many Europeanised states, were dominated by sojourners (Ng, 1959). Typically male, youthful and highly mobile, membership in these communities was highly transient. Some members would return to China after a short period, others would remain but relocate constantly in search of gold or work (Ng, 1993). It was not until the end of WWII that substantial permanent settlement amongst Chinese occurred, and with it the Chinese communities that exist today. The Sino-Japanese war (1931), followed by the communist takeover of China (1949), and New Zealand's relaxation of immigration rules (the right of naturalisation was restored for Chinese in 1952) were the main catalysts encouraging settlement.

Permanent settlement saw the development of two important features within the Chinese community. The first of these was the establishment of a more balanced gender ratio. In 1936 there were 511 females compared to 2432 males, by 1951 there were 2090 females and 3633 males. This allowed the formation of families, some of whom were reunited through migration and others who were formed through endogamous marriage.83 The second feature relates to a status shift from the Chinese village to the New Zealand Chinese community. What was important for Chinese now related more to the happenings within the community and dealings with the host than what was occurring in their previous homeland.

(2) Urbanisation

Another general feature of the Chinese is their concentration in urban locales. Prior to WWII the Chinese were far more rural in character. This can be seen in statistics that show Chinese involvement in agriculture declining dramatically from 41.3% in 1945 to 27.9% in 1956 (Lian, 1988). Today, over 93 percent of Chinese are urban dwellers (Statistics New Zealand, 1995). This was the result of both an urbanising trend

---

83 A process still encouraged today within the community.
experienced in developed nations after WWII, and a desire from Chinese to be close to one another. As one informant put it, "Chinese like to huddle". This urbanising trend meant most Chinese were now concentrated in the cities of Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch (Ip, 1995; Sue et al, 1982). This concentration in urban locales has relevance when assessing Chinese-host relations, for unlike the rural locale where it was common for Chinese to know large numbers of the host community personally, the urban locale is typified by a relative lack of personalising interaction. In short, relative to the size of the population, city dwellers know less of their fellow inhabitants than do rural dwellers. Also, unlike rural dwellers, urban dwellers engage in more "pseudo" personalising. We may wave or say "hi" to a neighbour but know little about them. This is problematic for Chinese as they are still identified as "Chinese" in spite of their assumed anonymous city character. The inability to "genuinely" personalise with significant numbers of city dwellers exposes Chinese to the weight of ethnic stereotypes. They cannot debunk them the way they could previously. Chinese, therefore, must relent to living with the weight of racial stereotypes with little opportunity to change them through personalised interaction.

(3) Homogeneous Community

The next general feature of importance relates to the homogeneous nature of the community and the relative equal status positions of its members. As already noted, the local Chinese in New Zealand are mainly Cantonese. But more importantly, they can trace their lineage to specific counties within the Guangzhou region of China (Ip, 1995). During the migration process, each major county or combination of neighbouring counties created their own associations in New Zealand (ibid). Furthermore, each association sought to bring out fellow members. Chain migration was the result. Thus we see a

---

84 The Poon-Fa Association, representing the Poon-yu and Fa County people, was resurrected in 1916. The Kwong Chew Club, representing the Sunwui people was founded in 1920 in Auckland. The Tung-Tsang Association, representing the Tung-koon and Tsang-shing people was established in 1924 in Wellington. And the Szeyap Association, representing Szeyap people, was founded in 1936 in Wellington (From Ip, 1995).
pattern where the Chinese in each major city in New Zealand are characterised by a certain county lineage with its corresponding association. So not only were the Chinese communities throughout the country united by their Chineseness, they were also united by their specific county dialect, culture, and in many cases, craft. That many Chinese brought out family members further accentuated this process.

Once in New Zealand, family members and former village ties provided the support to set up small businesses. It was common for a specific dialect group to occupy a certain trade, for example it was mentioned by an informant that fruitshops were mainly run and owned by Sam Yap Chinese. If Chinese wished to sell their business, it was often to another Chinese that it would go; preferably to a family member or at least someone of the same county lineage (see Sedgwick, 1982 and Serrie, 1985). In interactions with the host, discrimination was often experienced in the small business environment. Parker's (1995) study of the experiences of Chinese in small businesses provides an excellent example of how vulnerable the setting can be for a visible minority group. That Chinese were largely concentrated in the small business setting meant that amongst themselves they occupied relatively equal status. This concentration also meant their experiences with the host were remarkably similar.

(4) Lack of Anonymity

The final feature that is worth mentioning relates to the lack of anonymity within the Chinese community. Taking into account all the features described above (e.g., the small size of the community, relative equal status, urban concentration, and kin and psuedo-kin ties amongst its members) it should come as no surprise that privacy within the community was lacking. Essentially, everyone knew, or knew of, everyone else. I was surprised to discover how many people knew who I was when I began the interviewing process. Most knew of my parents or relations. Many even knew of the degree courses I
had studied, my travel adventures overseas and even my brief excursion as a professional musician prior to becoming a student. And this was information relayed back to me from people I thought of as complete strangers!

The lack of anonymity within the community setting has consequences for those who choose to reside within it. The conditions of the tight-knit community are conducive to the formation of status regimes. Status within and without the community was a central concern amongst Chinese. It plays a significant role in shaping the security enhancing process. The details of this, of course, will be discussed in the following chapter. The next section deals with a similarity amongst Chinese, that is, feelings of non-belonging, of being a permanent foreigner.

4. NON-BELONGING

The concept of non-belonging is derived from the insecurity context described above. Non-belonging is a conceptualisation of how Chinese feel about their place in the world, or perhaps more aptly, their lack of place. Chinese feel that they are treated as "guests" in New Zealand, in spite of several generations of settlement. As "guests", Chinese are obliged to follow unspoken rules to maintain host acceptance of them. Chinese see themselves as standing "outside" society although culturally they have become very much "insiders". These contradictory circumstances weigh heavily on Chinese. It increases their sense of insecurity. Non-belonging is the product of three main factors: 1) detachment from Chinese society through exile; 2) detachment from traditional Chinese culture through the adoption of New Zealand cultural norms and values; 3) detachment from New Zealand society due to discrimination.
(1) Non-Belonging and Detachment from Chinese Society

The first aspect of non-belonging can be seen as a product of Chinese being exiled from their previous homeland. As mentioned above, the historical insecurity context saw Southern Chinese migrate overseas for survival. Unstable economic and political circumstances made it impossible to return. Indeed, China during the post-communist era even requested that overseas Chinese relinquish their Chinese citizenship and seek naturalisation in their adopted homelands (Ip, 1990). The Overseas Chinese were seen as contaminated, they were somehow less pure, less Chinese, and not to be trusted. The cultural revolution strengthened these beliefs and ended any real hopes for Overseas Chinese to return home. The Overseas Chinese were essentially expelled from their previous homeland.85

(2) Non-Belonging and Cultural Alienation

In response to their alienation from China, the Overseas Chinese sought to accommodate themselves to their new host cultures. Resisting assimilation proved difficult, to assimilate was "the path of least resistance" as Chen (1993) puts it. The demand for assimilation, however, had the effect of further alienating Chinese from their original culture. The sense of alienation was particularly acute when New Zealand Chinese returned to Mainland China or Hong Kong. Informants Minnie and David recount:

David: I remember the first time I ever went back to Hong Kong, every time I'd walk down the street...

Minnie: We felt quite uncomfortable.

David: Yeah because there's a hell of a lot of Chinese there. And you walk

85 See Appendix C for further information.
down the street and if you saw a European I'd look at him twice to see if I knew him (laughs)...because there weren't that many there and in amongst all the Chinese. And you really felt out of place. You felt more a New Zealander more than Chinese, put it that way.

A cruel twist has also occurred with increasing Asian immigration into New Zealand. "Local" Chinese are now out numbered by migrant Chinese two to one. There is a feeling of being out of place amongst these new migrants as well.86 Gilbert Wong explains:

These days when I go into Chinese supply stores I have this vague sense of unease. I suppose it is a 'sense of otherness' which used to be a sense of togetherness whenever I visited Chinese places. Internally, I feel that I must be just a Kiwi, because I don't understand people talking Chinese, nor can I read those signs in Chinese characters. You know, those signs for soya sauce, oyster sauce and what not? Now they are all in Chinese. Yes, I feel that I ought to be able to understand them, and I don't! There is this painful estrangement from Chinese culture. On the other hand, I also feel I've lost my uniqueness of being a Chinese New Zealander. It is very uncomfortable, very disturbing. (From Ip, 1996:139)

(3) Detachment from New Zealand Society

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, non-belonging can be seen as an interpretation by Chinese of their portrayed absence and invisibility in the New Zealand cultural environment. Chen (1993), for example, writes of the surprising absence of Chinese in

---

86 This is further exacerbated by language and cultural differences. Most "local" Chinese speak English and/or Cantonese. They can trace their roots to Mainland China within the last 150 years. The new migrant Chinese, however, are mainly from Southeast Asia. They speak Mandarin, Hokkien and Hakka.
general historical texts. Admittedly, authors like Manying Ip have done much to correct
the omissions of past historical writings. But unfortunately, a Chinese author still does
not hold the same sway as acknowledgement from Maori and European writers that
Chinese do in fact have a place in New Zealand history, and hence a place in New
Zealand society. There is a difference between a minority group claiming belonging and
the host acknowledging a group belongs. No matter how forceful the claim from a
minority group, endorsement from the host is required for mutual acceptance.

Non-belonging in this guise is perhaps best captured through an understanding of
citizenship. Historically, citizenship has taken on many different meanings. In ancient
Greece, for example, citizens held a special place within society. They participated in the
religious, social, political and cultural life of the community (Chan, 1997). Today, we
tend to think of citizenship as being defined and expressed through individual rights; we
can display our citizenship by presentation of a passport to show which national polity we
belong to. In spite of today's legalistic understandings, it is evident that citizenship still
incorporates understandings of obligation, community responsibility and duty to a nation
state. The two components of rights and obligations thus go hand-in-hand. Citizenship
defined thus means a) the formal granting of rights, including the right to vote and
contribute to public debate, and b) a concept of sharing, of being part of a larger family,
of being welcomed and feeling like you belong. In short, modern citizenship involves
"rights" within and "identity" with a given nation state (Pettus, 1997). To have
citizenship in its full capacity is to "belong".

87 Professors Sinclair and Oliver, she writes, devote no more than a few lines to Chinese, while R. M. Burton's
study of New Zealand between the two world wars makes no mention at all. The absence is indeed a curious one
considering Chinese have been in New Zealand for over 130 years, featured so prominently in Parliamentary
debates, led by anti-Chinese politicians such as Seddon and Reeves, and were responsible for initiating New
Zealand's dairy export industry, the backbone of the entire economy.
88 This of course does not deny the formation of new conceptions of citizenship. As in the case of the formation
of a European Union. Here, rights are extended to persons beyond national boundaries, and new formations of a
European identity are beginning to form (Lemke, 1998).
Denial of full citizenship rights comes in the form of myriad discriminations. Legalistic discriminations, such as blatant immigration restrictions have become less evident, more subtle forms of denial do, however, still exist. It is this form of denial that serves as daily reminders to Chinese that they are "in someone else's country", as one informant put it. Indeed, many informants stated they had received derogatory comments from strangers telling them to "go home". For Chinese who grew up or were born in New Zealand, such rejections are particularly offensive. It fosters a sense of detachment from New Zealand society, or as Gilbert Wong puts it, "if you are not European or Maori, you can't help feeling as outsider" (From Ip, 1996:28-29). Writing of her experiences growing up in New Zealand, Mai Chen (1993) recounts incidents where her sense of place in New Zealand was constantly questioned. She describes her arrival back in New Zealand after studying abroad:

I remember saying to my husband that it was really good to be home. While we waited at Christchurch airport for our flight to Dunedin to be reunited with our families, my husband stretched out on some seats some distance away to sleep. I was left to guard all the hand luggage, of which there was a great deal after two years abroad. Some white New Zealanders came and sat a small distance from us. A woman said, 'Look at that Chinese woman with all that hand luggage. God, they're taking over the country. I wouldn't be surprised if she's just arrived from Hong Kong and is going to stay. Probably bring her whole family out next'. She made no attempt to lower her voice and they all stared at me as they nodded in agreement.

My mind cast back to other instances of discrimination—I remembered how a class-mate had said to me when I won a major scholarship to study abroad that it should have gone to a 'real' New Zealander.
All I could think of was how, after twenty years in New Zealand, after all the struggles and eventual triumphs to thrive and succeed in this new country, [my] legitimacy to be here could still be challenged by one insignificant racist. (ibid:6-8)

Mai Chen's experiences of such overt discrimination are not unique, more subtle forms, however, are equally as common. Justine, an informant in this study, expressed her anger at being denied belonging through everyday comments; such comments may appear innocent but can have the same effect as more blatant forms of discrimination.

It does annoy me when people say, 'oh your English is very good' that kind of thing. And I'm like, 'I was born here', and they're like, 'oh!' kind of thing. I think whatever generation of Chinese you are you're always gonna get that. Yeah, even in the [news]paper and things like that, they always talk about 'bicultural' New Zealand, that kind of annoys me. It should be multicultural. It's almost like Asians still don't belong here.

Justine brings up a number of issues, first is the "perpetual foreigner" label often associated with Asian people in Europeanised countries. Writing on Asians in America, Stacey Lee (1996:4) states:

The image that Asians are always foreign(ers) has been perpetuated by the Orientalist discourse which holds that there are innate differences between the East and the West. The Orientalist discourse suggests that an Asian person can never become an American. Rudyard Kipling's phrase, 'East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,' expresses this sentiment.
Thus, regardless of the number of generations an Asian American person's family has been in the United States, he or she has probably been asked: "What country are you from?"

Or in Justine's case, "your English is very good". The second issue Justine touches on is the thorny subject of "biculturalism" in New Zealand. At its best, the position of Chinese within a bicultural state is ambiguous (Ip, 1995). At its worst, and by its commonsense definition, Chinese are excluded altogether. If this were not enough, New Zealand's history of legalised discrimination against the Chinese and its weak anti-discrimination laws (see Chen, 1993) does little to send a message of unbridled welcoming.

5. SUMMARY
This chapter has attempted to establish the overriding conditions from which the emergent theory was discovered. Three areas of major importance were identified. The first of these related to the issue of structural insecurity. Here, I described four types of structural insecurity: a) historical; b) political; c) economical; and d) that relating to host discrimination. The discrimination context was dealt with in more depth due to its increased relevance. Second, I described the context of the small ethnic community and outlined four important factors; these are: a) permanent settlement; b) urbanisation; c) a homogeneous community; and d) lack of anonymity. Finally, I introduced the concept of "non-belonging" and suggested non-belonging can be identified in three ways: a) as a detachment from Chinese society due to exile; b) detachment from Chinese identity through cultural alienation; and c) detachment from New Zealand society through discrimination and exclusion. It is only with an understanding of these conditions that the emergent theory can truly be understood. The following chapter presents the Chinese response to these overriding conditions. It presents the emergent theory in its entirety.
Chapter 4: Enhancing Security

1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss a general process Chinese people engage in; I refer to it as the Enhancing Security process. Primarily, "enhancing security" involves a series of interrelated problem-solving strategies. The aim of the process is to combat feelings of uncertainty, vulnerability and exclusion - "insecurity consciousness". These feelings are the result of the conditions outlined in the previous chapter (i.e., historical insecurity, political insecurity, economic insecurity, and the discrimination context). It can be seen that the New Zealand Chinese exist in a situation of extreme power asymmetry. In such a circumstance where power is so obviously skewed, Chinese have found that encouraging host tolerance or altering the conditions on which tolerance is based are the means to enhancing security. The following discussion, therefore, deals predominantly with the ways Chinese act to ensure tolerance from the surrounding society. It also deals with the consequences of their actions in this endeavour, both good and bad, and how they manage these consequences.

I begin this chapter by outlining two aspects of insecurity consciousness that are perceived as problematic by Chinese - content insecurity and emotive insecurity. I then relate these to social and ethnic identity. These play an important role in the security enhancement strategies Chinese use. Following this, I discuss three interrelated processes: placating, affirming and challenging. These processes are ways of resolving the problem of insecurity. Within these sections I discuss the relevant conditions and consequences that are pertinent to each process.
(1) Content versus Emotive Insecurity

Before I detail the Chinese resolution to their perceived problem, a more explicit account of insecurity consciousness is required. This will facilitate a more concise understanding of what "enhancing security" actually means. Essentially, there are two types of insecurity consciousness. First, insecurity can be seen as content. By "content" I mean the physical or material aspects of being insecure. This can be conceived in terms of earning a livelihood, finding a place to live that is safe, and avoiding personal danger. In short, content security refers to the very basic needs people depend upon to survive. This aspect of insecurity can be captured in comments like:

Grandfather came out [here] and [his] life was rather insecure, so he sought security. It's a funny thing, if you are insecure, you seek security. Subsequently, you'll see Chinese...all have their own houses and most have [various] securities precisely because they seek security; whereas the European really depended on the Social Welfare to supply them security.

Content insecurity is fundamental. It was the reason why Chinese chose to leave China and migrate in the first place. Its relevance has not faded, for the conditions Overseas Chinese find themselves in are still insecure, albeit in different ways. In the previous chapter I identified a set of conditions that were referred to as the "insecurity context". This structural aspect of insecurity should not be confused with "content insecurity". The insecurity context can be seen as a set of conditions that are quite specific to certain types of Overseas Chinese, namely those in certain Europeanised countries (e.g., New Zealand, Australia, the US, Canada, and to a lesser degree the UK). Content insecurity derives from the insecurity context. The significance of content insecurity lies in the powerless position Chinese find themselves in. To ensure survival, Chinese need a place to live and

89 That is, Chinese are no longer escaping war and famine but still face discrimination and intolerance.
a place to earn a living. Host tolerance is what guarantees these things. In New Zealand, then, content security and host tolerance can be seen a synonymous.

The second type of insecurity dealt with in this study is that of emotive insecurity. This refers to psychological aspects of insecurity consciousness. Feelings of anxiety, paranoia, emotional trauma, and self-alienation can all be seen as various types of emotive insecurity. In the ensuing pages many examples of this type of insecurity are given. It is, however, most concisely captured by Goffman (1963:13) when he writes of the consequences of public avoidance by the stigmatised.

Lacking the salutary feed-back of daily social intercourse with others, the self-isolate can become suspicious, hostile, anxious, and bewildered... 'the fear that others can disrespect a person because of something he shows means that he is always insecure in his contact with other people; and this insecurity arises, not from mysterious and somewhat disguised sources, as a great deal of anxiety does, but from something which he cannot fix'. (italics added)

Unlike content insecurity, emotive insecurity is more difficult to "see". It often has ineffable qualities to it. It also derives from the insecurity context, where the powerlessness of Chinese combined with feelings of exclusion (i.e., non-belonging) compound anxiety, paranoia, emotional trauma, and self-alienation. Achieving emotive security requires a demand for equality, belonging and a public validation of one's ethnic identity. Tolerance on host terms does not guarantee emotive security. Rather, emotive security requires a reconstitution of tolerance standards. The "unspoken contract" must become null and void as a condition of host acceptance, while Chineseness must become de-stigmatised and "normal".
(2) Social and Ethnic Identities

Two more important concepts need to be introduced before the emergent theory can be presented; these are notions of *social identity* and *ethnic identity*. Both are inherent within the emergent theoretical framework. Social identities are derived from "cultural meanings and community memberships and are conferred upon the person by others" (Charmez, 1994:378). Being "Asian", for example, can be seen as a social identity. It is how many people in the New Zealand media have categorised Chinese. It is seldom a label Chinese people use themselves, but certain physical identifiers place Chinese people within this social category (e.g., black hair, colour of skin, shape of eyes, and so on). As such, this type of identity, also referred to as "role identity", is situation specific and can easily be manipulated. Potentially, people can disguise themselves to prevent being labelled. This is significant for social identities are often associated with cultural stereotypes, so all persons categorised into a certain social type are "seen" to be possessors of stereotypical attributes. It can also be seen that social identities are public identities, they are often used as guides for the mediation of social interaction amongst strangers. The conception of social identity is useful for it plays a large role in how Chinese choose to resolve their content insecurity concerns. Exactly how this occurs will be detailed later.

By contrast, ethnic identity is a "more or less fixed identity, involving a fairly exact equation of self with group which is the source of cultural or ethnic identification" (Lian, 1982:45). An individual can have many social identities but tends to have only one ethnic identity (ibid). This type of identity amongst powerless minorities, like Chinese, tends to be held within the private domain. Overt expressions of Chinese ethnic identity may be seen as threatening or challenging of existing cultural hegemony. They can be

---

90 For example, a Chinese person may be an "Asian" but also a "doctor".
91 I say "tends" because in cases of "mixed race" individuals it is perceivable that the individual can relate ethnically with more than one cultural group.
made public, however, under conditions of ceremonial display (such as when Chinese partake in local festivals with the Lion Dance). An acceptance of such displays is often portrayed as evidence of multiculturalism, but in reality are often superficial gestures of host tolerance. Ethnic identity, it will be suggested, forms the cornerstone of emotive security.

Now that these four concepts have been explained, the emergent theory can be presented. The write-up follows grounded theory conventions: sections are organised conceptually, major categories form general headings, and concepts are presented for the accumulative build-up of the theory. Examples are given for the purposes of creating imagery; they are not proof (Glaser, 1978). Grounded theories are suggested theories and the write-up presents findings and not facts. Figure 2 gives a diagrammatic representation of the emergent theory. It indicates all major categories, concepts and their relationships. It can be used as a guide to the overall structure of the theory. In addition to this, more detailed diagrams have been strategically placed throughout the remainder of the chapter (Figures 2a to 2j). These are intended as specific navigation aids so the reader does not get lost amongst the immense array of concepts.

2. ENHANCING SECURITY AS PROCESS

"Enhancing security" involves three distinct yet integrated processes that counter insecurity concerns. These are: a) placating, b) affirming, and c) challenging. The contexts and conditions under which each process plays itself out are different though their purpose remains the same; that is, to act as counter measures to content and emotive insecurity. Placating tactics are, as the conceptual label would suggest, various strategies enacted to pacify the host population and limit the potential for a "threshold tolerance" breach. They are, for the most part, types of impression management that require degrees

---

92 The presentation of "facts" requires a verificational framework, where statistical techniques can establish the "significance" of concepts and how they may apply to general populations.
Figure 2. A Model of How Chinese Enhance Security
of ethnic-host interaction. Social identities tend to be emphasised and ethnic identity minimised in this exercise. "Placating" occurs under the conditions set by the "unspoken contract". As such, content security may be obtained at the cost of emotive security. By contrast, "affirming" is a response to the demands of "placating". In "affirming", ethnic identity comes to the fore and little if any host-ethnic interaction occurs. Here, affirmative actions are taken by the ethnic community or individual to counter-balance the affects of discrimination. Finally, challenging processes are the subtle and not so subtle forms in which Chinese make a claim for belonging, demand equality and assert an ethnic identity as a valid public identity. Imposed social identities are renounced. "Challenging" can be seen as the public act of affirming self and rejecting discrimination. De-stigmatisation and normalisation of Chineseness are its demands. "Challenging" often transcends "placating", although they can work in unison.

The following section deals with the first of the three processes: placating.

3. PLACATING

Being a physically distinctive minority group, Chinese public behaviour can easily come under host scrutiny. This is especially true during negative shift phases, where a combination of social, political and economic changes may initiate a decline in tolerance. Chinese are well aware of the unspoken contract and the fickle nature of host tolerance.

Minnie: [My parents were] conscious of the fact that they were Chinese and had to present a better front. [And] we all had to put on our best behaviour. Chinese never got into trouble, Chinese never did this, Chinese never did that, [Chinese were] more law-abiding.

David: I think you'll find that, in terms of being good citizens, you don't find
many local Chinese people going to court or anything like that. [Because] we're here as a minority. [There's] pressure on [us not to] get into trouble...we might get sent out of New Zealand.

Minnie: Or discriminated against.

Chinese (content) security, in this sense, can be seen to rely on a careful management of public image. Placating manoeuvres are a series of impression management strategies, both deliberate and sometimes inadvertent, that are acted out for host viewing. The aim is to placate the host population by presenting non-threatening and sometimes stereotypical imagery. The ability to successfully manipulate one's public image can lead to a greater level of acceptance in New Zealand society, and ultimately an increased level of (content) security. The reverse is also true if the image manipulation is unsuccessful.

The arrival of large numbers of Asian migrants in the 1990s, which sparked a wave of anti-Asian sentiment in New Zealand, has made salient many of the placating manoeuvres local Chinese use. For local Chinese, the arrival of new Asian migrants initiated a fear that their "good" image may be destroyed, and with it, host tolerance as well. New migrants are often unaware of the unspoken rules within their newly-adopted nation. Learning such rules requires time. The behaviour of these new migrants were seen by local Chinese as "brash", "competitive" and "show-offy"; the exact opposite image to that constructed by local Chinese. Thus, although many local Chinese welcomed the growing number of Asian migrants into New Zealand, the one concern was in terms of image.

Beven: What are your views on new migrants coming into NZ, especially in

---

93 Impression management in this study refers to "the process by which individuals attempt to control the impressions others form of them". It is relevant because "the impressions people make on others have implications for how others perceive, evaluate, and treat them, as well as for their own views of themselves, people sometimes behave in ways that will create certain impressions in others' eyes". (From Leary and Kowalski, 1990:34).
the last ten years?

Alex: I think that it's good, in a way. So long as they don't bring in the wrong elements. 'Cos, if they start bringing the wrong elements in, you know like the crims, which I believe a lot of Vietnamese are, then it gives [all] Asians a bad name. At the moment it's been pretty good I think. Because the Chinese over the last 15 to 20 years [have been] very well-respected by Pakehas. What I'm scared of, worried about, is...these unruly elements. Possibly from the likes of Cambodia or Vietnam, you know. They're the sharky ones. They can ruin the image of Asians, that's what I'm scared of. Or if the Chinese triads get into New Zealand and start to dominate and get into messy things. They could ruin the image of Asians in New Zealand [too].

It can be stated that the use of placating strategies varies, as does one's awareness of the placating exercise. Placating is present, however, in both negative and positive shift periods, but becomes more relevant and necessary during a negative shift. Awareness of placating is often the result of perceived growing intolerance. During more tolerant periods placating becomes "background" and Chinese awareness of it is lessened. It becomes a subconscious behaviour of sorts. What is apparent is that placating sparks a distinct contrast between the private and public worlds of Chinese.

My life had been divided into two clear zones. There was the back of the shop, where you lived your Chinese life, and there was the front of the shop, where you presented your European side. There was an inner life and the outer life. This was no problem, it was just the way things were. This continued when I married my first husband, the Chinese one, because he
understood the same rules. There was the private, Chinese world, and the public, European world. (From Beatson and Beatson, 1986:50)

In more general terms, placating is the presentation by Chinese of the unspoken contract. For the most part, this presentation comes in the form of assimilative displays. Chinese "play" at assimilating because assimilation is most often perceived as the most desirable outcome by the host population. In fact, ease of assimilation has often been used as an excuse to permit or prohibit ethnics from entering a society. Such is the legacy of colonial administrations and their subsequent immigration programs. The presentation of assimilation amongst visible ethnics is particularly acute because of their perceived inability to assimilate. Also, although assimilation is the crux of placating, there are exceptions. To discover these exceptions and the general assimilative display process, a closer look at placating is required.

Conceptually, placating displays can be grouped under five general categories. Placating, thus, occurs by a) showing commitment, b) blending in, c) distancing, d) role play, and e) creating understanding. Each display is utilised in different situations; they range from more general tactics to ones involving a high degree of interaction. The aim, however, remains the same: to enhance content security through pacification of the host population. As we progress through the ordering, the skill levels of the actors must increase. It can be said that few if any interacting skills are required in displays of commitment, but a high degree of skill is required in creating understanding. In the latter case, the actor must have

---

94 In 1968, the then Minister of Immigration stated, "people who share a common heritage of language and tradition integrate very quickly. The greater and more obvious the differences between the immigrant and the average New Zealander, the longer and more difficult the period of assimilation, and the greater the tendency of immigrants to hve off into little colonies which become self sufficient and resistant to the process of assimilation.. the peoples of Asia and Africa being of a culture alien both to that of European and Polynesian New Zealand, present more difficult problems of assimilation than any others" (Ho, 1995:28 citing Shand). Furthermore, New Zealand has maintained a strong adherence to "traditional" source countries for its migrants. The exception being between 1987 and the mid 1990s, when liberalisation saw Asian migrants outstrip European migration for the first time (see Palat, 1996).

95 ibid
in depth knowledge of the surrounding society, the unspoken contract and all the
unwritten rules that govern acceptable ethnic behaviour. Also, the differing types of
placating can often be seen to merge into one another. This aspect of "merging" is further
accentuated by the fact that in reality they seldom occur in isolation, but rather, groups of
placating strategies operate simultaneously. This adds to the effectiveness of the placating
exercise. A look at each of the placating categories identified above follows.

(1) Showing Commitment

\[\text{Placating} \quad \text{Showing Commitment} \quad \text{Dedicated Display of the Functional Role} \quad \text{The Good-Will Gesture}\]

**Figure 2a.** "Showing Commitment" Typology

This projection is a *dedicated display of the functional role* Chinese are expected to play
within the host society. Chinese are assigned a role because this role is the justification for
which they have been granted entry into the new society. Thus, early Chinese sojourners
were granted entry as goldminers (see Sedgwick, 1982). Later Chinese migrants have
been granted entry as business migrants (see Palat, 1996). Many local Chinese were
granted entry as war refugees or on the grounds of family reunification based on refugee
status (see Sedgwick, 1982). Their role was to assimilate and to succeed by adherence to
protestant ethic values - essentially to be non-Chinese, Chinese people. Chinese ability to
fulfil these roles was how they were assessed as worthy citizens. One Chinese put it this
way, "the thinking [was] to tolerate, endure and slowly prove yourself and in time you
will be accepted". Local Chinese played their role so well that they came to be seen as a
"model minority". They excelled in education and moved into middle class professions
(see Lian, 1988; Chung, 1988) with no government aid. The problem has always been that to fulfil the role too well is to exceed the parameters of the unspoken contract, while to fail at the role yielded the same result. Chinese were caught in contradictory circumstances. Recently, Chinese migrants have been criticised for not fulfilling their commodified role of boosting the national economy (see Appendix C). "Where is New Zealand's Silicon Valley?" asked one critic.96

One means Chinese have devised to counter criticisms and placate the host population is the good-will gesture. These tend to occur when tolerance is low and a minority perceives a show of good will is necessary to placate the host population. The Taiwanese businessman who donated his Rolls Royce to the Starship Children's Hospital in Auckland in the midst of much anti-Asian sentiment is one example of such a gesture. Unfortunately, such a gesture may benefit the hospital but can easily be interpreted as confirming of racial stereotypes that Asians were wealthy beyond belief and posed a threat of takeover. As such, good-will gestures tend to be perceived as superficial; they lack credibility because they do not get to the heart of what the host population perceives as vitally important.97 That is, that its minority populations adhere to unspoken rules. For Chinese, this comes in the form of the specific unspoken contract discussed in the previous chapter. Thus, good-will gestures are seldom effective as a placating strategy, though they may be used by those less savvy in the arts of placating.

(2) Blending In

More effective as a placating strategy is the art of blending in. Although Chinese were assigned a role that required them to be successful in order to be accepted, the threshold

---

96 Ranginui Walker in a television documentary entitled Instant Kiwis.
97 The "good will gesture" has similar properties to "the sincerity act" described by Bigus (1972) in his study of milkmen and cultivating. As Bigus (1972) suggests, being sincere is one thing, but being too nice can be conceived as "phony" and "deceitful". Likewise for the good-will gesture. It has the air of being fake, an attempt to buy host acceptance rather than earn it.
tolerance system meant success was always relative to visibility. The more successful Chinese became, the more invisible they needed to be to counteract the effects of being seen as a threat and thus narrowing the threshold tolerance level. In other words, although achieving and being successful were the grounds on which Chinese were tolerated, too much success and thus visibility posed the risk of tipping the balance in the opposite direction. In recognition of this, local Chinese have devised tactics that enhance the invisibility of their community and pose an image of being non-threatening.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 2b. "Blending In" Typology**

"Blending in" groups several types of strategies that when performed well make Chinese all but concealed to the host population. There are five general types, 1) *geographical spread and size of the Chinese population*, 2) *avoiding incidents*, 3) *normalising*, 4) *acting passively*, and 5) *identity manipulation*. The degree of ethnic-host interaction increases with each general type. Likewise, as the interaction increases, so the skill level of the ethnic actor must also increase. I also identify a separate category of purely inadvertent strategies that serve the purpose of blending. I present this last as "additional tactics".

---

98 The reverse is also true though not evidenced amongst the Chinese community. Theoretically, the less successful Chinese were the more invisible they would have to be also.
(a) Geographical Spread and Size

These strategies are as much inadvertent as they are deliberate. Through immigration restrictions and the unique class structure of the local Chinese (see Appendix C), a situation has emerged where there is an absence of Chinese enclaves or "Chinatownss".99 This situation is unique to New Zealand. Most other comparable colonial nations (e.g., Australia, Canada, and the US) have clearly defined Chinese ethnic neighbourhoods.100 Similar to the situation in many UK cities, the Chinese in New Zealand were until recently concentrated in small family-run businesses. This meant geographical spread was in aid of business survival (Parker, 1995). There are only so many Chinese restaurants you can have in one street. In fact, many businesses and family residences were combined (Ip, 1996) ensuring the spread was even throughout a city. Even when families became more suburban and moved out of their shops and into separate homes, there was no distinct geographical concentration in the form of Chinatowns. Regardless, the Chinese have been such a small minority group (only 43, 563 in 1991), until recently, any geographical concentration would have been of minimal impact. Indeed, in Christchurch, local Chinese often saw the suburbs of Avonhead and Ilam as their "Chinatowns". Although, if a stranger walked through these neighbourhoods s/he could hardly tell that it had a higher concentration of Chinese than any other part of the city. Displays of Chinese-ness are conspicuously absent. Notably, some Chinese stated they avoided these suburbs because there were "too many Chinese". Other neighbourhoods were chosen as places to reside.

99 Haining street in Wellington has often been regarded as New Zealand's only real Chinatown, but it no longer maintains this reputation.
100 Although, today they tend to exist as much as tourist attractions than as real ethnic enclaves.
The result of geographical spread was to enhance the impression of Chinese as a small community. Furthermore, the relative absence of other Asian-looking minorities\textsuperscript{101} (until recently) added to this effect. The execution of minimal presence was so convincing, albeit sometimes inadvertent, that many were surprised when Chinese appeared in public. Mai Chen (1993:4) recounts a rather humorous example.

My family emigrated to New Zealand in 1970, settling first in Christchurch, and then in Dunedin. There were so few coloured minorities in the South Island. On the first day we were in New Zealand a kindly neighbour offered to take us girls for a walk down to the park. While the neighbour was trying to explain to us how to push the button at the pedestrian crossing, we heard an almighty crash. It was later recounted to us, via the neighbour...that the offending driver had been so amazed by the sight of four Chinese girls dressed in identical red Chinese suits that he had not noticed the red light and had ploughed into the car in front of him, triggering a series of crashes down the line of traffic.

After 1987 immigration changes saw increasing numbers of Asian migrants enter New Zealand. Calls to limit the "Asian-Invasion" were made from politicians and the public alike (see Palat, 1996). Interestingly, many informants in this study expressed support to curtail Asian migrant numbers also.

We actually have had reservations about the open door [immigration] policy, [it] has been a bit too open...when you get a group of people, different

\textsuperscript{101} In 1991 there were only 99,576 people of Asian ethnicity in New Zealand comprising only 4.9% of the total population. The highest concentration was in Auckland, where 28% of the city population were Asian. These figures may be misleading, however, as the "Asian" census categorisation includes groups from South Asia (such as Indian, Sri Lankan, and Iranian). A revised figure for East Asians in 1991 (including Chinese, Filipino, Cambodian, Japanese, Vietnamese, Malay, Lao, Thai, Korean, Indonesian, Nepalese and Tibetan) is 65,418 (From Statistics New Zealand, 1995).
people, people notice you, and it isn't good when you get big groups of people because you do stand out. Whether it's good or bad people can see you, whereas before we were able to be quite exclusive.

Advocating the limitation of further immigration by Chinese is not surprising. The local Chinese, once relatively invisible, began to become increasingly noticeable. The tactics of geographical spread and size were being eroded. Their support for curtailing Asian immigration was in recognition of this fact.\footnote{The avocation by Chinese to limit the size of their own community is nothing new. Ng (1993) found that when European "miners in 1870 started a petition against the further introduction of Chinese...the 400-500 Chinese in Arrowtown nearly spoiled it all when they, too, considered signing it!" (Pg. 147).}

(b) Avoiding Incidents

Being a small minority group is never a guarantee of being invisible or of being seen as non-threatening. Chinese needed to actively cultivate their "good" image to ensure tolerance was maintained. One way Chinese did this was by avoiding incidents, which essentially meant keeping out of trouble and minimising the risk of being perceived as troublesome.

...because we are a small group and there's a certain amount of discrimination collectivity there's also an attitude of not letting the side down. So...travelling on public transport or staying in a motel...you made sure that you left the place cleaner [than when you entered] and not disgrace your race.

The success of this tactic was measured by the lack of negative public attention Chinese achieved, particularly from the media. As such, informants often cited the small numbers
of Chinese in prison\textsuperscript{103} as evidence of how successful such avoiding had become. In this regard, Chinese compared themselves to other minorities, such as Maori and Pacific Islanders. It was stated by many that negative public attention towards these other minority groups was one of the reasons Chinese escaped much public scrutiny. By comparison, Chinese were a "model minority". This situation changed in the late 1990s with growing numbers of Asian migrants. Media headlines such as "Wealthy Asians 'out of control'" (Press, April 12, 1995, pg. 1) and "Asian crime rate soars" (Press, August 1, 1997, pg. 2) reflected a threshold tolerance breach and non-compliance with the unspoken contract by these migrants.

(c) Normalising

In reaction to these headlines and growing anti-Asian sentiment, normalising strategies suddenly became a priority as these new migrants began to learn the rules of the unspoken contract. For example, Tony Reid (1990) reports of Chinese migrants selling their new Mercedes-Benz' and buying secondhand Ford Falcons; Paul Fong, the editor of a Chinese newspaper in Christchurch, wrote an editorial (Chinese Monthly News, April 1994) urging Chinese students to avoid flaunting their wealth by displaying gold watches and driving "flash" cars; and in 1994, Marge Scott, the principal of a Christchurch school, spoke of how Asian migrants now preferred to move into less exclusive neighbourhoods to draw less attention to themselves.\textsuperscript{104} Acquiring competency in these strategies became a survival technique.

These are modern day examples of normalising. I was also given many examples from an elderly Chinese who grew up in New Zealand prior to WWII. He told me how his

\textsuperscript{103} In 1990 for example there were 6182 prisoners in New Zealand. 2980 were Maori, 2857 were Europeans, 315 were Pacific Island Polynesians and 30 were other (figures are cited from Chen 1993). The use of 1990 figures is of relevance because after this date Asian immigration occurred on a large scale. Thus, the 1990 figure is likely to represent the absence of "local" Chinese in prison.

\textsuperscript{104} This point was mentioned during an interview I did with her in 1994 as part of another research project on Asian educational achievement.
mother, when she arrived in New Zealand, changed her hair and clothes to fit western norms. He also spoke of how many Chinese males cut their queues to become less noticeable. Normalising thus takes many forms. The tactic, however, remains essentially the same. Its occurrence is prompted by host reactions regarding the undesirability of certain behaviours or characteristics not considered normative. Normalising is thus a reactionary response - one of many in an attempt to placate the host population. It can be seen as an essential, non-interactionary, tactic involving "display" but little else.

(d) Acting Passively

When interaction increases, developing more sophisticated blending and non-threatening strategies becomes a priority. One such strategy was to act passive. Acting passively in public situations minimised the potential for Chinese to be seen as a threat. This tactic is most clearly evidenced in the educative setting. The following quote from Lyman's (1977) study demonstrates this tactic. Here, Lyman discusses the behaviour of a Chinese student, Chow, and how his parents advised him of "appropriate" behaviour at public school; appropriate being quiet and unassuming. In Chinese school, however, "appropriateness" was not required. As Chow writes of his schooling days:

...no pressure was exerted by my parents to do anything but attend Chinese school. This double standard led to a Jekyll-Hyde existence for me on school days. In public school I was a model of deportment, studious and courteous. In Chinese school I was a little terror - baiting the teacher constantly, fighting and getting into all kinds of mischief. The reason for my parents' attitudes was not lost on me. In public school, where all the teachers were white, I had to present my best posture in order not to shame the Chinese in general and my family in particular. In Chinese school where all the students and teachers

105 I use this quote rather than a local example because it creates better imagery. It is, however, representative of expressions by local Chinese.
were Chinese we could revert to normal. However, probably due to the strain of my role playing in public school, I would react to an extreme when turned loose in Chinese school. Generally, I think these actions and reactions were true to some extent, more or less, in all the Chinese children. (pg. 23)

The difference between the private and public worlds of Chinese was so stark as to be almost indistinguishable. Chinese children played their required role of "model minority" in the school setting, and teachers came to expect this as "just part of Chinese culture".106

This passive image has become stereotypical in western society (Parker, 1995). Chinese came to be seen as "nerds", who excelled academically but were simultaneously lacking in macho characteristics. As passivity, quietness and academic achievement107 were considered feminine traits, so Chinese males came to be "feminised" in Western culture (Lee, 1996). Likewise, Chinese females are seen as ultra feminine. The Suzy Wong and Madam Butterfly image reigns supreme (Sue and Morishima, 1982). Weakness in all its forms are how Chinese are depicted and expected to act in everyday life. Chinese parents reinforced this public image by telling their children to maintain their passive "performance".

Oh, initially the two younger ones had some troubles! At primary school they were teased and bullied. When they came home and complained...we just said, 'Never mind, those Kiwi children are just naughty.' You see, we Chinese parents would never teach our children to be assertive, or complain to the school, or make a fuss. (Ip, 1990:172)

106 Rita Chung (1983) in a study on New Zealand Chinese students found that teachers expected Asian students to be more emotional stable (one who does not cause trouble) and more academically competent (the ability to grasp instructions) than their white counterparts. Ethnicity was a good predictor of teacher expectations. She also found that teachers expected Asian students to live up to stereotypes of achievement. Asian students were expected to perform brilliantly in maths and science, or at the very least be diligent and docile students.
107 e.g., the "girlie swot", a name given to people who study hard.
(c) Identity Manipulation

Another form of blending local Chinese use is identity manipulation. This is similar to Goffman's (1963) concept of "passing", though it is more generalised and flexible. "Passing" is the conceptualisation that some stigmatised individuals can effectively disguise their identity and come to be seen as members of the dominant group. This is rarely possible for Chinese, but Chinese can manipulate their identity to take on other roles. Thus, one Chinese I spoke to was often mistaken for being Polynesian. She used this to great effect and avoided the negativity of being seen as "Asian". During a phase of anti-Asian sentiment, this can be seen as highly effective. It did, however, expose her to the racial connotations of being seen as a Polynesian. Similarly, some informants reported pretending to be Japanese tourists because they were given preferential treatment in many shops. It appeared that being a tourist was seen as more acceptable than being a migrant.

The former is perceived to add value to the local economy, the latter is often perceived as detracting value (see Walker, 1996). Identity manipulation is highly dependent on context and requires great skill. Pretending to be Japanese amongst an audience "wise" to the saliences of a Japanese identity is unworkable. As such, Chinese used this tactic fleetingly and never immersed themselves into the role beyond their skill levels.

Identity manipulation can also occur virtually. That is, various ethnic indicators can be disguised so that if the ethnic is never seen, s/he can give the impression of being a dominant group member. The Anglicisation of Chinese surnames was a common ploy. Thus, Ng became King, Yung became Young, Ah-Chee became Archie and so on (see Greif, 1974).108 The children of the second generation also received European first names. Who could tell that someone named Charles Young could be Chinese? Another

---

108 The Anglicisation of surnames was not always a deliberate ploy. Sometimes it was a mistake from customs officials unfamiliar with Chinese names. So on entry to New Zealand, some Chinese had names assigned to them in their paper work (e.g., "Zhou" (Chou/Chow) became "Joe") (Ip, 2001, Personal Correspondence).
ploy was to master the local accent; this allowed the ethnic actor to "pass" while on the phone. Goffman's (1963) notion of "passing" most appropriately represents this aspect of identity manipulation.

(f) Some Additional Tactics
So far I have outlined various strategies that are purposeful in the art of blending in. There are other strategies however that serve the same function but are quite inadvertent. These strategies are utilised specifically for escaping the immediate effects of discrimination but inadvertently impression Chinese absence or conformity. I identify three inadvertent techniques, these are relocating, avoiding, and career minimising.

Relocating
With an upsurge in anti-Asian sentiment in New Zealand, it was expressed by many informants that relocating to a new city or even country was a distinct possibility. Two informants left New Zealand during the course of my study. Many stated they wanted to go to more culturally diverse and tolerant locations where their visible presence would not be so noticeable. Places like Hong Kong, Sydney and New York were mentioned. By relocating, content security is increased in New Zealand by reducing the visibility of Chinese. Although, this is only likely if relocating occurs on a mass scale, and occurs in conjunction with geographical spread and the limitation of population size. On the otherhand, emotive security is bolstered for the Chinese who leaves, as s/he escapes the discriminatory context. In relation to the second issue, relocating is unique because the Chinese actor need not change, but rather selects a "scene" in which s/he fits or can be better concealed. In a place like Hong Kong, however, new problems arise. Whereas being less Chinese is the concern in Europeanised societies, the context of Hong Kong requires being increasingly more Chinese. Relocating in this instance requires more
concealing; concealing one's non-Chinese qualities.\textsuperscript{109} Emotive insecurity may still be evident in this instance, for there is always the fear that they may be discovered as a fake Chinese. Relocating is particularly acute during negative shift periods, where the saliencies of a Chinese identity become sharply focused and the ethnic actor seeks a reprieve from unwanted negative attention.

Relocating obviously has conditions that enable it and make it possible. Generally, young children cannot easily relocate. Relocating tends to be done by those with a high degree of independence and mobility, they are not "tied down". Indeed, most informants who reported this strategy were in careers that were technical, scientific and "objective" as opposed to "arty" and "subjective". The careers they had maintained touristry qualities that made movement easy (see Pape, 1964). There is evidence that Chinese may even prefer these types of careers because of their content insecurity concerns.\textsuperscript{110}

\textbf{Avoiding}

Another type of inadvertent concealing involves \textit{avoidance tactics}. During the height of anti-Asian sentiment in the late 1990s, many informants reported avoiding unnecessary public outings because of the continued threat of "street racism". Some informants identified specific locations to be avoided and on which time of day such avoidance should be strongly adhered to. For example, one informant spoke of the "negative vibe" in the Christchurch city mall, which on Friday evenings was "full of rugbyheads" and "cowboys". These were groups that informants saw as highly resistant to the presence of Chinese in New Zealand. Avoiding them served the twin goals of avoiding "street racism"

\textsuperscript{109} One of Ip's (1996) informants, who did not speak Chinese and was living in Hong Kong stated, "When I go to the street market these days, I try not to speak English...I try to get by without speaking at all. Well, you can do it by picking things up, and giving them ten dollars so that they can give you some change" (pg. 32)

\textsuperscript{110} One informant stated, "I remember my father saying, 'in medicine you don't have to worry about a livelihood'. He never talked about getting rich and making a lot of money, he really didn't talk about that but he did say many times, and he's quoting another Chinese whose son became a doctor, older than me, that, 'if you qualify in medicine you'll not have to worry about a livelihood'. So there was a thinking of security and survival behind it all."
and of "impressioning" Chinese absence. By avoiding being seen publicly, Chinese inadvertently concealed their presence and no public acting was required. "Avoiding" obviously requires the ethnic actor to know what to avoid and how to avoid it. This requires social knowledge about specific locations and the social types that need to be avoided. It is this type of knowledge that makes avoiding effective.

**Career Minimising**

Finally, "impressioning" Chinese absence was also achieved through career choices. Informants often expressed a distinct preference for non-public occupations. Thus, although Chinese began to enter career fields that came into direct competition with the host population from the 1960s onwards (Lian, 1982), informants still reported preferences for becoming solicitors rather than barristers, accountants rather than teachers, and most notably, Chinese largely avoided the political arena.111

Career path minimising maintained other aspects also. It is evident that professionalised careers were an escape from the "naked" racism of the working classes. Parker's (1995) study on the experiences of young Chinese in small catering businesses showed how workers sought to escape the constant racial abuse they experienced "behind the counter", mainly from the drunk and working class, through educational qualifications. Education was the key into a world where constant paranoia was diminished. As each customer coming through the door of the small catering business was a potential perpetrator, the young Chinese minding the shop lived in a constant state of emotive insecurity. The professional world was no guarantee of escaping racism, but the "genteel" racism on offer was less humiliating. Education was often spoken of as exactly this, "rising above the humiliation". Informants often spoke of their professional work environment as a place

---

111 This, of course, does not mean Chinese avoided all public type occupations. In fact, there was also a high preference for becoming general practice doctors and dentists. These occupations were chosen for their imaging potential (they made Chinese look good), financial rewards (content security), mobility and independence (content security).
where being Chinese was not an issue. It was a place where their qualifications supplanteditic ethnicity. The role of doctor, dentist, lawyer or accountant differs from the role of Chinese caterer selling Chinese food. In the latter case, Chinese ethnicity is an integral aspect of the trade; ethnicity authenticates the food (ibid). The degree certificate or diploma, however, authenticates the professional. In the former case Chineseness is maximised in ethnic-host encounters in aid of business survival; in the latter case it is minimised, often for the same reasons.

(3) Distancing

There are circumstances where local Chinese feel they are being ethnically lumped with a group they do not subscribe membership to, or they may agree to the membership but do not wish to be associated with them because of negative host reaction. In these circumstances distancing behaviours are utilised for placation effect. Distancing implies the statement, "Chinese are not all the same, please do not treat us as if we are, regardless, we are no threat". There are three ways Chinese distance, a) by display, b) by association, and c) by explanation.

![Distancing Typology]

**Figure 2c.** "Distancing" Typology

(a) Display

Displays of difference are used where the perceived audience is wide and usually unknown to the Chinese. It consists of Chinese minimising their Chinese attributes and
emphasising their assimilative aspects. An example can be given in the following quote.

...when we walk down the street, walk through varsity or anywhere, shopping malls, you know there's so many new [Asian] immigrants and you know that they're not local, they look different and they act a bit different, you know, speaking Chinese and that...so you sort of speak English louder, like, 'hey look over there!' so Europeans don't confuse you. Oh it's really silly but I do find that I do things like that so I don't get lumped with them...

Another example can be seen in the informant who came home to discover that her son had dyed his hair blonde. He wanted to avoid any association with Asian migrants and this was his way of distancing. "Display" was one of the most popular ways of distancing. Espiritu (1992) and Hayano (1981) identified similar tactics in the US amongst various Asian students. Likewise, Lee (1996) found that distancing was evident amongst Koreans in the US, although she also found that as a technique it was not always effective, ethnic lumping tended to occur regardless.

(b) Association

Local Chinese recognised the limited effectiveness of display distancing also. Often, it was used in conjunction with association distancing to enhance the assimilative effect. Association distancing required Chinese to surround themselves with members of the host population, thus making themselves "seen" as assimilated ethnics. In practice this meant maximising contact with whites and minimising contact with Chinese in public settings.

As a concept, it can be seen to be the antithesis of ethnic lumping, where the ethnic becomes associated with other ethnics that "look" similar. Association distancing allows Chinese to escape this ethnic labelling.
...getting to school was pretty horrendous. You had to get past all that racial abuse. I had a certain amount of control and security at home, then I had none while I was getting to school...I learnt some ways around it. I would tag onto people going to school. I knew that if my brother and I went together we got more abuse. So I used to find excuses to stay behind. Then he would go on ahead, and I'd come and try to tag onto somebody that I knew. There were some people that it was better to go to school with than others. I remember the feeling of going along and then 'Wow-there's so-and-so!' and I would rush up and get in with their little group of people. (From Beatson and Beatson, 1986:48)

By being seen with whites, Chinese could effectively disguise themselves and be accepted by virtue of association. Or as Goffman (1963:47) put it, "...in certain circumstances the social identity of those an individual is with can be used as a source of information concerning his own social identity, the assumption being that he is what the others are".

Association distancing is most effective when the ratio of Chinese to whites is low. Thus, one Chinese amongst ten whites is more effective than ten Chinese to one white. Similarly, the status of those Chinese associate with is important. The higher the status position of whites, the more powerful the statement of belonging. Thus, an adult Chinese amongst ten white children is not as effective as ten white adults with one Chinese child. From this, it can also be seen that increasing status of associates decreases the necessary ratio. Hence we see in the 1940s the highly respected Reverend McNeur lobbying on behalf of the Chinese community and successfully earning them a degree of acceptance (Sedgwick, 1982) they may not have gained through self-representation, or representation by a lower status individual.
Association distancing is an achievement for Chinese, for it is a condition of honorary membership to the majority group. As one informant stated, "a lot of my school friends have said to me, 'I don't perceive you as being Chinese, in the first instance you're one of us'". To surround oneself with members of the majority population and be immersed in the European world was to escape the indignity of being Chinese in public settings. It required, however, the use of other actors for an effective display. This necessitates the cultivation of relationships, whether of associates or of genuine friends. Thus, although the tactic is relatively simplistic, the means of enacting the tactic requires a high degree of interacting skill. The ethnic actor needs to "work" their way into a group and maintain the association for the duration of the public display.

(c) Explanation

The final type of distancing I discuss occurs through explaining. This tactic requires the most skill and interacting ability from the ethnic actor. Normally, it occurs when Chinese are amongst associates rather than amongst friends. An informant, Amanda, recounts:

Sometimes it's quite interesting, at times I do find myself going on the defensive and I don't really need to be. Like, [at work], when [associates] read something out of the newspaper about the immigrants and I might make a comment like um, 'Oh I hate it when people call me names and things and confuse me with them, we're not the same' and they just listen to me, and I often find I will come up with these comments and try and get my point across to the staff just as a way of trying to educate them hopefully...if I can help them see my side just a little bit.

Explanation distancing often requires great tact on the part of the ethnic actor. In order to present a convincing argument the ethnic must be able to "see" the world from the
dominant world view. Thus, "marginal" social types typically use this strategy. That is, those who have a sophisticated bicultural view of the world.

It can be seen that each type of distancing requires differing levels of interaction. Display distancing is merely a fleeting indicator of difference. Association distancing requires the recruitment of others, preferable those of higher status, while explanation distancing requires an ability to identify difference and logically present an argument counter to what interactants perceive the case to be. The effectiveness of distancing as a placating strategy is questionable. Certainly, they are reactionary responses that occur with little thought or planning. Their use, however, appears quite ubiquitous.

**4 Role Plays**

So far I have detailed relatively passive tactics used in the placation exercise. As suggested, most are reactionary and occur without premeditation. In situations where an increased amount of interaction is required, different types of strategies are evident. The techniques I discuss in this section are referred to as *role plays* because they require a fair degree of social acting. Role plays incorporate a variety of performances that can, on the surface, be seen as contradictory. There are two broad categories. The first concerns *assimilative roles*. Here, Chinese make accentuated attempts to display their assimilation. The second category concerns playing the *foreigner role*. This stands in stark contrast to assimilative roles but serves the same purpose. Parker (1995), for example, found in the UK that some whites were insulted by Chinese who spoke English extremely well. It was an affront to Britishness that a Chinese could be so British. To placate the offender, playing the foreigner was often more effective than attempts at displaying assimilation. The aim was to cause as little friction as possible. In both cases rests the importance of stereotypes as a guide to effective performance. Chinese must understand these
stereotypes in order to use them successfully and maintain the placation effect. In contrast to the tactics presented above, role plays require a high degree of skill on the part of the ethnic actor to produce a convincing performance. Both assimilative and foreigner roles will be detailed below.

![Role Plays Diagram]

**Figure 2d. "Role Play" Typology**

(a) **Assimilative Roles**

Assimilative roles are the predominant form of role play for insecure minorities such as Chinese. The demand for assimilation is often encouraged by state governments. And the perceived inability of minorities to assimilate has often been used as justification to prohibit coloured minorities from establishing themselves as permanent residents. For example, even when Chinese were granted citizenship rights, the New Zealand government prevented Chinese language teachers from entering the country (Sedgwick, 1982). The reasoning was clear: the maintenance of an ethnic language would inhibit assimilation (ibid). The demand for assimilation is strongly felt by Chinese. That Chinese

---

112 The stereotype guides interactions between differing ethnic groups. I believe interaction on the internet is a clue to how important stereotypes are in everyday interactions. Textual interaction on the internet involves no gender, no class and no ethnicity. People can invent characters and be whoever they want. In a study, Leshko (1995) discovered that "real time" interactive "chat" was initiated by certain types of questions. People always wanted to know gender, age, ethnicity, occupation and so on. It was as if not knowing these characteristics prevented conversation to take place. What this reveals is the power of the stereotype, and how important it is in creating a picture in our minds before we begin to interact. Without the stereotype we are not entirely sure how to act. The fact that, during "chat", revealing false identities yielded different interactive responses is indicative of the importance of the stereotype in everyday interaction.

113 See quote above from the 1968 Minister of Customs and Immigration.
feel the need to display assimilative behaviours - often in exaggerated form - is indication of the social pressures involved; indeed, it is an acknowledgement of their powerless status.

The first assimilative role play I discuss here is that of *engagement assimilation*. There are instances where Chinese, regardless of their status, are perceived as foreign. The physical distinction of Chineseness carries with it all the baggage of a foreign identity. In these circumstances, Chinese may choose to counteract the stereotype by engaging the perpetrator(s) and displaying assimilative aspects. Usually, this display is not blatant. There is no overt challenge made. Instead, a normative display is projected to the perpetrator(s), indicating the stereotype was a falsity. An example of this type of display is recounted by Ding (1998:12). He writes:

> There will hardly be a month when I would not be mocked by a young New Zealander who would speak in broken English within earshot. I have learned to muster by best English and remark loudly on their 'impeccable linguistic skills'...

This tactic is used with great effect when perpetrators deny Chinese belonging. I used this tactic one day when purchasing a bike. The proprietor of the bike store took one look at me and decided I could afford the most expensive item in the store, his comment was "surely you can afford it!". The assumption was that I, as a Chinese person, was therefore a wealthy Asian migrant. Feeling somewhat insulted by such gross ethnic lumping and stereotyping, I chose to debunk the stereotype by exaggerating my New Zealand accent, and engaging in a conversation where we discussed cricket. Here, I purposely mentioned I had attended primary school with, and indeed played alongside, a current New Zealand cricketer. The statement I was subtly making was "hey, I was born
here, I understand and am immersed in New Zealand culture, don't stereotype me". I am not sure what impression I made on the proprietor, but on reflection, I was engaging in an assimilative role play.  

Because engagement assimilation involves the breaking of stereotypes about Chinese people as perpetually foreign, surprise is a common reaction. Jenson recalls:

...you get people in pubs and they say to you, 'oh yeah, you're not like a Chinese at all, you're like a Kiwi', which says two things: first of all that you have assimilated really well, and secondly, that they thought you'd be different and not 'Kiwi' at all!

Ambivalence is another common reaction; for, on the one hand, assimilation is seen as good. The Chinese are just like "us". On the other hand, "being like us" is an admission of equality. To accept Chinese as just Kiwis is also to negate any justification for discrimination.

If the Chinese is unsure of the response or is in a situation where engagement assimilation is unlikely to succeed less forceful tactics can be used. Perhaps the most insipid assimilative role play is *self-effacing*. Self-effacing occurs as ethnic humour and self-mockery. Here the racial minority berates his own ethnic group as a means of gaining acceptance amongst the majority. Such self-effacing behaviour is often welcomed by the majority, as it allows racial discrimination to be expressed in a joke context by the racial minority themselves (Lee, 1996). This diminishes the seriousness of racism, therefore, making it more acceptable. It also reveals to people that the minority understands his subordinate position in that society; through self-ridicule, the minority is indicating his

---

114 This does not mean I was unaware of the fact that I was acting. It does mean I was unaware of the type of acting I was engaging in - "engagement assimilation".
understanding of the established hegemony. What self-ridicule does is create a dualism for the racial minority. Distinctions arise between the assimilated self and the ethnic self. In order to understand a joke about Chinese people, the Chinese joke teller must become self-conscious; she must step outside of herself, and for a moment not be Chinese; she must see the world from European eyes, otherwise she would not "get" the joke (Leveen, 1996). Joke telling, therefore, is a way for Chinese to demonstrate they are not part of the group being caricatured (ibid). Thus, self-mockery is evidence of an ethnic individual's assimilation in a given society.

Chinese who are in situations where they are immersed amongst members of the host population are most likely to use this tactic. This is not to say that ethnic humour is not used amongst Chinese themselves - it often is; the difference however lies in the purpose of the endeavour. Amongst other Chinese, ethnic humour becomes a therapy of sorts - amongst the majority population it becomes an ingratiating tactic. In Lee's (1996) study of a predominantly white school, she noted that terms like "chink" and "chogue" were used by Asian students to enhance the self-effacement effect. An informant in this study, who was the only Chinese at a small New Zealand primary school, recalled an incident where:

...some Chinese kids came in and everyone picked on them, and I picked on them too! It's like, 'hey, I'm Chinese' it's like, 'oh, okay, well maybe I shouldn't do this' and they became friends. And [then we] just did the same thing again [when the next Chinese arrived]

Lee (1996:94) refers to self-effacing tactics as "busting" and suggests "humor, self-mockery, and clowning are self-protective and resistant strategies that racial minorities use to deal with the dominant group...[t]hey are adaptations that the powerless make to deal with the powerful prior to politicization of the powerless...[consequently] those in power
come to expect self-effacing behaviour". It becomes a condition of their acceptance.

(b) Foreigner Roles

In contrast to self-effacing behaviours and assimilative roles, foreigner roles are less common, though still used for placation effect. These role plays play up to stereotypes of Chinese as perpetually foreign. Jenson recalls a common incident at school where:

...people often asked me, as if I represented all my race, certain questions like, 'What would Chinese do in this sort of [situation]'. I felt like saying, 'what the fuck are you asking me for?!!' (laughs). But that needed some kind of reply, so I developed over the years...bits and pieces you pick up, so that you can talk and seem to be knowledgeable about Chinese matters. That's the way it is. It's bullshit! (laughs) I wanted to fit in with what New Zealanders thought of as Chinese.

Jenson, a second generation Chinese New Zealander, had little knowledge of things Chinese. He considered himself more a New Zealander than Chinese. To him, being Chinese was a label others placed on him; it was his social identity. Most multi-generational Chinese felt this way. Yet he was still perceived as a Chinese person possessing all the cultural traits of someone living in ancient China. Clearly, there is a static understanding of Chineseness. This is the result of persistent stereotypes that see Chinese people as foreign, exotic, and strange (Parker, 1995). Playing up to the stereotype, as Jenson did, was a way of satisfying the preconceived image people had of

---

115 Minorities who reject self-effacing behaviour are said to be "too sensitive" or "lacking a sense of humour". In 1995, a visiting American professor, Jacob Neusner, made public accusations of anti-semitism in New Zealand. He based his claims on experiences where people made jokes about Jews and denied that Judaism was a religion, but rather "a certain attitude towards money" (Press, Jan 9, 1995:1). The comments were made in jest and clearly Neusner was expected to play the self-effacing game. He did not. He reacted angrily and published his thoughts in an American magazine. In a public rebuttal, academics called him a "blowhard" with "extreme sensitivity to his Jewishness". "What he experienced in New Zealand may have been unconvivial but it was hardly nasty or harmful" states David Novitz (Press, Jan 10, 1995:1). Such comments from Novitz, who is also Jewish, reveal how the self-effacing tactic works.
him. The placation effect was successfully executed.

(5) Creating Understanding
There is one more tactic in the placating exercise: that of creating understanding. This tactic is similar to explanation distancing but is not an overt attempt at trying to debunk ethnic lumping. Instead, creating understanding is an attempt to bridge the gap between Chinese views of the world and non-Chinese views of the world. Often, it is the social elites within ethnic communities who favour this tactic. Their position lets them publicly state through speech, publication and any other form of presentation an informed argument about the plight of the minority. Creating understanding usually pulls at emotional connections between host and minority group. Inherent in creating understanding is the statement, "we may look different but we want the same things in life as you". This type of placating strategy is usually emergent during negative shift periods where heightened intolerance initiates more articulate defensive responses from the ethnic community.

![Diagram]

Figure 2e. "Creating Understanding" Typology

4. PLACATING AND SITUATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL COPING
It is evident that placating tactics involve a heightened awareness of the social identities of Chinese people. Chineseness can be minimised or maximised for placation effect. The former is more common. Ethnic identities, however, remain relatively dormant. For example, to assert a strong Chinese "self" in a placation tactic that requires assimilative skills contradicts the objective of the strategy. Content security is its main purpose, and as a consequence, emotive security tends to take a battering. Chinese experience the tension
involved in placating as a sense of ambivalence and dilemma. McLauchlan's (1991) article on the anti-Asian sentiment in Auckland captures the dilemma local Chinese find themselves in when placating is in effect, he writes:

Asian jokes are in vogue in Howick-Pakuranga. Evonne says her Caucasian friends include her in their joke-telling sessions, but she's ambivalent about the honour. 'They say, 'We're not laughing at you. We're laughing at them'. But it's difficult to know how to feel' (pg. 117)

If Evonne challenges the joke she runs the risk of being seen as an outsider. This occurs because inherent in the placating exercise is the maintenance of the egalitarian myth manifested through non-challenges to discriminatory incidents. To make a challenge is to draw attention to oneself and the falsity of the myth, which negates placating. That the joke is told in her presence is an indication of honorary "insider" membership. She is accepted if she laughs at other Asians, but at the same time it involves an inherent nullification of self, or at least that part of her self that identifies with Asians. Therefore, to placate is to deny an aspect of self. Because of the resulting feeling of ambivalence, informants often spoke of psychological coping strategies that were employed at the moment of a placation exercise. I briefly outline these strategies below under the headings of absorbing, forgiving and denying of self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational Psychological Coping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absorbing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denying of Self</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2f.** "Situational Psychological Coping" Typology
(1) Absorbing

Informants often spoke of absorbing racism. Absorbing essentially meant internalising discrimination and accepting subordinate status as part of the price to be paid for being Chinese. As Ogbu (1991:21) writes, minorities often "rationalise...prejudice and discrimination by saying as 'guests' in a foreign land they have no choice but to tolerate prejudice and discrimination". Absorbing often occurred when informants chose to "just ignore" or "laugh off" discriminatory remarks. Furthermore, absorbing was often reinforced by parents. They are mindful of the consequences of posing a challenge to discrimination.

The abuse on the way to school was verbal, and I remember there was throwing of stones and things, too...I remember coming home and crying about it, and my mother saying: 'There is nothing you can do about it.' She lined me up with that little quote: 'Sticks and stones will break my bones but words will never hurt me.' But I decided that that was a load of bullshit (Beatson and Beatson, 1986:48)

Absorbing is seldom a successful tactic, for it identifies for Chinese their unenviable reality: that they are a subordinate minority with little or no power. More successful strategies explain away discrimination while maintaining the social myth of egalitarianism. These strategies allow Chinese to feel more comfortable about their minority status.

(2) Forgiving

One means of doing this is through forgiving. Forgiving is the process by which the perpetrator is made incompetent in some way. He is cast in the role of a fool or deviant. Racist comments are seen as the products of the ignorant, uneducated, and intoxicated.
The logic is that intelligent, educated and sober persons do not possess such discriminatory views. In response to a question on dealing with discriminatory incidents one informant had this to say:

Most of them are drunk so they don't know what they're saying anyway. But you can tell they know nothing. I just get disappointed. I mean, it's not simply that they are uneducated, half of them probably have never been on a plane. The furthest they have gone is probably Rangiora (laughs). Because honestly, they don't know anything about foreign culture or anything.

As an intellectual and worldly inferior, the perpetrator is made into an insignificant figure. As a self-protective mechanism this tactic serves a useful purpose, although, it is so easily falsified by negative examples. The Chinese is often left to absorb discrimination again when faced with these counter examples. Yet, there are constant attempts to uphold the egalitarian myth. "Forgiving" is a tactic filled with optimism, though this is constantly shattered by the consistency of discriminatory experiences.

A lot of New Zealanders are real country bumpkins. I just get really disappointed. You know, you think New Zealand is actually quite liberal, a relatively forward thinking country, but when you see people like that!?

(3) Denying of Self

In contrast to absorbing and forgiving, the most extreme strategy informants used was the denying of self. Here, the Chinese denies his ethnic identity and plays a momentary mind game to escape the indignity of being stigmatised.

When people...like friends hassle me for being Chinese I just laugh at it, I
don't really mind it because I don't think I am. I'm a New Zealander not a Chinese New Zealander.

Discrimination, then, does not affect this non-Chinese Chinese because he does not identify with his imposed social identity. This extreme position is seldom workable for it is so easily contradicted. This is especially the case during "mirroring" experiences.

I often find meeting other Chinese Kiwi's, who speak Kiwi, kind of odd. It's like looking in a mirror and not liking what you see.

The falsity of denying an inherent ethnic identity is realised at these moments. As a strategy then, the denying of self protects for an instance but soon fades in its usefulness.

To recount, to absorb, forgive and deny self are momentary coping strategies that are inherent in the placation process. They tend to be fleeting measures without lasting resolution. They occur because placating involves a heightened awareness of social identities, which demands minimisation of "self".

So far, the analysis has outlined the strategies used in placating. It has been suggested that by showing commitment, blending in, distancing, role play and by creating understanding Chinese can create an image of a compliant and non-threatening minority. It has also been suggested that placating demands psychological coping strategies that occur as self-justifications. The impression one gets, however, is that placating is a haphazard exercise occurring with little awareness amongst Chinese. This is far from the case. Coordinating performance is also required for a more effective display. It is to this issue I now turn.
5. COORDINATING PERFORMANCE

As Chinese are often ethnically lumped, the public acting of one individual often reflects on all Chinese. Variations or non-conformance in the placating exercise, thus, can be seen to limit its overall effectiveness. In other words, placating works best when all Chinese placate. Although placating is generally learnt through trial and error, some aspects of the exercise are encouraged by the ethnic community (e.g., showing commitment and blending in). The community, then, acts as a coordinating mechanism to ensure a degree of uniformity occurs in placating performances. Goffman (1959) referred to this as "team performance" and offers some useful concepts that can be easily incorporated into the existing analysis (from Ueda, 1974). Crucial to the maintenance of team performance is a threefold scheme of social organisation: a) dramaturgical loyalty, b) dramaturgical discipline, and c) dramaturgical circumspection. Dramaturgical loyalty refers to the maintenance of obligation to one's ethnic community. Dramaturgical discipline refers to the uniform presentation amongst ethnics to the viewing public. And dramaturgical circumspection involves the deliberate and careful planning needed to present the uniform image. It can be seen that the tight-knit nature of the Chinese community, its homogeneous character, as well as the lack of anonymity within is an ideal platform for coordinating performance.

![Coordinating Performance](image)

**Figure 2g.** "Coordinating Performance" Typology
(1) Dramaturgical Loyalty

Loyalty within the Chinese community, and indeed the Overseas Chinese generally, is
maintained through a strong sense of group solidarity. Their experiences of discrimination
fostered a togetherness that bonded Chinese together. To protect themselves Chinese
formed their own organisations: "native place associations; surname groups; dialect
groups; business guilds; athletic clubs; religious groups; benevolent societies, tongs and
triads" (Seagraves, 1995:110). They were a self-reliant community because they were
exiled from China and in many instances exiled from social normality within their host
societies. So close were the Chinese that many informants talked of the "say hello to all
Chinese rule" that their parents taught them from a young age. This simply meant that if a
Chinese passed another Chinese in the street they would both acknowledge one another.
It was a show of loyalty, connectedness and recognition of minority status.

The maintenance of loyalty was further encouraged through reminders of discriminatory
experiences from family and community. When I visited the Chinese Association Hall for
a fundraising event in 1996, placards were displayed on a stage detailing the history of
Chinese in New Zealand. On these placards were derogatory quotes made by New
Zealand politicians towards Chinese, citations of anti-Chinese movements and anti-
Chinese violence, and a chronology of immigration restrictions that had been enacted to
prohibit Chinese entry into the country (see Appendix C). Reminders of discrimination
are also made from parents to their children.

My father was born in New Zealand...and I know that when I spoke to him,
that when they were growing up, there was quite a lot of racism, almost
apartheid I guess you'd call it. In Christchurch they weren't allowed to go to
the barbers, [they] wouldn't cut their hair because they were Chinese.
Tales of discrimination were only one means of insuring loyalty. Loyalty was also encouraged through *identity maintenance*. Thus the Chinese community promoted language schools, maintained traditional Chinese festivals, and introduced an annual Easter sports tournament as a vehicle for cultural exhibition and social mingling. The sports tournament was also strongly encouraged by Chinese parents for the purposes of cultivating relationships amongst their children, and ultimately of ensuring endogamy remained the norm within the community (Sedgwick, 1982).

Most notably, loyalty was also affected through cultural manifestations. Informants often talked about obligation to family and community as inherent in Chinese culture.

...you know the traditional thinking, Chinese [have] a more extended time concept of support and obligation to their children. [The support extends] right to the time that they get married and [are] established in occupations.

Furthermore, the obligation relationship between parent and child is characterised by an understanding of reciprocity (Ching, 1978). Parents support the child through school, into a stable career, and often into marriage, and in return, the child supports the parents in their old age. Obligation from child to parent involves "being good", which in terms of security means listening to and taking parental advice on public behaviour and imaging (which is reinforced by community "information" discussed below).

Chinese children are not only compelled by cultural tradition to obey parental wishes; the experience of the small business setting is also relevant. It fosters a sense of guilt at seeing how hard their parents have worked and how much they have sacrificed (see Leong and Leung, 1994). As one informant put it, "[parents] invest so much of themselves in you; money and time, and their dreams". To "be good" and follow parental
advice is an acknowledgement of parental struggle, an acknowledgement of being a minority, and an acknowledgement of Chinese identity. The sense of obligation was so strongly felt by Chinese that those who chose to ignore parental advice felt intense guilt. They felt they were being "selfish".

(2) **Dramaturgical Discipline**

Discipline within the community is maintained through the dissemination of *information*. Information serves as a constant reminder of appropriate behaviour. There are two types of information dissemination: *formal* information and *informal* information. Formal information takes the guise of community newsletters, newspapers, seminars, speeches and the like. This means of information dissemination is available to all. In the case of newsletters and newspapers, they are often sent to people's homes. All the happenings within the community is contained within this print media. The Canterbury Chinese Association newsletter publishes such things as scholarship winners for those who succeed in national examinations. The high achievement norm is strongly adhered to as an integral component of the "model minority" image. The print media can also be used for less subtle indicators of appropriate public behaviour. I have already mentioned the article by Paul Fong (Chinese Monthly News, April, 1994) that urged Chinese migrants to tone down their image in an effort to "blend" more successfully. Finally, public presentations can also be used to encourage community discipline. I recall an incident where the chairperson of the Chinese Association gave a speech at the closing of a Easter sports tournament. After congratulating the participants and organisers he reminded the crowd that Chinese were a minority in New Zealand and must be diligent in their attempts to maintain "a good public image".

As important as formal information is in maintaining discipline, it does not come close to the control exerted by informal mechanisms. Here, community gossip is highly
significant. The small size, homogeneous nature and tight-knit character of the community makes gossip a powerful weapon for controlling any behavioural transgressions. Gossip thus serves a social control function. Those that choose to break community rules are invariably those whom are most gossiped about. The best gossip, after all, is that of a scandalous nature; that is, those who have made radical departures from expected norms (see Gluckman, 1963).

There is a grapevine that leads all the way back home. So anything that happens, all the parents would know...like if somebody's son got expelled [from school], everybody would know exactly who that was and how that happened. If somebody had a car accident, maybe [the community] would find out before we did. Everything would go back, and it spreads very fast...There's no privacy.

Gossip is made even more effective within the Chinese community due to an intense concern for status amongst its members. Some informants referred to this as the "Kiasu syndrome", which simply refers to a "fear of losing out" to others. It results in a constant one-uping process; "[parents] want to show something off...if it's not their car then it's their kid" stated one informant. As such, gossip is an ideal means of obtaining information for social comparison (Suls, 1977) and given the normative nature placating has taken on within the Chinese community, transgressions from it are often corrected through Kiasu and indeed more gossip. The only way to avoid negative gossip is to act

116 This one-uping process amongst Chinese in small communities has been beautifully captured in satirical form in Amy Tan's (1989) novel "The Joy Luck Club". She writes:

"...One day I heard my mother and her friend Lindo Jong both talking in a loud bragging tone of voice so others could hear...Auntie Lindo's daughter, Waverly, who was my age [aged 10]. . . had gained a certain amount of fame as "Chinatown's Littlest Chinese Chess Champion."

"She bring home too many trophy," lamented Auntie Lindo... "All day she play chess. All day I have no time to do nothing but dust off her winnings." She threw a scolding look at Waverly, who pretended not to see her.

"You lucky you don't have this problem," said Auntie Lindo with a sigh to my mother.

And my mother squared her shoulders and bragged: "Our problem worser than yours. If we ask Jing-mei wash dish, she hear nothing but music. It's like you can't stop this natural talent." (pg. 138)
normative in the extreme. It is the fear of Chinese parents to have children who transgress community norms; gossip is inevitable and loss of status is a distinct possibility.

Mum would hassle me about my haircut when I was younger. She'd go, 'oh you look like a criminal'. [And I said], 'you're only worried about what your friends would say about you because of your son'. Even now when I shave my head or something [my] mother would say, 'oh there's a whole lot that [my] friends are gonna say, now!'

(3) Dramaturgical Circumspection

To restate, dramaturgical circumspection involves the deliberate and careful planning needed to present a uniform image. Maintaining loyalty and discipline are necessarily important in this endeavour (Goffman, 1959), but the maintenance of the Chinese community under a united organisational framework and the encapsulation of a significant membership is also necessary. Thus, community organisations like the New Zealand Chinese Association have launched two key strategies to spread its web of influence. The first of these is merging with other Chinese organisations. The second is the development of recruiting strategies to bring outsiders into the fold.

Merging has become necessary because of the growing diversity of Chinese in New Zealand due principally to changes to immigration policy. Many of these new Chinese communities have established their own separate associations. In a declaration of intentions, the New Zealand Chinese Association (NZCA) made the following statements in the 1999 spring newsletter:

117 Goffman (1959) principally used the notion of dramaturgical circumspection to refer to the staging of performance. Thus he mentions the careful selection of an audience when engaging in a performance. Smaller audiences are easier to perform to, larger ones more difficult. The rendition of dramaturgical circumspection given here refers less to the actual staging of performance and more to the pre-public planning needed to ensure the performance occurs smoothly and uniformly.
A main objective of the NZCA is to unite the Chinese in New Zealand and also be the leading organisation representing Chinese New Zealanders. If we are to pursue this objective, we would need to develop strategies to accommodate these diverse groups of recent immigrants and to promote not only their cultures, but also their dialects. We may need to develop alliances or mergers with present new Chinese migrant organisations. (pg. 3-4)

By bringing other associations into the fold, formal information at the very least can be disseminated throughout the wider Chinese community. Even better, merging facilitates the sharing of cultural festivals and the Easter sports tournament, activities which can only enhance the prospect for coordinating performance.

Recruitment has become necessary because membership has been declining in recent years. Obviously, the larger the membership pool, the greater the influence of the umbrella organisation (NZCA). Recruitment aims have been stated in the following terms:

Increased youth participation in NZCA is another important issue to be considered...One of the most visible manifestations of youth participation in NZCA is the Annual Easter Sports and Cultural Tournament...The NZCA will have to...develop strategies to retain and enhance the Tournament...Another strategy to enhance youth participation is to involve more youth in branch and NZCA organisations. [Furthermore the] NZCA will have to develop strategies and programmes to cater for its senior citizens...(pg. 4)

Thus, through merging and recruiting, the NZCA gains greater leverage in controlling external imaging. Placating maintenance, of course, is seldom stated as the reasoning
behind these strategies. Indeed, the stated aims of the Association are to "provide assistance and support for the Chinese in New Zealand, to promote and foster their language and culture and their intellectual, moral and physical well-being and to unite the Chinese in New Zealand" (NZCA Spring Newsletter, 1999:3). Placating maintenance as positive impression management is, however, an unstated aim, as host tolerance clearly depends on it. The examples given above of formal information as discipline clearly indicate the Chinese leadership recognise this fact.

6. WHO PLACATES MOST?

Placating was a general type of activity engaged in by all Chinese I came across. There was, however, some variation. Some saw placating as more necessary and pertinent than others. A brief discussion of the factors that increase an individuals likelihood to placate is required. Three key factors determine increased placating; these are: a) degree of community immersion, b) experience of negative shifts during a specified critical juncture, and c) the amount of power and status of the individual within wider society.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conditions that Increase 'Placating'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Immersion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The 'Critical Juncture'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power &amp; Status</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2h.** Aspects that Increase the Likelihood of "Placating"

**1) Community Immersion**

From the foregoing discussion of community-based influences, it is not difficult to see that those more immersed within the ethnic community are also more likely to engage in enhanced placating activities. The pressure of community mechanisms (e.g., gossip, Kiasu, and the like) ensure normative acting is the standard. Of course, it needs to be
mentioned that not all communities take on the same characteristics. It is the social elites who significantly influence the types of activities that shape community norms (Lian, 1988). If social elites see placating as pertinent and the majority of the community do as well, then the community takes on that particular character. Given the homogeneous character of the local Chinese community in New Zealand, it is not surprising uniformity in perspective is the norm. Related to this is the tendency for local Chinese social elites to have grown up in a particular era where anti-Chinese sentiment was prevalent. Many informants spoke of the 1950s as watershed years (see Appendix C). There was a movement from host intolerance to growing tolerance during the decade leading into the 1960s. No doubt the economic boom of the 1960s contributed to these perceptions of growing tolerance.

(2) The Critical Juncture

This also leads onto the next major factor influencing placating: experience of negative shifts during a specified critical juncture. The critical juncture I specify is actually a rather long period of time ranging from the teenage years through to the career initiation stage of someone’s life. The impressionable aspects of this time in life are commonsense and well understood (see Phinney and Rotheram, 1987). Experiences of discrimination and rejection during this phase seems to have life-long consequences, with a particular impact on coping strategies. Informants spoke of never forgetting the discrimination they faced at school and in their early work careers. Some even recalled specific incidents and the names and places of those who insulted them.

[It was] thirty odd years ago when I was experiencing it. And I tell you who gave us the most cheek, [it was] the poor Catholic families. And I always

---

118 Uniformity in regards to their positioning and relationship to the host population that is. Within the Chinese community many different perspectives are evident in regards to other concerns, such as loyalty to China for example (see Sedgwick, 1982).
remember [thinking], 'oh by God I'll get you' as I was growing up; at that stage I was at high school. Isn't it funny that you just never forget. I just thought I would never ever forget the cheek that [they] gave me. I never did. And I see them in the street, quite a few Ashburton people have moved here, and I just turn the other way. I just cannot be bothered with that.

Placating was a normative activity for these Chinese as their survival solely depended on it. To further complicate the issue, experiences of discrimination seemed to be associated with increasing immersion within the ethnic community. The community became a solace. This further exposed Chinese to community-based mechanisms (e.g., gossip), while the status concerns within the ethnic community also seemed to be compounded during this critical juncture. Chinese parents want their children to be successful (that is, to do well in examinations and get highly qualified jobs), firstly for practical reasons (content security), but also for external imaging (content security) and "bragging rights" within the community.

(3) **Power and Status**

Finally, the amount of power and status of the individual within wider society also influences the perceived need for placating. This is generally translated into educational qualifications. Those more educated and in occupations of high status see less need to placate than those at the opposite end of the spectrum. Indeed, the work context often determines the usefulness of the placating exercise. Professionals or experts are usually in a position of power and if whites wish to obtain services from a Chinese expert, it is usually based on skills. Non-professional Chinese, however, may be placed in a weakened position. The Chinese caterer for example sells himself by his ethnic identity, it authenticates the food. Placating may be necessary in this case to ensure custom.
You used to get Europeans coming in saying, 'oh how much is this', and they'd say 'oh no, you too dear!' (said in an exaggerated Chinese accent). They [were usually] sarcastic remarks. And they (parents) just had to put up with it. They couldn't do anything. They couldn't say, 'oh you get out you', or something like that because they wanted their trade. Most of the Chinese, well, none of them at that stage were in any sense wealthy, they were just trying to make a living. And they knew at that stage that even a shilling, or two shillings, is a big difference, it's another customer, so why should they antagonise these Europeans. You know [they couldn't say], 'you get out you white bastard!' (laughs) you know, they wouldn't do it. So they had to put up with a lot of it and whoever came into the shop. They just had to grin and bear it.

(4) The Master Placater

Some additional comments concerning placating are necessary before I proceed onto a discussion of its consequences. It can be seen that many permutations of these three critical factors are possible. I will discuss one particular permutation: that of the powerful individual who also experienced a negative shift during his/her critical juncture and has a high degree of community immersion. This type of individual generally fits the role of social elite within the ethnic community. S/he usually takes a leadership role. S/he is highly relevant because s/he can influence the shape of the community, is often spokesperson for it, and thus is seen as an ideal, typical representation of it.

With an equal amount of immersion and understanding of the Chinese world and the European world, this social type is what Hsu (1981) calls the "marginal person". These individuals see the world from twin perspectives and make excellent mediators between
ethnic community and the wider society. Their role as placaters is thus highly relevant. They can explain the quirks of the ethnic group in articulate ways. They create a degree of understanding, often through public presentation and the publication of articles and books, within wider society. They also serve as role models for the ethnic community, for their tales of success are inspirational. Often, they are pioneers (e.g., the first Chinese doctor, the first Chinese lawyer, dentist, Member of Parliament, university lecturer and so on) and thus pave the way for others to follow. Every local Chinese I talked to during the course of this study could identify these social types. Their role is vital in the placation exercise, more so than any other social type.

7. THE CONSEQUENCES OF PLACATING

Placating is a solution to the problem of content insecurity. It is a means where powerless Chinese can influence to some degree the fickle nature of host tolerance. A positive consequence of placating is that when done well, tolerance increases and Chinese gain content security. Negative outcomes are more evident, though. The continued use of placating is not unproblematic. An environment that demands placating is also an environment fraught with issues of emotive insecurity; that is, feelings of anxiety, paranoia and emotional trauma. Chinese indicated this in comments like:

As soon as I came back to Auckland there was like this change in being Chinese. Like when I went overseas you didn't feel so self-conscious at all. Whereas as soon as I came back to New Zealand it's like, oh, self-conscious again.

When I go to the supermarket, I do feel quite paranoid, especially when I'm with other Chinese (paraphrased from an unrecorded interview)
I really think college was the most unhappy days of my life. I always felt left out. We felt we really had to step back and be invisible. (From Immigrant Nation, 1995)

An environment that demands placating is also one that demands a high degree of social acting; for placating is exactly that - a false presentation of "self". To placate is to live in a state of "bad faith",\textsuperscript{119} to be something that one is not. The pressure not only comes from the surrounding society to conform to this fraudulent image, it also comes from the ethnic community who are aware of the consequences of not playing along. Pansy Wong summed up the consequences of placating beautifully when she stated:

I remember for a long time when I was in Christchurch, people would say, 'oh, isn't it great, there has only been one Chinese New Zealander in jail'. Not that I criticise that type of stand, but what I'm sort of saying is, how can we as a community be held responsible for everyone of our member's behaviours?

We don't have to set ourselves unnecessarily high targets because that price...I have seen in a lot of areas. For example, our youngsters have a lot of pressure in academic achievement. Of course it's great that you achieve and have good results. But we also must understand that some may develop later, some may prefer to have a more balanced academic and sports pursuit. Some may want to pursue a non-professional degree. But the choices in [the] Chinese community tends to be 'hey, if you can, it's a doctor, engineer, a lawyer'. But we should have people of different fields. I mean, people

\textsuperscript{119} In general terms, "bad faith" is a condition of self-deception. A lie told to one's consciousness (see Jean-Paul Sartre (1956) Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Consciousness (translated by Hazel Barnes, New York, pp. 47-72)).
should be able to pursue philosophy, arts, culture...because ultimately you can only be really good when you're interested in a subject.

And another thing, there may be health and other issues...I think the other day I went to a community organisation, they were dealing with issues like mental health, handicapped children. And people were like, 'oh, your community doesn't have those sorts of problems'. And the honest answer is, I'm sure they have but they will feel really intimidated to raise it. Like, 'no, we can't have disadvantaged people in our community'. By denying it, it can be quite harsh on individual families, or individuals to seek help.

Social acting, to the extent I have described, has led Chinese to question its benefits. As one Chinese stated, "People...expect too much from you, so I hate being Chinese sometimes" (From Ip, E. 1990:35). Self-hatred is not an uncommon state, all local Chinese I spoke to said they had this feeling at some time in their lives. For some, the pressure associated with being Chinese was so great that a total abandonment of one's ethnic self was common. Mai Chen (1993) writes:

The message I received from [experiences of discrimination] was clear. Being Chinese was a handicap. Since I was Chinese, I was inherently handicapped. I responded by over-compensating, by throwing off every vestige of Chineseness and fully embracing New Zealand culture. I wanted people to know I was not really Chinese because I did not want to be treated like a Chinese. For me, becoming Kiwi was the path of least resistance in a life which already had too much resistance. It was a way of surviving. (pg. 5-6)
Under such circumstances, social acting becomes habitual. In order to portray a more convincing role as "model minority" deep immersion in the role is inevitable - "method acting" of sorts. This immersion makes the performance more realistic for audience and performer alike. Its consequence, however, is self-alienation. Ueda (1974:79) writes of the demand for social acting by stating:

This process is insidiously pathological for, as the act is repeated, the individual becomes less aware that he is only an actor. By repeated performance he arrives at a state where he cannot separate act from fact, and he loses consciousness of his self-alienation much as Marx's lumpenproletariat were unconscious of their own alienation.

Self-alienation can, however, become revealed to the Chinese at moments of reflection. I conceptualise these as discovery moments, where events, occurrences and circumstances can shake the individual into a heightened state of awareness about their ethnic identity. Discovery moments were more likely to occur where ethnic difference became heightened by external conditions. Hence, many informants reported the handover of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty and growing anti-Asian sentiment in New Zealand as contexts that were crucial to their accentuated awareness of difference. The crucial point was that such events highlighted ethnic difference between Chinese people and the surrounding society, which was non-Chinese. It was a sudden realisation from informants that their history was different and unique and that they did not share the same heritage as the dominant group. It was, in other words, a realisation that they were unconsciously playing a role that negated their ethnic identity.

I think the turning point was in the 5th form, I read a book by Witi Ihimaera to do with the Maori people...The story really affected me, I think it was
called 'The Whale'.\textsuperscript{120} It was about this Maori elder and how he was really disappointed in the young people turning more and more white. And that kinda got me thinking about my own identity. And I thought, oh my gosh, this can apply to me as well! And so I sorta wrote an essay, and my English teacher took me aside and had a talk to me about it. And that had a really significant impact on me, just questioning my own identity and that sort of thing. And from then on I've become more and more interested in Chinese culture.

The discovery moment was recurrent. It occurred over and over matching shifting tolerance levels. Ironically, self-alienation was most prevalent during periods of sustained host tolerance. This is because placating is somewhat unconscious during these periods. Negative shifts typically spark an awareness of placating and ethnic identity, which initiates Chinese on a path of solace seeking. I refer to this as affirming.

8. AFFIRMING

Affirmation processes are esteem-building strategies that counter-balance the minimisation of self required through placating. In fact, the more alienated a person realises that they were, the more intense the affirmation process tends to be. The immediate psychological strategies of absorbing, forgiving and denying of self were only temporary measures. They allowed placating to proceed without too much damage to the ego. Once the effectiveness of these fleeting measures faded, however, more stable strategies were required to cope with the daily bombardment of discriminatory events. In affirming, Chinese maximise their ethnic identity and, in doing so, release the pent up frustration accrued from feigned social performance. Affirming processes are more or less private, meaning that Chinese can escape their imposed social identity and be "true to themselves".

\textsuperscript{120} The book was actually called "Whale Rider" (Reed Publishing, 1995).
Privacy, after all, is "one of 'the little ways in which we resist the pull' of group commitments and reinforce our selfhood" (from Goffman, 1959 quoted in Schwartz, 1993). This aspect of privacy aligns with Goffman's (1967) concept of "back region", where Chinese can engage in activities that are inconsistent with public presentations of self. The back region is a person's comfort zone; it is free of the restrictions and the interaction rules that govern public life. Affirming can thus be seen as the means by which Chinese counteract the emotive insecurity experienced in everyday life. To affirm is to achieve balance to life. There are three types of affirming that are considered relevant by informants. These are, a) association affirmation, b) cultural affirmation, and c) intellectual affirmation. I detail each below.

![Affirming Diagram]

**Figure 2i. "Affirming" Typology**

(1) **Association Affirmation**

Association affirmation occurs when Chinese seek comfort amongst those who understand their plight as ethnic minorities. This does not only mean Chinese seek the company of Chinese, but Chinese can seek the company of other minorities who may
have comparable experiences. Thus, some informants sought the company of Maori, Pacific Islanders, and foreign European nationals. It was amongst these like-minded people that Chinese could share their experiences without fear of retribution. *Sharing*, in fact, is the fundamental component of association affirmation.

Yeah, they (white New Zealanders) are friends but they are not close. You are friendly with them but you never share anything deeper with them...there's no bond. Like I tell people, the only Kiwi friend I have isn't really Kiwi. Her mum is Kiwi, her dad is Swedish. She was born in Hong Kong and lived there for 18 years so she understands who I am.

Yet, this *shared understanding is often ineffable*, as Ip's (1996) informants stated, "It is very hard to pin down...what it is like to be a Chinese New Zealander...There is a tacit, unspoken sort of thing" (pg. 29) and "Chineseness is nothing very tangible" (pg. 57). I was able to capture this very ineffableness in interviews when informants conveyed to me what it meant to be Chinese. Comments like, "you know what I mean" and "I'm sure you understand" were common. I knew exactly what they meant, but no words were necessarily exchanged to communicate this understanding. Lyman and Douglass (1973:346) write of this unspoken understanding ethnics have when they state:

This silent but shared understanding constitutes the symbolic estate "inherited" by the ingroup. It can neither be communicated to nor adopted by the outsider. A recent but by no means unique example is the current emphasis on "Soul" among blacks in America. "Soul" can be experienced by blacks, but not by whites. At best, a fellow traveller of the black community can, after long and intimate association, develop an emphatic understanding, while never sharing fully in the communion which "soul" provides for those
who "have" it. "Soul" constitutes an invisible cement binding blacks together and separating them and their unique experience from other groups.

The sharing amongst "ingroup" members provides an atmosphere where ethnics can confide in others without necessarily having to verbalise their experiences. That a vocabulary has yet to emerge to easily capture feelings of exclusion and difference is perhaps indicative of how language reflects the concerns of the powerful and not the subordinate. Regardless, such inherent understanding is the product of subtle and consistent exclusionary experiences faced on a daily basis, while within ethnic groups it is the subtle ways a specific culture is conveyed.

This need for association affirmation can extend to even those who see themselves as distanced from their ethnic community. One informant who associated mainly with non-Chinese also stated she could only marry a "Chinese boy". Another had a Maori girlfriend who provided a shared understanding of being a minority and aided the informant in his struggle for identity. It appears the need for association affirmation may be universal amongst minorities, for this informant also supported his girlfriend in dealing with Maoriness. Further emphasising this universality are comments by Indian writer Geeta Kothari (1995:170 cited in Tse, 1995) who recalled her dismay at the lack of understanding when in a relationship with a non-Indian: "In the beginning of our relationship, we fight a lot. I am angry at him for not being Indian, for not understanding immediately what I'm talking about". The ineffable quality of the shared minority experience is what encourages the association. At the extreme, it can lead to increasing immersion within the "shared" community. Informants often spoke of "hanging out" with more and more Chinese as they grew older. They provided a solace when faced with

---

121 Indeed, minorities who reconstitute language are often perceived as threatening. Avril Bell (1996) suggests the rejection of the "Pakeha" label amongst many European New Zealanders is indicative of the power language and labelling has. To accept the "Pakeha" label is to accept a certain bicultural relationship with Maori. Those who rejected the label also rejected this relationship.
increasing perceptions of exclusion. Many younger Chinese even identified cliques within the Chinese community that were united by their non-Chineseness. One informant reasoned why these Chinese formed such a strong bond:

...the reason why they're like that is...it's an insecurity thing about their own culture. They've lost so much of their culture, they're like local local Chinese. And they've lost a lot of their culture...and that's why they had to stick together, because of the language barrier. And just the whole culture loss...

In these "shared" relationships informants were given a private space to affirm themselves. Association affirmation became a respite from the daily pressure of role play and performance demanded in placating strategies.

(2) Cultural Affirmation

Most significantly, association affirmation was often accompanied by a desire to incorporate varying aspects of ethnic culture into one's lives, for within this culture lay the secrets to who Chinese "were". Cultural affirmation concerns the adoption of imagery and/or ideologies that affirm a Chinese ethnic identity. It is the bolstering of perceptions of self. Thus, although sharing provides a starting point from which to counteract feelings of exclusion, it can become hollow on its own. Ethnic identity is a more or less fixed state (Lian, 1982), and escape from this identity is but fleeting (e.g., denying of self). When this is combined with a public world that bombards Chinese with antagonistic images and ideologies that can deny positive perceptions of self, Chinese are left with a need to acknowledge cultural elements associated with their ethnic identity as a means of

---

122 Parker (1995) for example documents the fixated and stereotypical nature of Chineseness in western society. Chinese are depicted as intelligent yet sinister, fiendish, and inscrutable (ibid). These attributes are captured in the characters of popular fiction (e.g., Dr Fu Manchu and Ming the Merciless) (ibid). They contrast with more favourable images of more powerful and dominant groups. Alongside these social images is the persistent ideology of racial differentiation, which identifies a hierarchy of racial types placing Chinese in a subordinate position (Lee, 1996).
psychological comfort. In real terms, Chinese reported moments where they hated being Chinese, hated looking Chinese and wanted to be white and "normal". This was particularly acute during the teenage years when self-consciousness became a heightened state (see Phinney and Rotheram, 1987). While placating strategies such as "blending in" were employed publicly to deal with these issues, privately, cultural affirming was the main counter-measure to add balance and produce more positive perceptions of self. Ethnic culture in this sense becomes a therapy. This understanding of culture as therapy has been captured in many descriptive works investigating minority groups (see, Wetherell and Potter, 1992; Parker, 1995; Song, 1997). It is nothing new. Though it has seldom been identified as but one of several types of affirming.

Cultural affirmation consists of two important components. The first of these is defining Chineseness. Definitions of Chinese are reflections of "self", in order to culturally affirm Chinese must know what things are to be considered "Chinese". The second aspect of cultural affirmation is the adoption of symbolic affirming agents. It is these agents that are tethers to identity, culture and self.

(a) Defining

Above, I discussed an important instance where Chinese become suddenly aware of their self-alienation. I called this the "discovery moment". Inherent in the discovery moment was a feeling of conflict about "self". Questions such as "who am I?", "what does it mean to be Chinese?" and "what is a Chinese person?" arose. Attempts are made to resolve the conflict through clarification of Chineseness. Often, clarification came through sharing with friends, family and confidantes.

I wanted to know what [being] 'Chinese' was, like what a Chinese person was. [My friend] sent me a card from New York...it had Chinese characters.
And the card explained what the strokes were. Each stroke was holding each other up...so...people were holding each other up. So that was really interesting.

A definition of Chineseness was considered important for informants, for it allowed an assessment to be made about how to culturally affirm and with what cultural elements. Definitions of Chineseness ranged from the highly inclusive through to the highly exclusive. Exclusive forms were expressed by informants who saw Chineseness in terms of language, ancient culture and traditions. Indicators of this type of definition are captured in comments like:

I do feel with my daughter, I want to put in a lot of effort to make her learn the Chinese language...I feel that it's important for her development an understanding of who she is, to be able to have that language ability, to understand her culture. Because there's a lot of things that lie behind [language]...just by reading English you can't get through to the culture that we have, the Chinese culture that we have. So who are you? I mean the identity is probably lost somewhere if you don't have the culture or language background there.

Parker (1995) writes of this form and suggests exclusive Chinese identity is:

'a sort of collective one true self' which provides unifying and unchanging points of reference and meaning. A sense of cultural identity as emanating from an identifiable point or place...constructed through mythic narratives of unique origin (pg. 34)
Typically, those who saw Chineseness in these terms were those who spoke Chinese, had been immersed in a Chinese cultural world, had family that supported such renditions, and were first generation migrants. Inclusive forms, however, were understandings of Chineseness that were dynamic, open, constantly evolving and negotiated. Indicators of this type of definition are captured in comments like:

[you are still Chinese] regardless of whether you speak Chinese or write Chinese or whatever...[you] may not speak Chinese but may have an intense interest in things Chinese.

I consider myself to be quite Chinese but I don't speak Chinese very well and I don't think I'm really in touch culturally

Or as Parker (1995:37) writes:

[Open forms of identity] decenter the subject, [have] a hybrid view of culture and see identities as continually connected through open forms of narrative. In relation to Chinese identity the stress would be on mobile and multifaceted identifications, with Chinese identity only a part of a broader set of connections.

It was this latter form most informants chose. Defining Chineseness as open, dynamic and thus inclusive empowered and affirmed those who did not possess much cultural understanding or language skills. It was their means of resolving the dilemma and coming to terms with being a Chinese in a non-Chinese society. Multi-generational Chinese preferred this definition.
It was not uncommon for Chinese to have definitions enforced upon them. These enforced understandings of Chineseness typically came during childhood and often led to a rejection of Chineseness and rejection of those cultural elements that represented it. "It was like, 'I'm not Chinese so don't speak Chinese to me'" stated one informant. Moving beyond enforced definitions was the path to cultural affirming.

It used to be drummed into us... 'you New Zealand born [Chinese will] be totally westernised, and there's no future and no hope here, and unless you can read and write Chinese you're not a Chinese.' I don't believe that.

Achieving a point of self-definition requires a degree of maturity, experience, and indeed, a heightened awareness of ethnic difference as well as similarity with the dominant group.

Self-definitions of Chineseness can be seen as reflected images of "self". That is, definitions of Chineseness were consistent with renditions of "self". For example, informants who saw themselves as "just Chinese" defined Chineseness in highly exclusive terms; those who saw themselves as "Chinese New Zealanders" combined inclusive and exclusive definitions; while those who saw themselves as "just New Zealanders" or indeed as "Asian New Zealanders" adopted the most open and inclusive definitions. The identification of "Asian New Zealander" was a pan-ethnic identification. These definitions and images of self are important for they can predict how cultural affirming will take place, and herein lies the crux of cultural affirmation: cultural affirmation simply refers to the ability to obtain pride from some aspect(s) of Chineseness however it may be defined. It is a connecting experience. It identifies for the Chinese the point of difference between what it is to be Chinese and what it is not.
(b) Symbolic Agents of Cultural Affirmation

Chinese use various forms of cultural symbolism as affirming agents. The most basic form is *assimilated-superficial symbolism*. These are cultural forms that do not challenge existing social imagery or ideologies and can often be easily incorporated into the host culture with little or no fuss. An example of this type of cultural symbolism can be seen in the informant who was highly assimilated and went no further than to watch kung fu movies with friends as a means of affirming. One can easily see how an individual who chose to identify himself as "just a New Zealander" would use this type of symbolism. This aspect of Hong Kong popular culture has largely been incorporated into western popular culture. Actors such as Jackie Chan and Bruce Lee are as famous in New Zealand as they are in Hong Kong. There was no inconsistency in adopting this cultural facet with perceptions of self. It allowed cultural affirming to take place without the questioning or abandonment of accepted social imagery or ideologies held within the host society.

Another type of cultural affirming comes through the use of *behavioural symbolism*. Here, informants adopt typifications of Chinese conduct. Many saw speaking and learning to speak Chinese as important, while others ate Chinese food and played mah jong with friends. Through these endeavours Chinese connected with their culture. This type of symbolism is generally acceptable as public behaviour. Chinese restaurants are ubiquitous, speaking Chinese in public is not generally seen as offensive to host peoples, and playing mah jong is but a quirk of many Chinese but certainly not a challenge to existing hegemonic structures. There are some aspects of behavioural symbolism that may not be considered acceptable in a public forum, such as the use of some ingredients in Chinese medical remedies. This largely depends on host tolerance however.

Another affirming agent is *archaic symbolism*, where all the traditional symbols of China's ancient past are used to profess Chineseness. Informants spoke of Chinese
inventions such as gun powder, the building of Great Wall of China, and the ancient written language as significant. The great sage Confucius and Confucian philosophy were also seen as symbolic. For Chinese, these archaic symbols represented cultural supremacy. Parker (1995:34) captures the affirming logic of this type of symbolism when he writes:

The imaginary coherence and richness of China, its immense geographic size and symbolic weight, have supported...a sense of cultural identity for Chinese people historically, in particular for the thirty million overseas Chinese. China is a readily locatable homeland, only colonized at its outermost points...There is the additional comfort to Chinese overseas of cultural persistence through a distinctively ideographic language; 5,000 years of continuous cultural history and a mythology of venerable tradition, codified in the classics of Chinese literature.

Indeed, many informants used the argument that Overseas Chinese success was largely the product of Confucian philosophy. In this way, Chinese can reclaim their past and project it into the present and the future. Noteworthy is that "behavioural symbols" can be incorporated into this affirming agent. Also notable is that this type of symbolism is generally kept private, for its imagery and associated ideologies can be seen to contradict that of the host society.

The same is also true of patriotic symbolism. The key difference between archaic and patriotic symbolism is the latter eulogises the present day achievements of China. Its adherents may align themselves politically, ideological and/or nationally as a form of affirmation. Many informants spoke of the current economic boom in China as affirming of their Chineseness, and indeed a sign of Chinese supremacy. One informant spoke of
the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty as significant; she stated, "I did feel proud to be Chinese because China [was] taking over Hong Kong, it has restored China's reputation...I'm Chinese and nothing can ever change that...China did something good". To align politically, ideologically or nationally often requires a reframing from host perceptions of such events. The same informant stated, "the populist media view was that China is getting back Hong Kong, this is not necessarily a good thing, it's dangerous...just from watching TV, I believed that...then I learnt about the history, why Hong Kong was taken away in the first place, and then I did feel proud to be Chinese". Learning the history of Hong Kong allowed a new perspective to emerge that allowed affirming to take place. The danger in this type of symbolism is its potential for failure. It becomes more difficult to feel proud when tragic events occur, such as the Tiannamen Square incident in 1989. To align blindly can result in over-accentuating the positive and downplaying the negative.

The final type of symbolism I discuss here is emergent-cultural symbolism. This type of affirming agent reflects the current and emergent experiences of Chinese people in Europeanised countries. It is an understanding of culture that may acknowledge the past but places greater emphasis on the present. Novels such as Amy Tan's (1989) "The Joy Luck Club" capture the essence of these experiences, as do the life histories of Manying Ip (1990 and 1996). It is the experience of Chinese as sojourners and goldminers later becoming settlers, the forging of community, the experience of the small business setting, of becoming a "model minority", of facing overt and covert discrimination, and ultimately the emergence of new identities. It is a pride in being associated with these experiences.

In this sense, Chineseness takes on new dimensions and pride can be drawn from these new dimensions. Ip's (1996) study, for example, captures informants who drew pride from business success and academic success. In this study, informants spoke of
educational and occupational success in terms of "revenge" and "having a point to prove". For some, to be Chinese was to achieve. For others it was the broader historical significance of being an immigrant minority in New Zealand. However informants chose to define it, Chineseness through the lens of emergent-cultural symbolism was unique and specific but always connected to the minority experience.

To conclude this section on cultural affirming some additional comments are necessary. First of all, although affirming agents have been presented separately, it was common for Chinese to combine different types of cultural symbolism for affirming purposes. Also, it is obvious that certain types of symbolism lend themselves more to exclusive definitions of Chineseness and others to more inclusive forms. Shifting definitions also led to adopting different symbols for affirmation, while different symbolisms typically introduced individuals to networks of like-minded people where sharing could occur to bolster the affirming exercise.

(3) Intellectual Affirmation

The final type of affirmation to be discussed is intellectual affirmation. Unlike association or cultural affirming, which most Chinese engage in to some degree, intellectual affirmation is seldom used. It involves a theoretical understanding of Chinese experiences as a minority. In this sense, such affirming allows it adherents to connect Chinese experiences to that of other minority groups. Intellectual affirmation therefore often lends itself to sharing in the broadest sense. Intellectual affirming is the course of many Chinese writers in social science who investigate on a theoretical level their own experiences. It is one step beyond emergent-cultural symbolism as an affirming agent. It is affirmation through abstraction. Nancy Kwok, one of Ip's (1996) informants, for example, chose to become an ardent marxist. This intellectual framework allowed her to interpret her experiences as a Chinese as well as connect to the existing struggles of other groups, such
as Maori. It is the transcending quality of intellectual affirming that makes it a powerful measure.

Some concluding comments: up to this point the analysis has suggested that the problem of content insecurity is resolved by placating. It has also been suggested that placating is not an unproblematic resolution, for inherent within it are feelings of emotive insecurity. At its worst, placating leads to self-alienation. It is here that affirming becomes necessary as a counter measure to restore the ethnic self. Affirming is the resolution to emotive insecurity (those feelings of anxiety, paranoia, emotional trauma, and self-alienation). So content and emotive insecurity are resolved by public and private strategies respectively. The problem with this set of resolutions is that the subordination of Chinese and the adherence to the unspoken contract is never questioned - these are merely catered for. Chinese have, however, devised other more radical strategies that seek to resolve content and emotive insecurity. It is this type of strategy I turn to next. I call it the challenging strategy.

9. CHALLENGING
The challenging response is not so common but still evident amongst some Chinese. Essentially, challenging involves confronting the discrimination context in some way. It is always a public act. By public I mean something conducted outside the confines of the ethnic community and interacting with dominant members of the host society. To challenge is to attempt to resolve both content and emotive insecurity concerns at the same time. Challenging can be seen as the antithesis of placating. Yet they are not entirely incompatible. A challenging stance combined with a placating disposition is often referred to as being diplomatic. Challenging, when done well, can convince a fickle public that Chinese are indeed valid citizens and should be seen as New Zealanders. Disguising Chineseness or pretending to be something one is not becomes removed as a condition of
acceptance. Unsuccessful challenging, however, can lead to a perception of threat by the host population. To challenge is to debunk the unspoken contract in no uncertain terms. Unsuccessful challenges, therefore, can lead to decreasing tolerance. These are the potential risks.

Challenging responses are highly varied. They range from physical fights, to reciprocating verbal insults, to more congenial debates, to political campaigns. They can be individual or collective. The former is more common. A collective response was only identified with political campaigns. Whatever the type of challenging response, it is clear that a change in mental state has occurred: whereas placating involves a passive acceptance of discrimination, and affirming its resolution, with challenging, discrimination is openly confronted and affirming occurs within the challenging act. Challenging responses make three distinctive statements.

![Challenging Typology]

Figure 2j. "Challenging" Typology

(1) Equality
First, to challenge is to make a demand for equality and this involves a rejection of the status quo. When Pansy Wong, New Zealand's first Chinese MP, made her maiden speech to Parliament, she stated that Asians were no longer to be "passive targets" for racial discrimination (Press, March 20, 1997:3). "We can no longer afford to stand back. It's up to us to say we are New Zealanders and we deserve better" stated Wong (Press,
May 28, 1996:5). A similar response came from Mai Chen (1993:10), who was inspired to enter the legal profession to challenge discrimination.

It was my experiences of discrimination that first attracted me to the law. I studied law because I saw it as a tool to redress the powerlessness and discrimination that I, and those I loved, had experienced. I came to the law, not to perpetuate the status quo, but to change it and so I chose an academic career where I could write and think about how the law could be better. (pg. 10)

(2) Belonging

The second statement which challenging makes is a claim for belonging. Inequality is often justified on the basis that Chinese are not "real" New Zealanders and therefore are not entitled to full citizenship rights. Chinese are seen as perpetual foreigners. Informants commented that they often got asked "where do you come from?" in spite of their obvious New Zealand accent and comments such as "your English is very good" were not uncommon. The claim for belonging was a clear rebuttal of the perpetual foreigner belief. One informant recalled an incident where,

...in form two, I was walking over to the bars...and then this guy said, 'oh, go home, these are our bars, go home to China', and I was like, 'hello, I was born here, go back to England!'

The "go back to England" comment served an equalising function making the statement, "you are an immigrant too", while the claim for belonging ("I was born here") was a clear challenge to the general belief of Chinese perpetual foreignness.
(3) Identity

The third statement challenging makes is the assertion of the Chinese ethnic identity as a valid public identity. Whereas placating involves the nullification of self, challenging involves the assertion of self. Incorporated into the challenging logic was the reversal of discriminatory reasoning. Racism was no longer to be considered a problem for Chinese but rather was interpreted as a problem for the host society. Comments like, "it's not my problem, it's their problem", were common. Change, therefore, was seen as the responsibility of the host society not of Chinese. Most informants accepted that new migrants should change to some degree to accept aspects of the host culture. But informants also noted that after several generations of Chinese settlement, it becomes the host society's role to change and accept them as valid citizens without the unspoken contract as a condition of acceptance. Thus, the false presentation of self was no longer seen as an acceptable compromise.

(4) Conditions

As suggested above, there are two types of challenging responses, the individual response and the collective response. The former being most common. I will briefly outline the conditions that lead to both respectively.

(a) Individual

Challenging tends to occur most when tolerance is perceived to be declining and the effectiveness of placating becomes ineffectual. There is a shift in mental state from one of accepting discrimination and dealing with it through passive means towards a rejection of discrimination and a confrontation with perpetrators.

[in the late 1990s there were] comments...from Pakeha people, that's when I became more conscious of it (anti-Asian sentiment). Well, I mean, I think I
was kind of brought up to just ignore them and just walk by quickly. But then I started getting really mad about it, and why should I just sorta walk away! So I started replying to it, dealing with it up front, saying things like, 'why don't you go back to England!' Yeah, kind of giving abuse back kind of thing. I was just sick of just taking it.

Challenging also tends to occur most amongst certain social types. Firstly, challenging is often the response of those who do not know of the unspoken contract. Thus, very young children often challenge discrimination, knowing little of the need to placate. Secondly, challenging is associated with those who stand outside of the community web of influence. This is particularly the case in regards to the New Zealand Chinese Association, which makes a stand on the need to placate.\(^{123}\) Thirdly, those in more powerful positions in wider society are more likely to challenge than those less powerful. For example, Chinese in catering businesses are unlikely to challenge discrimination because of the potential loss of custom. And finally, Chinese who grew up in a positive shift period and cross the threshold into a negative shift are also more likely to challenge, especially if they fall under the second and third conditions stated above. This was the case for the informant above who chose to ignore parental advice on engaging a placating tactic in aversive situations.

(b) Collective

The collective challenge is most likely to occur when leadership takes on the individualistic qualities identified above. It is also most likely to occur where ethnic concentration in a geographical region is relatively high, tolerance is perceived as low or

\(^{123}\) In an article by Yee Kee Poon (1996b: 11), an executive member of the New Zealand Chinese Association, he outlines the Association non-challenging stance in regards to political involvement, he states: the Chinese Association is not political "because we do not want to jeopardise the good relationship we enjoy in this country...so we do not take part in the struggle between the political parties in New Zealand. We are friendly with all parties but are not involved". This is perhaps the most clear statement of the placating stance taken by the Association.
declining and ethnic group unity is strong. Given this criteria, it was no surprise that recent migrant Chinese launched the first Asian-based political party in 1996 (i.e., the Ethnic Minority Party). Not only were these migrants concentrated in Auckland but intolerance was also most prevalent there. A lack of unity however perhaps explains the inability of this political entity to succeed. Since the 1996 national election, it has faded into obscurity. This unsuccessful collective challenge can be compared to those in the US, where such challenges have been more successful. The Asian-American movement in the 1970s was a largely intellectual, middle class, collective that united previously antagonistic groups together in order to fight discrimination, assert a self-selected public identity, and stake a claim for belonging (hence the Asian "American" label) in American society (see Wei, 1993).

From these conditions, it can be seen that affirming may well contribute to the emergence of challenging; for association affirmation groups like-minded minorities together, thus forming a collective that shares the bond of social exclusion. In "sharing" their experiences, they may become "wise" to the hidden forces that maintain their subordinate status. This possibility is increased when combined with intellectual affirmation. The "unspoken contract", thus, may be revealed and be seen as unacceptable. Furthermore, intellectual affirmation offers the opportunity to alter the powerless position many Chinese find themselves in. Parker's (1995) study of British Chinese, for example, found that many informants sought education to overcome discrimination. As placating leads to affirming, affirming may well lead to an alteration of "mediating conditions" (see figure 2 for clarification) that determine whether Chinese will placate in the future. In a very real sense, once Chinese discover they are self-alienated, this could be the catalyst for major social change: a shift from a predominantly placating response to a predominantly challenging one.
Another option is also possible, however - affirming could reinforce placating. This may occur where affirmation is sought by increasing immersion within a placative ethnic community. Given ethnic communities often engage in identity maintenance programs, these may be seen by young ethnics as opportunities to affirm. The annual Easter sports tournament, for example, offers elements for cultural affirming and also the opportunity for association affirmation. But these are also opportunities for a placatory leadership to enforce a placative strategy.

10. SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the means by which Chinese enhance security. I began by identifying two types of insecurity - content and emotive. I follow by introducing two types of identity: social identity, which is a public identity, and ethnic identity, which is mainly private. Placating tactics were then presented, and these were grouped according to the degree of interaction involved between host and Chinese. It was then suggested that placating requires psychological coping strategies. These, however, were fleeting resolutions that occur at the moment of a placating strategy. A presentation of the maintenance of "team performance" was then presented utilising Goffman's conceptions of dramaturgical loyalty, discipline and circumspection. Following this, it was suggested that as placating was the solution to content insecurity, the environment that encouraged such a strategy was one that resulted in emotive insecurity for Chinese - the worst form of which was self-alienation. As a counter-measure, Chinese employed affirming strategies as a means of restoring "self" - acknowledging one's ethnic identity. Finally, the challenging response was presented. This response transcended placating and affirming while connecting content and emotive security resolution in one type of responsive strategy. It was also suggested that affirming may lead to conditions that determine increased challenging or maintained placating.
Although this chapter has presented the actions of Chinese as strategic in the management of insecurity, it must be noted that not all behaviours identified are enacted with this intent all of the time. For example, it is quite possible that a Chinese is simply associating with white friends rather than purposefully engaging in "association distancing". Similarly, it may be the case that Chinese choose to live in a predominantly white neighbourhood because they like the street, not because they are trying to maintain "geographical spread" from other Chinese. What is presented in this chapter are purposeful strategies for coping as Chinese in an insecure environment. The presentation of Chinese as manipulative and overly strategic in everyday life is a falsity. They are only strategic when it comes to conscious behaviours that attempt to manage insecurity.

In the following chapter I draw some general conclusions regarding the emergent theory. I also examine the relevant literature and make in depth comparisons. The implications of the research are also stated with immersed statements of where possible future research could be conducted to increase the density and scope of the emergent framework.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

1. INTRODUCTION

The above analysis, although concentrating on the Chinese in New Zealand, identifies a conceptual framework that can prove relevant for many groups. The enhancing security process is evidenced amongst Sikh immigrants in the US (see Gibson, 1988), American blacks (see Greene, 1995), and the Chinese in the UK (see Parker, 1995) to name but three.\textsuperscript{124} Furthermore, an analysis of Goffman's (1963) work on stigma suggests "enhancing security" may be applicable not only to racial minorities but to visibly stigmatised persons generally. It is this generalising aspect of grounded theory that gives it much utility. In this final chapter the substantive aspects of the emergent theory will be compared with the extant literature to show its place at this level of analysis. Aspects of the theory will be elaborated, first at the substantive level in regards to other theories on minority adaptation, and second on a formal, theoretical level. In the second case only a cursory attempt is made. At various points in the text, suggestions are made as to future research possibilities, including the verification of theory and hypotheses, and expanding the theoretical framework. At the end of this chapter, some implications of the study are stated. To begin with, though, a comparison with the existing literature in the substantive field will be made.

\textsuperscript{124} These studies did not identify the strategies as an enhancing security process of course. It was through grounded theory analysis that such strategies became evident.
2. SUBSTANTIVE THEORY AND THE EXTANT LITERATURE

The emergent framework presented above was essentially a study of how Chinese adapt and survive in a society where they are powerless and feel excluded. In this respect, this study can easily be compared to more general theories on adaptation, which may apply to Chinese. There are four theoretical frameworks that can be identified in the relevant literature. These frameworks explain Chinese adaptation in terms of: a) assimilation, b) primordial culturalism, c) structural influences, and d) a cultural-ecological perspective. I begin with the assimilation perspective.

(1) The Assimilation Perspective

Theories of assimilation have been the commonsense means of understanding Chinese behaviour in Europeanised countries. Such theories arose from the need to explain why Chinese and other minorities like them (e.g., Japanese, Indians and Jews) achieved relative parity (in terms of educational and occupational success) with dominant groups, while other less fortunate minorities languished far behind (e.g., African Americans, Hispanics, and Maori). The argument suggested that successful ethnics maintained white, middle-class, norms and values; these were internalised and consequently brought success.  

125 Milton Gordon's (1964, cited in Sue and Okazaki, 1990) book, Assimilation in American Life, is a classic example of this perspective. He argued that the upward mobility of Jews was largely the result of thrift, sobriety, ambition and delayed gratification; so-called "protestant ethic values". At the same time, Sue and Kitano (1973) note similar arguments amongst many social scientists concerning Chinese. From this perspective, Chinese adapted to the new society by abandoning their own cultural values and norms and supplanting these with those of the host culture.

125 The assimilation hypothesis contrasts with the cultural-deficit model used to explain minority failure (see Fowler and Richards, 1978). This models posits that groups such as African-Americans have "failed" because of their inability to adopt white middle-class values and norms.
A significant aspect of this perspective was the understanding that not only did assimilation bring "success", it also brought host tolerance. To assimilate was a sign of genuine commitment to the new society. To remain ethnically distinct, however, was to cast serious doubts on this commitment. Pluralism was not an option for this was essentially a type of power-sharing. Such a compromise is unnecessary when power is so obviously skewed towards one group. Logically, if assimilation brought tolerance, then a lack of assimilation brought intolerance. This notion of tolerance through assimilation can be captured in the work of Price (1974). Price investigated Chinese migration in North America and Australasia between 1836 and 1888. He writes of the intolerance towards Chinese by stating:

...these new young societies in America and Australasia were just at that stage of development when they were trying to find their own identity...The Chinese...simply did not swim with the main stream of colonial development. (pg. 254)

Through and beneath all the noise about cheap labour, vice, disease, racial inferiority and invasion, are discernible signs of this basic anger at the Chinaman's apparent refusal to change his ways and become more like his fellow colonists; that is, to assimilate to the customs and opinions of Anglo-Saxon new world society. (pg. 254)

[an unwillingness to assimilate would] lead to grave internal conflict...[for] it is 'a matter of two systems of existence which can hardly combine together...' (pg. 257)

An extension of Price's argument would explain the relative decline in discrimination,
especially during the post war years, as a product of Chinese willingness to change and assimilate into the host culture.

There are a number of assumptions made by the assimilation argument. First, it assumes that groups like the Chinese have been, and can be, smoothly absorbed into the host society (Ueda, 1974). Second, it assumes Chinese have achieved happiness from their "success" (ibid). Third, the position sees society as inherently meritocratic; or as Herbert Croly (cited, in Ueda, 1974) stated in regard to the "success" of the Japanese in the US, assimilation offers "The Promise of American Life". Fourth, host tolerance is primarily in the hands of those seeking acceptance.

The assimilation argument has not been supported by this thesis. In fact, the emergent grounded theory contradicts fundamental aspects of it. First, Chinese have not been smoothly absorbed into New Zealand society as suggested. Rather, the crucial aspects of assimilation by Chinese are feigned. "Model minority" behaviour is less the product of assimilation and more the product of social acting.126 The fundamental error made by the hypothesis is this: it is assumed that the display and internalisation of social norms are one in the same - or at least, the former being evidence of the latter. Karp (1973:432) has this to say on the matter.

Conformity, according to [a] normative paradigm of interaction, is seen to occur because society, in effect, "gets inside" the individual. The price of nonconformity is not simply the scorn of one's fellows, but, more importantly, scorn for oneself. Persons conform because not to do so engenders guilt. Norms are, from this perspective, not merely guidelines for behavior but assume "moral" force.

126 This of course is not to assume all assimilative behaviour is fake, only that relating to the strategic management of "normals" for the purposes of placating.
The opposing view is reflected in this study. That is, being seen as social may have very little to do with norm internalisation. "Placating" is a form of social acting to show that Chinese understand the rules of society. Whether Chinese have actually internalised those rules is another matter. The data suggests many have not but rather maintain their performance to ensure tolerance. The consequences of such performance is "emotive insecurity". Thus, there are deep psychological costs to achieving acceptance even if assimilation is feigned.

Second, the felt need to affirm and/or challenge by Chinese does not indicate abiding happiness. Surely "affirming" would not be required if Chinese were so content with social life and had a feeling of belonging to the surrounding society; while "challenging" would be redundant if Chinese felt they were indeed being treated as equals. This, of course, is not to say that some Chinese have not achieved fulfilment from their "success". Indeed, many who have yet to experience a "discovery moment" could well be in a state of blissful happiness from ignorance. It was the discovery of "self-alienation" that sparked that need to seek affirmation, which consequently increased the likelihood of "challenging". What is being suggested is that the assimilation argument goes too far in its assumptions. The situation is far more complex and variable.

Third, the inherent meritocratic nature of society has also not been supported. Indeed, Chinese played up to the myth of meritocracy by being a compliant minority. The maintenance of the myth was an aspect of the "unspoken contract", where in exchange for "playing along" and "assimilating" Chinese were given a degree of tolerance and a high placing on the racial hierarchy. The demand for assimilation, of course, was judged by "idealised" norms rather than "actual" norms. Furthermore, the notion of "threshold tolerance" highlights the falsity of the assimilative assumption; that is, if tolerance equates
to assimilation, then more assimilation (often displayed as "success" or meeting "idealised" norms) must result in more tolerance. It has been shown in this study that too much assimilation (displayed by exceeding "idealised notions of "success") can initiate tolerance declines.

The assimilation argument can be seen as fundamentally flawed. Its overly simplistic perspective on adaptation ignores struggle, conflict, and the psychological costs that are evident in Chinese coping.

(2) The Primordial Cultural Perspective

Similar to, yet still different from, the assimilation hypothesis is an understanding of Chinese from a primordial cultural perspective. This view asserts that ethnic groups like Chinese can best be understood by examining aspects of their traditional culture. It is suggested that there exists a congruence between the culture of the host society and that of "successful" ethnics. Thus, in reference to the Japanese in America, Kitano (1969, cited in Lee, 1996) argued that there is a "functional compatibility" between Japanese culture and American culture, thus making it easy for Japanese to adapt to American society. Likewise for the Chinese in New Zealand. From this perspective, Chinese have adapted to the new society not by assimilating but by habitually casting forward an inherent Chineseness. This allows them to cope with the troubles and tribulations of everyday life as a visible minority.

More precise renditions of this perspective identify specific aspects of Chinese culture that aid this endeavour. Here, Confucian values are seen as important and these are exemplified in the family by:

Definitive views on parental control, obedience, strict discipline, emphasis on
education, filial piety, respect for elders, family obligations, reverence for tradition, maintenance of harmony, and negation of conflict. (Lin and Fu, 1990:429)

Confucian principles are not merely confined to the family or community sphere, however. Confucian culture is said to explain interactional behaviour between Chinese and the host society. Applying this theory, Chinese "act passive" in public settings not because they are attempting to placate, but rather because this is simply an aspect of culture; or as Lin and Fu put it, it is the maintenance of harmony and the negation of conflict inherent in Chineseness.

Another facet of Chinese culture that is said to aid adaptation is the emphasis on community. Confucian principles stress collectivism over individualism. This emphasis adds a socially oriented component to social behaviour. Norms are adhered to because deviations from norms become reflections on family (Chen and Uttal, 1988). This, in combination with a cultural emphasis on education, results in an ethnic group that uniformly displays "model minority" behaviour.

There has been some evidence in this study for the primordial cultural hypothesis. The Chinese community is dominated by first generation Chinese and those who grew up in "negative shift" periods. Given this, cultural manifestations that are seen as traditional did emerge as relevant in terms of community control and obligation. Outside of the community, however, the primordial cultural explanation does not hold weight. The fact that Chinese act differently in public settings (that is, outside of the confines of the ethnic community) than they do in private (that is, within the ethnic community) suggests that an inherent Chineseness is not the primary causation behind their behaviour. Also, the "challenging" response is difficult to explain from a cultural primordial perspective. This
action contradicts Confucian principles relating to the maintenance of harmony and the negation of conflict. Even Sedgwick (1982) has noted that early Chinese sojourners, a group one would expect to be very "Chinese", lodged challenges against legalised discrimination.

Perhaps the most clandestinely disparaging aspect of the primordial cultural perspective is that it sees Chinese as incipient whites (Ueda, 1974). The suggestion is that Chinese values are really protestant ethic values. Essentially, this argument is similar to the assimilation hypothesis in its assumptions. It merely reverses the logic on the origins of the ethnic group's manifest culture. Given this similarity, it also tends to suffer from the same shortcomings. Ethnic differences between Europeans and Chinese are seen as minimal; thus Chinese are said to be easily integrated into the new society. There is no conception of conflict or psychological cost to Chinese in this endeavour; while society is again seen as inherently meritocratic. Given the cultural similarity between Chinese and the host society, host tolerance is assumed to be an almost inevitable outcome.

Further weaknesses in this position concern its over-reliance on a static understanding of culture. Culture is portrayed as an almost innate quality arising from within the closed boundaries of the ethnic group. Thus, it ignores the possibility of cultural aspects being emergent from interaction between host society and ethnic community. The dynamism of culture is lost. Another weakness is its understanding of community mechanisms of social control (e.g., gossip and status). These are seen as uniquely Chinese characteristics, for the Confucian emphasis on collectivism promotes their emergence. This study, however, suggests that these may be characteristics of small communities generally, not of any particular type of ethnic community.127

127 A cursory look at studies involving small communities provides further evidence for this assertion. For example, the concept of "face", often touted as a distinctively Chinese characteristic, was clearly evident in Silverman's (1982) study of gypsies in New York City. Likewise, Schultz' (1975) study of a small white middle class community in America identified gossip as a primary control mechanism.
The primordial cultural explanation maybe useful in explaining relatively new ethnic communities and their behaviours. This is especially the case if such communities have not yet had time to adapt. It appears, however, that adaptation is not a drawn-out process but occurs almost immediately. New Asian migrants, for example, employed "normalising" strategies in reaction to declining host tolerance. If adaptation occurs this fast, then the utility of this perspective must be considered to be severely limited. This again reveals the primary weakness in this position: the primordial cultural perspective does not conceptualise adaptation in terms of host-ethnic interaction.

(3) The Structural Perspective

Unlike the frameworks presented above, the structural perspective stresses the importance of economic, political and institutional factors in ethnic adaptation (see Glenn, 1983). Adaptation is not seen as either a direct reflection of traditional Chinese culture or an assimilation into the dominant culture. This does not mean, however, that the attitudes and values of family and community are not seen as important - they are. The main difference between this perspective and those outlined above lies in an understanding of how attitudes and values are constructed. It is hypothesised that these are the products of structural conditions, which in turn influence the types of interactions Chinese have with the host society. The perspective acknowledges that ethnic groups struggle in their new environment. It also sees conflict as omnipresent and tolerance as fickle.

Bonacich's (1973) rendition of the "middleman minority" thesis is perhaps the best attempt at understanding ethnic adaptation from a structural perspective. Simply put, Bonacich suggests that ethnic groups like Chinese, Indians and Jews can be seen as similar in their adaptive responses to new societies. They are essentially groups that maintain a "sojourner" outlook. Sojourning occurs from the need to survive. Something I
referred to in this study as the need for "content security". This need initiates a diasporic experience where security can be sought by relocating to earn a living. The aim of sojourner communities, however, is ultimately to return "home". This desire leads sojourners into occupations that maintain "liquidity", referred to in this study as mobile occupations. Bonacich gives the examples of restaurants, laundries and truck farming with rapid turnover crops. These are occupations located between the working masses and the power elites of society: in short, "middlemen" occupations. They can be compared to less mobile and more "permanent" industries such as forestry or cattle farming, which require large amounts of capital and long-term investment.

One consequence of a sojourner outlook is the emergence of cultural values and norms that stress thrift, hard work and delayed gratification. These were characteristics identified as protestant ethic or Confucian traits in other theories on adaptation. They are emergent because sojourners are oriented not towards the new society but rather towards their previous homeland. The "pay-off" for thrift, hard work and delayed gratification is a comfortable retirement at "home". Over time, these traits become "traditional". They are maintained as an aspect of ethnic culture regardless of whether the group actually returns "home" or not. "Model minority" behaviour, therefore, finds its roots in sojourning.

Bonacich suggests that the principal non-economic result of sojourning is a high degree of internal solidarity. Thus ethnic enclaves emerge. These may also emerge amongst "settler" ethnics due to common language and culture but soon dissipate over time. Typical characteristics of sojourner communities are:

...a resistance to out-marriage, residential self-segregation, the establishment of language and cultural schools for their children, the maintenance of distinctive cultural traits (including, often, a distinctive religion), and a
tendency to avoid involvement in local politics except in affairs that directly affect their group. They form highly organized communities which resist assimilation. (Bonacich, 1973:586)

Solidarity, Bonacich states, influences occupation; for the middleman minority uses ethnic ties to promote their business interests and exploit fellow ethnics as cheap labour. Fellow ethnics, as sojourners, do not object, for commitment to the group outweighs commitment to their class. Thus, sojourner workers tend not to join or support unions within the new society.

Furthermore, such close ethnic ties tend to make the economic activities middlemen engage in highly profitable.

[But] middlemen minorities are [only] permitted to occupy certain "occupational niches" which are noncompetitive with the dominant group. These positions allow for somewhat higher socioeconomic status than other minority groups, but their remains a ceiling on advancement into positions of authority or institutional power...The positions which these middleman minorities occupy are precarious and dependent upon the goodwill of the dominant group. They are allowed to achieve, but only so high. (Hirschman and Wong, 1981:496)

This quote seems to indicate a concept identified in this study as "threshold tolerance". The middleman minority thesis highlights the achievement ceiling, but unfortunately does not indicate that there is also a lower limit to achievement; nor does not recognise that host "goodwill" is dependent on an "unspoken contract".
Instead, intolerance is conceived purely in terms of the social position and attitude of sojourners. Caught between the power elites and the working masses, "middlemen minorities" become scapegoats for the power elites when things go bad (e.g., during economic, political or social crises); while the working masses see them as unfair competition, for they often work harder and longer for less. Thus, groups within the new society often form coalitions against the middleman group. Power elites may temporarily side with the working masses against sojourners to deflect attention away from themselves. A clever ploy given that power elites are often the group that initially invited middlemen minorities in in the first place. I identified a similar concept in this study referred to as "alliancing"; though it was suggested that this was not restricted to non-middlemen ethnics. Any group can form an "alliance" with the dominant group to enhance security. It was the means to achieving "most favoured minority" status.

It can be seen that the structural perspective as presented in the middleman minority thesis is strongly supported by the findings of this study. In essence, the structural environment establishes the conditions in which "enhancing security" emerges. Generative conditions, such as the "unspoken contract" and the relative power asymmetry involved in host-ethnic encounters, find their beginnings in things economic, political and socio-structural. Also, concepts such as "content insecurity","alliancing", and "threshold tolerance" are clearly evident in the "middleman minority" explanation, although not fully conceptualised and still in rudimentary form.

Rather than being contradictory frameworks, "enhancing security" and the "middleman minority" thesis appear quite complimentary. The focus of the latter is on a generative structure, while the focus of the former is on the consequential processes. Together, these frameworks offer much insight into the logic of host intolerance and the means by which ethnics manage their image to overcome that intolerance. Bonacich claims that intolerance
is largely the result of indicators of sojourning; that is, the maintenance of a tight-knit community, a lack of assimilation, and a lack of commitment to the new society. Intolerance is more than host perceptions of an uncommitted and unassimilable minority, however. It is also the result of factors beyond the control of the minority (economic crises for example). But in terms of what the minority group can "manage", it appears displays of a sojourner mindset may indeed be a primary causation behind tolerance declines. And Chinese seem to recognise this also, hence their "placating" displays of "showing commitment", "blending in", "assimilative role plays" and the like.

Bonacich makes another interesting insight: sojourning behaviours may cause a lot of intolerance, but intolerance also encourages the maintenance of a sojourner mindset. Chinese seem to recognise this fact too. Hence, "affirming", which largely involves the maintenance of Chineseness (a sojourning behaviour), is generally kept a private phenomenon. Interestingly though, the most assured sign of commitment from Chinese is displayed by "challenging", which involves a demand for belonging, equality and recognition of their ethnic identity. Yet, to challenge is also to run the risk of further host intolerance. This may especially be the case if demands for equality and a recognition of ethnic identity are pursued with vigour. Commitment, then, does not always bring tolerance. Given this, it appears Bonacich's understanding of host intolerance may be limited. I propose that intolerance is better understood by the concept of "threshold tolerance" embodied within the "unspoken contract".

(4) The Cultural Ecological Perspective

This framework incorporates many aspects of those discussed above and is, in many respects, quite consistent with the findings of this study. It suggests that change and adaptation are central to the ability of minority groups to survive; or, as Ogbugu (1981:421) puts it:
...cultural ecology is the study of how the way a population uses its natural environmental influences and is influenced by its social organization and cultural values and how the relationship between the personal attributes and behaviors of its members and their environment is to be found in the strategies or tasks they have devised for coping with their environmental demands, in ways of exploiting available resources to attain their subsistence goals and solve recurrent and new problems, as well as in ways of dealing with one another.

Admittedly, Ogbru's definition of cultural ecology is rather cryptic. It does, however, capture the multifaceted nature of the approach. Put more simply, cultural ecology proposes that identity, historical experiences and perceptions of opportunity in the new society are all factors that influence emergent strategies devised for everyday survival (Gibson, 1988; Ogbru, 1978). Interaction within and without the ethnic group, and the cultural meanings associated with that interaction, are seen as vital to understanding group strategies for survival.

A key component of survival in new societies involves what Ogbru (1981) refers to as "subsistence", or earning a living.

[The] subsistence quest has dominated man's evolutionary history and has acquired a symbolic significance far beyond the need to satisfy biological drives of hunger; it has become intimately tied to man's quest for status enhancement or self-esteem, especially in modern industrial societies. (Ogbru, 1981:421)
This notion of subsistence is equivalent to the emergent concept of "content security" dealt with in this study. Ogbu continues:

> While all human populations respond to subsistence demands, they do not all respond alike or with the same set of strategies because they do not occupy the same environment, because their environments do not contain the same resources, and because they have different histories of resource exploitation and of quest for protection. (ibid)

Thus, different ethnic groups and their adaptive strategies must be seen as unique. Having made this assertion of uniqueness, Ogbu then contradicts himself by grossly categorising ethnic groups to fit into his framework.

According to Ogbu (1983), there are three types of minorities and each display specific adaptive characteristics. The three types of minorities are: autonomous, castelike and immigrant. Autonomous minorities in the US are groups like Jews, the Amish and Mormons. They are numerically small, subject to discrimination but have adapted and become successful. Their main coping strategy is "passing", which is easily enabled, given that most are physically similar to the dominant group. These minorities may also attain significant political and/or economic power, making their minority status less significant. It is also evident that community mechanisms, similar to those identified in this study, promote successful adaptation (e.g., gossip networks). Generally, this type of minority is easily absorbed into the host population, while the intolerance they face tends to be fleeting and not deeply embedded within the cultural fabric of society.

By contrast, castelike minorities are characterised by an inability to escape their inherent social position. These minorities are "involuntary", in that they are often colonised
peoples or the descendants of slaves. Groups like African Americans and Maori fall into this category. Discrimination and intolerance against this social type is deeply embedded within the cultural history of the host society. Indeed, to afford such groups equal social status often means admitting past wrongs, which can create a dilemma for dominant groups. It may mean relinquishing control of economic resources or some other form of compensation. To prevent this from occurring, rationalising ideologies often emerge to justify the subordinate status of these groups. Ogbu (1983) suggests, however, that castelike minorities seldom believe such ideologies; rather, they develop an oppositional culture that challenges the status quo.\textsuperscript{128} 

A consequence of an oppositional culture is often social failure because such a culture sees "success" as synonymous with "acting white". The inculcation of dominant values is seen by castelike minorities as a denigration of self.\textsuperscript{129} Within the ethnic community, those that challenge the oppositional culture are kept in line with social sanctions, such as name-calling and teasing (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986).\textsuperscript{130} The emergence of an oppositional culture can be seen as a type of "challenging" response, which is a normative state in the adaptive strategy of castelike minorities. There are circumstances, however, where castelike minorities can manoeuvre dominant groups for personal gain. Ogbu (1983) refers to this type of strategy amongst blacks as "Uncle Tomming", which involves "being compliant, dependent and manipulative". This strategy appears very similar to what I call "placating".

Finally, Ogbu identifies a group he refers to as the "immigrant minority". Like castelike minorities, immigrant minorities are usually visibly identifiable. Many are economic

\textsuperscript{128} The rejection of the "folk theory" of success is an example; that is, the idea that hard work and talent lead to success.

\textsuperscript{129} This idea relates quite closely to what I call "self-alienation" in this study.

\textsuperscript{130} This contrasts with the findings in this study, where within the community there was pressure on Chinese to display their assimilative aspects to a watching public. In short, Chinese encouraged "acting white", it was seen as a means of placating.
migrants or refugees, and for this reason, Ogbu refers to them as "more-or-less voluntary" in their minority status. This group tends to become successful in spite of their powerlessness. Ogbu explains their success in terms of turning inward towards their own community, which acts as a source of solace and support thus allowing the group to withstand discrimination. Groups like the Chinese and Indians fall into this category.

The immigrant minority can be seen as synonymous with Bonacich's rendition of the "middleman minority". For example, Ogbu (1983:169) states that Chinese, as "strangers [can] operate psychologically outside established definitions of social status and relations, [and, though they] may be subject to pillory and discrimination, [Chinese] have not usually had time to internalize the effects of discrimination". Furthermore, emigration by immigrant minorities "is usually motivated by a desire to accumulate wealth or other means of achieving advancement 'back home'...[t]his acts as a strong incentive to exploit anticipated and unanticipated opportunities" in the new society (Ogbu, 1983:170). As "strangers" in the new society, immigrant minorities can adopt idealised dominant group values with no personal cost. Thus, "acting white" is seen as a coping strategy for this group.

In many respects, the cultural ecological perspective on minority adaptation is consistent with the findings of this study. Ogbu identifies concepts like "subsistence", "passing", and "Uncle Tomming", which can be seen as similar to "content security" and various forms of "placating". Ogbu also identifies the significance of power as a condition for the emergence of different coping strategies. While his conception of host intolerance is indeed an insight, suggesting that historical circumstances influence the willingness of host peoples to accept or reject social advancement for certain types of minorities. This idea is not, however, inconsistent with the ideas put forward in this study where I suggest intolerance is related to economic, political and social factors.
As insightful as Ogbu's work is, there are evident weaknesses. First, Ogbu rigidly classifies minority groups into specific types. He does suggest that it is possible for groups to move between autonomous, castelike and immigrant categorisations, but he offers no indication of how this may occur, except to say that "[s]ome internal and external forces can change the status of a given minority group" (Ogbu, 1983:172). This, it appears, is an attempt to account for the evident variation within groups that is not sufficiently conceptualised in his framework. It would be better, I suggest, to see minorities as individuals who are influenced by certain conditions. For example, Chinese variation on "enhancing security" is largely accounted for by a) knowledge and/or acceptability of the "unspoken contract", b) degree of community immersion, c) experience of negative shifts, and d) the degree of power and status within the host society. By accounting for variation based on these conditions, the emergent framework can explain evident inconsistencies in Ogbu's framework. That is, Ogbu claims that castelike minorities develop a oppositional culture. In short, they engage in "challenging". Yet, Chinese do this also. Ogbu appears to have over-generalised his categories.

Second, Ogbu's understanding of host intolerance also appears somewhat rigid. Intolerance, he suggests, is largely tied into historical circumstances that have become deeply embedded within the cultural fabric of society. Hence, blacks are tolerated less than Chinese in the US. Yet, I suggest that intolerance is a dynamic phenomenon, and it relates to the pluralistic nature of societies also. For example, if Chinese pose a greater hegemonic challenge than blacks, it is likely that alliances will be struck against Chinese for a) the dominant group to maintain power, and b) for the minority who wants to advance their ranking on the racial hierarchy - the notion of "most favoured minority" status. I would suggest that strong resistance to black advancement in the US is better explained by their insistence on "challenging" hegemonic structures in combination with historical circumstances of oppression; while Chinese tolerance in the US is largely the
result of "placating" being a normative strategy, "challenging" being relatively absent, and more favourable historical circumstances.\textsuperscript{131}

Finally, Ogbu's conceptualisations of Chinese are not strongly supported by this study. His definition of Chinese as "immigrant minorities", "strangers" and "outsiders" appears more based on stereotypes than actuality. Such conceptualisations only perpetuate the permanent foreigner image assigned to this group (Lee, 1996). This study has shown that Chinese demand belonging, equality and recognition of their ethnic identity. Chinese do see themselves as New Zealanders, and no doubt American Chinese see themselves as Americans. Also, Ogbu sees Chinese being able to easily cope with discrimination because Chinese see themselves as "strangers" who will return "home", while the community provides a source of solace for coping. Only the latter contention emerged within this study; even then, Chinese do suffer psychological costs. This is especially the case with "placating", which results in feelings of anxiety, paranoia, emotional trauma, and self-alienation.

It can be said then, that the cultural ecological framework has been partially supported by this study. While this study suggests that many of the concepts in the cultural ecological framework may be over-generalised.

To conclude this section, it can be seen that "enhancing security" as a conceptual framework relates in part to all major theories of ethnic adaptation to new societies. Indeed, the emergent framework can be seen to transcend the extant literature, thus connecting their relevant aspects within an interactional framework\textsuperscript{132} that explains the everyday experiences of powerless minorities.

\textsuperscript{131} For example Chinese and American alliances during WWII.

\textsuperscript{132} This simply refers to theory based around interaction as opposed to one based around structure, such as Bonacich's thesis on middlemen minorities.
3. ELABORATING THE THEORY

"Enhancing security" holds within it the potential for much elaboration. Substantive grounded theories are seldom complete because their focus is typically on a specified community that is bound by local conditions and circumstances. In other words, a theory generated with reference to the Chinese in New Zealand will have most relevance to this community. But, as shown, the discovered categories and indeed the general process can be relevant to other ethnic communities (e.g., blacks, Jews, Japanese and Indians, to name but a few). In this respect, the substantive area the current theory contributes to can be identified as that of race relations. To show the general import of the emergent framework to this field of study, it would be useful to expand upon what has already been presented above. This exercise will highlight the generalising aspect of the grounded theory. In this section, therefore, I elaborate by comparison and conjecture and in so doing identify areas for further research and hypotheses to be tested. Predominantly, I focus on the conditions that vary the "enhancing security" process.

The single most important condition within the emergent theory appears to be power. Powerless groups and individuals seem condemned to placate if the cost of not doing so is increased discrimination or, at worst, expulsion from the host society. Lack of power for the many Chinese in New Zealand is related to their exiled nature; they have no homeland to return to. Furthermore, it relates to their small numerical size, geographical spread and political and economic subordination. It is quite possible that communities that do not display these characteristics will not feel the need to placate. The Chinese in Southeast Asia for example are economically dominant though politically subordinate. Their existence is based on a pluralistic compromise - an enforced tolerance of sorts. "Placating" in Southeast Asia amongst the Chinese is likely to be less prominent or indeed non-existent. This would explain why Southeast Asian Chinese migrants to New Zealand did not initially display "normative" behaviour and thus broke the conventions of the
"unspoken contract". This pluralistic compromise has, however, restricted forceful "challenging" amongst the Chinese in Southeast Asia.

"Challenging" is the course of those more powerful. It lies at the other extreme of responses to insecurity. If my contention is correct, there should be examples where minorities exhibit enough power to challenge existing hegemonic structures and not fear the consequences of such a challenge. A group's power may come from numerical strength, political influence, or indeed a sense of undeniable belonging in the host society. Many "castelike" minorities hold such positions. Lian (1988), for example, suggests that Maori have adopted a "challenging" stance to subordination. The established legitimacy of the Treaty of Waitangi since the 1970s, the "bicultural" agenda set by governments, and the treaty claims process for redress of past wrongs is recognition of the "place" of Maori in New Zealand. There is no demand for "showing commitment" amongst Maori like there is for Chinese. Maori belonging in New Zealand is unquestionable. The "challenging" option thus appears more viable for Maori than for Chinese. No one can ever tell Maori to "go home" for instance. Expulsion can never be held as a threat for not conforming to established norms. Decreasing tolerance amongst the majority towards Maori is quite possible however, though the consequences of this declining tolerance appear to be less than for Chinese. Although "challenging" may be a group response to subordination from Maori, "placating" may still be evident amongst individuals. This is especially the case in situations of extreme power asymmetry.133 "Placating" can also be detected amongst Maori academics, who appear to take on the role of "creating understanding" (see Walker, 1996). They present to Pakeha their side of the story as it were.134

133 The lone Maori amongst Pakeha may feel the need to placate for example. "Uncle Tomming" amongst American blacks was also evident in these types of situations (see Ogbu, 1983).

134 Often a fine line exists between placating and challenging. Walker's (1996) book the "Walker Papers" can easily be interpreted either way, for example. Here, he presents the Maori view on a variety of issues relating to the Treaty of Waitangi.
Another interesting aspect of "enhancing security" is that in pluralistic societies it is common for more than one minority group to attempt to gain acceptance into the world of "normals". This sets up a situation of competition amongst minorities. I referred to this in the context section of this study as "most favoured minority" status, where interethnic competition occurs to establish a high placing on a racial hierarchy. Lee's (1996) study on Asian students in the US showed quite clearly how students use "placating" strategies to increase their level of acceptance and thus their racial positioning. More importantly though, was that through "intellectual affirming" seemingly disparate groups can begin to see connections amongst their experiences and pan-ethnic alliances can be formed. It was this type of collaboration that saw the emergence of the "Asian-American" movement (Wei, 1993). Here, previously antagonistic groups united to fight discrimination. As already mentioned, the Asian American movement was a middle-class intellectual challenge to the status quo. This might be referred to as a "top-down" challenge, where elites lead a challenge against the established hegemony. "Bottom-up" challenges are also possible, but these often occur in a situation of pluralistic ignorance. That is, where each minority group is unaware of the other's concerns and base challenges on specific aspects of discriminatory experience relevant to one's own group. It is in this situation that attempts are made for "most favoured minority" status. "Top-down" challenges appear more useful because of their unifying potential.

The tolerance threshold is another condition that appears to greatly influence the type of responses from minority groups. The greater the perceived tolerance the less evident "placating", "affirming" and "challenging" are. However, negative tolerance shifts often

---

135 Lee did not, of course, refer to these behaviours as "placating" but an assessment of her students behaviours reveals these strategies.

136 The intellectual framework one uses must present opportunities for a unifying perspective. Marxism is a good example of a unifying intellectual framework.

137 Again, there must be a unifying framework present that allows groups to "see" beyond their own self interest.
initiate these processes in full force. This occurs because negative shifts correspond with
a narrowing tolerance threshold, meaning small deviations from acceptable norms
amongst specific minorities yield greater host reaction. If a minority is powerless\textsuperscript{138}
during a negative shift they are more likely to engage in exaggerated "placating" behaviour
along with the corresponding "affirming" behaviour. If the minority maintains a degree of
power during a negative tolerance shift then a "challenging" response is quite likely. It
should be noted that "placating" is aimed at maintaining, regaining or increasing tolerance
while existing in a normative environment determined by the dominant group. This is the
reason why "affirming" becomes necessary. The normative environment does not cater
for the psychological needs of the minority. "Challenging", however, is a response that
attempts to alter the normative environment and make the minority "normal". Since
dominant groups often define what is to be considered "normal", challenges are often
seen as threatening, unless they are successfully combined with "placating"
behaviours.\textsuperscript{139}

Yet another important aspect of the emergent theory is the role of the ethnic community.
The nature of a community can determine the community response to insecurity (content
and emotive). It can be seen that a small, tight-knit homogeneous community is ideal for
image control. Mechanisms such as gossip become all the more powerful. Furthermore,
such communities allow the leadership to have a significant influence. "Challenging"
leaderships often promote "challenging" strategies to deal with insecurity concerns.

\textsuperscript{138} In the sense of being numerical small, and economically and politically subordinate.
\textsuperscript{139} I referred to this aspect of combining "placating" and "challenging" in the body text as being diplomatic.
An examination of political movements can illustrate how "challenging" within a placative framework can be
effective. The best minority political leaders are often those who are able to bring onside "normals" and present
a challenge in a placatory way. Martin Luther King is an excellent example of such a leader. King lead a
movement that challenged the status quo yet filled his speeches with placatory rhetoric. The "I Have a Dream"
speech is a good case in point. This speech is replete with utterances that reflect acceptable American values
(e.g., Christian religious rhetoric, conciliatory expressions, and an emphasis on non-violent protest. King's
approach to "challenging" can be contrasted with that of Louis Farakhan. Not only does Farakhan stand outside
religious social norms of American society (i.e., The Nation of Islam), he also makes no attempt at "placating"
American society. The "Million Man March" held in Washington in 1995 excluded not only whites but also
black women. Not surprisingly, King has been eulogised into American culture as a great leader, while Farakhan
has been labelled a militant and anti-semitic.
"Placating" leaderships often promote "placating" strategies along with "affirming" measures held within the community. The type of leadership and character of the community can have consequences for ethnic members. People often gravitate towards an ethnic community because it offers a source of solace, a sense of belonging. A lack of correspondence between community strategies and those of individuals can lead to feelings of exclusion. The risk may be that the community is not providing what individuals want, which creates a situation where solace is sought at the cost of conformity or abandonment of the community occurs due to frustration at its restrictive character.

Another factor relating to the ethnic community is its urban locale. This appears important for a number of reasons. Urban life can be contrasted with rural life where the type and intensity of social interaction differs. "Enhancing security" appears very much an urban phenomenon, or at least one that is exacerbated by the urban environment. Simmel (1950) captures the difference between urban and rural settings nicely when he writes:

With each crossing of the street, the tempo and multiplicity of economic, occupational and social life, the city sets up a deep contrast with small town and rural life with reference to the sensory foundations of psychic life. The metropolis exacts from man as a discriminating creature a different amount of consciousness than does rural life. Here the rhythm of life and sensory mental imagery flows more slowly, more habitually and more evenly. Precisely in this connection the sophisticated character of metropolitan psychic life becomes more understandable as over and against small town life which rests upon deeply felt and emotional relationships (pg. 410)
The urban setting can be seen therefore to create a more rational, intellectual and anonymous person (Karp, 1973). It is these aspects that make "placating" and "affirming" more necessary and "challenging" more likely. In regards to anonymity, the city exacerbates exclusion. Interaction becomes increasingly false amongst strangers for there is no time to know everyone. Preconceived images and stereotypes are how people are perceived constantly. There is an urban "reserve".

As a result of this reserve we frequently do not even know by sight those who have been our neighbors for years. And it is this reserve which in the eyes of small-town people make us appear to be cold and heartless. Indeed, if I do not deceive myself, the inner aspects of this outer reserve is not indifference but, more often than we are aware, it is a slight aversion, a mutual strangeness and repulsion, which will break into hatred and fight at the moment of closer contact, however caused. (Simmel, 1950:415)

The urban reserve and anonymity, however, creates more freedom. Small communities are places where norms are more strictly enforced. Gossip, rumour and the lack of anonymity serve to control normative digressions. The freedom of the city, by way of anonymity, does however create tension; "hatred" and "fight" are more easily initiated as Simmel suggests. It is this tension that gives way to social movements, challenges to the status quo. This is bolstered by the more intellectual and rational character of its population, while the fast paced life of the city provides an ideal catalyst for social change. Change can be seen as more acceptable in the city than in rural locales. Indeed, it
is often seen as an inevitable aspect of what defines a city.140

To sum up this section briefly it can be said that the emergent grounded theory has far greater relevance than mere application within the Chinese community in New Zealand. From a substantive point of view, the theory relates to the area of race relations. Many of the conditions identified here are indicators of where the theory may be applicable and to what groups it may apply. As suggested, much of what has been elaborated can harness future research opportunities. New theories can spring from the old; hypotheses can be tested, extended or modified.

So far this chapter has identified and compared the emergent theory to the specific literature of Chinese and minority adaptation to new societies. Conditions of the emergent theory have been elaborated to show their potential for further development. In the following section I briefly deal with the issue of formal theory - yet another opportunity for future research.

4. FROM SUBSTANTIVE TO FORMAL THEORY

As valuable as the contribution to substantive theory is, it is the contribution to formal theory that reveals the most powerful aspect of grounded theory analysis. Race relations, it can be seen, is but one aspect of a more general type of research domain. In a formal theoretical sense, this study contributes to the study of stigma and its management. The analysis is, in fact, a study of how visibly stigmatised groups manoeuvre themselves and

140 The connection between ethnic relations and the city relates to a much touted psychological theory dealing with tolerance. It is called the "contact hypothesis". It suggests that more contact results in more tolerance - although, this is not strictly the case. Forbes (1997, cited in Tatalovich, 1998) identified an interesting phenomenon. That is, that tolerance tends to increase when interactions are on an individual basis with ethnic members. Yet, tolerance tends to decline when interaction is predominantly on a group basis with ethnic members. This notion seems to be well understood by informants in this study, as most "placating" strategies seem to be aimed at being invisible, not being seen with other ethnics, and differentiating oneself from ethnic identification. Interestingly, the city may be a place of potential social change, a place where Chinese can initiate and realise equality; but the close contact and more "emotional" ties of rural locales may be where Chinese are treated more equally on a daily basis.
members of the host population to ensure tolerance. Furthermore, it is a study of exclusion and coping with exclusion. General social forms that occur in everyday interactions amongst the visibly stigmatised are captured.

This study therefore connects to the much celebrated work of Erving Goffman. Goffman's (1963) book "Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity" identifies the general aspects of dealing with stigma. It introduced into the sociological vocabulary powerful concepts such as "passing" and "covering" that still find theoretical relevance today, some forty years after their initial discovery. "Enhancing security" fits neatly into Goffman's scheme of stigma management, while as a grounded theory it resists some of the criticism levelled at Goffman's work.

There are three areas of critique that can be directed towards Goffman. First, he presents an "over-managed" view of "man" (Glaser, 1978). There is one predominant theoretical code used by Goffman: that of "strategy". Everything is strategic for Goffman. Glaser suggests Goffman "forces" the strategy code on data without evidence of grounding. And this leads onto the second major criticism of Goffman: that the methodology by which he makes discoveries is unspecified (Ekins, 1993). A reader of Goffman's work is left wondering to what degree the work is grounded. Finally, as useful as Stigma is as a formal theoretical framework, much of the theoretical detail is left in descriptive form; it is unlabelled and therefore difficult to use in general application.

It is hoped that the current study will add depth to those areas of stigma management left unspecified by Goffman, while the application of a rigorous methodology will lay to rest questions of conceptual and theoretical groundedness. One area of stigma management not dealt with in any depth by Goffman is the maintenance of host tolerance and how this can be influenced by stigmatised persons and collectives. Moreover, an examination of
how "tolerance shifts" can influence the adaptive responses of the stigmatised is also an area unexplored by Goffman but dealt with in this study. Whilst solace seeking amongst the stigmatised finds greater focus here, it is only cursorily mentioned in "Stigma". These are the major contributions to formal theory made by the emergent grounded framework.

Glaser (1978) lists a number of ways in which substantive theory can be shifted to a higher level of abstraction, thus meeting the requirements of a formal grounded theory. One technique is the "rewrite" where substantive words, phrases and adjectives are removed and replaced with more general terms. Thus, "foreigner roles" might be relabelled as "stereotyped roles". Thus when applied to say a blind person we can imagine how "normals" would expect a blind person to act and thus the blind person may play the "stereotyped role" to fulfil this preconceived expectation, thus "placating" the "normal" individual. The concept is the same but the relabelling makes for greater general application. This technique is limited though, for a study of one substantive area is unlikely to yield adequate "fit" to a different substantive community (ibid).

A better way to achieve conceptual fit is through constant comparison of similar and dissimilar groups (ibid). Thus comparing Chinese to other ethnic minorities would be useful. Also, comparing Chinese to blind people would be equally useful for formal theory generation. All groups mentioned here can be seen as stigmatised in some way. By comparing similar types of stigmatised people we verify the usefulness of categories, define the conditions under which categories exist, and identify the basic properties of categories (Conrad, 1978). By comparing dissimilar groups (such as Chinese and the blind) we achieve a dense development of categories and delimit the scope of the theory (ibid). An example from Goffman (1963) can be given. Here he quotes a blind person who states:
Once - a few years ago - I thought that I would much rather go out with a sighted man than a blind man. But I have dates off and on, and slowly my feelings about this have changed. I value the understanding of the blind for the blind, and now I could respect a blind man for his own qualities and be glad for the understanding he could give me (italics added) (pg. 107)

By comparison with the emergent grounded theory, it can be seen that this quote indicates the concept of "association affirmation". It reveals the same properties identified by Chinese. That is, that there is an ineffable understanding from people who are similarly stigmatised. "Normals" cannot easily "understand" what it means to be blind and the experiences associated with this. Further analysis may reveal more similarities with Chinese and indeed differences that could easily be worked into a formal theoretical framework. The comparison technique for generating formal theory creates better "fit" than the "rewrite" technique, and thus increases the theory's relevance and ability to "work" in more diverse areas.

These are but cursory examples of how the substantive theory can be extended to a higher level of conceptual abstraction. It does, however, illustrate the potential power of grounded theory to capture social processes that are quite generally applicable in society. The task of more comparison is an opportunity for future research.

5. IMPLICATIONS

So far, this chapter has dealt with the relevant theoretical literature, which was compared and contrasted with the emergent theory; the emergent framework was then elaborated to show its general application in the substantive and formal arenas. In this final section the functional aspect of grounded theory is realised and implications of the emergent framework are stated.
Stating implications forms an important aspect of grounded theory studies: grounded theories do more than merely describe what is happening in an action scene (Brooks, 1998). Grounded theories also explain through concepts what is going on. Quoting Glaser and Strauss (1967) Brooks (1998:129) notes that:

[Good grounded theories] ...enable the person who uses it to have enough control in everyday situations to make its application worth trying...The person who applies the theory must be enabled to understand and analyse ongoing situational realities, to produce and predict change in them, and to predict and control consequences both for the object of change and for other parts of the total situation that will be affected.

Given this, recommendations are made to aid the process of tolerance development between ethnic groups like Chinese and the surrounding host society. Comments are also made on how communities can promote social change without exacerbating host intolerance. Finally, some ideas are presented on how communities can be more inclusive, aid those who are experiencing self-alienation, and prevent occurrences of pluralistic ignorance, where ethnic communities compete for "most favoured minority" status. These recommendations are at differing levels; broader social recommendations are dealt with first, followed by those dealing with community-based issues.

It is evident that the conditions that characterise Chinese existence, and minorities like them, in New Zealand are in need of change. It has been suggested that "insecurity consciousness" is the product of political and economic subordination, the economic positioning and expected economic role of Chinese, and the related issue of "non-belonging" or "permanent foreigner" status. These conditions need to be altered if groups
like Chinese are to feel more comfortable in new societies. First and foremost there needs to be a shift in the way immigrant groups are viewed. Too often their legitimation for entry is based on purely economic criteria. Government agencies need to shift focus and highlight the benefits of cultural diversity instead of solely focusing on economic benefits. An overemphasis on the economic role of migrants serves to increase the likelihood of host intolerance, especially since such policies are often initiated during economic declines. In such a context, class concerns can easily become conflated with ethnicity. The process of ethnic lumping also means that "innocent" groups can become equally targeted for discrimination; and in the case of Chinese, perpetuating their sense of "non-belonging". Second, but related to the first, the connection between the "immigrant" label and "Chinese", "Asian", or any other relevant coloured minority group needs to be abandoned. This aspect of labelling only exacerbates feelings of "non-belonging"; it denies the historical significance and contribution of groups like Chinese to New Zealand society and perpetuates the perception of such groups as sojourners. A starting point for this change may simply be to rewrite the history books in a more inclusive form.\textsuperscript{141}

Third, political representation should be encouraged amongst groups like Chinese. The invisibility of Chinese from the public arena, I suggest, has largely been a combination of host intolerance and a ploy by Chinese to "blend in". This situation is similar to that in Southeast Asia, where in exchange for non-political challenges a "tolerable" coexistence was struck. It differs, however, in that in Southeast Asia pluralistic societies became commonplace, and Chinese remained largely Chinese in habit, custom and outlook. In New Zealand, though, political absence was combined with the demand for assimilation. This, as this study has shown, led to a situation where "placating" became commonplace with the ultimate consequence of self-alienation. It is in the political arena that Chinese can redress the imbalance, establish the Chinese identity as part of the New Zealand identity,

\textsuperscript{141} Chen (1993) for example notes the relative absence of Chinese in the major historical texts on New Zealand.
break down the historical image of Chinese as sojourners rather than settlers, and ultimately become full citizens. It is also the arena where anti-discrimination laws can be made more effective. We need only look at the example of Jews to see how successful political participation can be in establishing a degree of security in a new nation (see Ginsberg, 1993).

The evident danger of significant political participation is that it may arouse feelings of threat amongst members of the host population. Such feelings are likely, given the conflation of economic roles and "immigrant" groups. For this reason, the elimination of the economic role assignment should be antecedent to significant political participation. Interestingly, and as noted above, political participation as a form of "challenging" can also be a type of "placating". It is a sign of commitment to the surrounding society. Indeed, the best political response is to combine "placating" and "challenging". In real terms, this may mean participation in existing political parties and not the formation of ethnically-based political movements. The latter case may serve to heighten the perception of threat, while the former case is more likely to increase the perception of commitment. Also, from within this framework, attempts can be made to eliminate the zero-sum notion of cultural existence. It should be spelt out that accepting Chineseness as a component of the national identity in no way diminishes Europeanness or Maoriness. As this study has shown, it is quite possible for identities to be open, additive and complementary. Inclusive identity promotion should be touted as beneficial for all.

In regards to actions that can be taken by ethnic communities, there are a number of measures. First, "challenging" responses are perhaps best initiated during positive shifts rather than during negative shifts. It is far more common for the latter case to occur because increasing discrimination forces ethnic communities to launch defensive

---

142 See the "non-belonging" section in chapter 3 for a definition of citizenship.
responses. During more tolerant phases, there appears to be a complacency. Yet, it is evident that "challenging" during periods of relative tolerance may be more fruitful. The Civil Rights Movement in the US, for example, occurred within the economic boom of the 1960s; whether planned or inadvertent, it led to sweeping changes; anti-discrimination laws were reinforced, affirmative action programs were initiated, and black culture became firmly etched into American culture generally. Compare this situation to Asian Americans, who in spite of their long history are still seen as "immigrants" that stand "outside" the framework of American cultural definition (see Lee, 1996).

Ethnic communities can also promote change by recognising their role in the subordination exercise. Concepts such as the "unspoken contract" and processes such as "placating" provide insight into how subordination is maintained by ethnic groups themselves. In the Chinese community, for example, it can be seen that the general placative approach to coping is maintained by social control mechanisms such as gossip and the concern for status. Those who challenge the social norm of "placating" are often ostracised or silenced for fear that their behaviour may damage the community image, and hence host tolerance. In reality, however, their actions are the course for greater acceptance. It is only through "challenging" that equality, belonging and the acceptance of an ethnic identity as a valid public identity can become realised. The "challenging" response from these "militants" therefore should not be discouraged, but rather, cultivated into a united community response. Fears of declining host tolerance can be alleviated by knowledge that "challenging" when combined with "placating" can be highly effective in promoting social change without massive social friction.

The cultivation of "militants" can occur within the community by promoting "affirming". It was suggested that many ethnics became self-alienated in an environment that demands assimilation, and that this sense of alienation is realised during "discovery moments", 
which leads to a path of affirmation. Affirmation processes do not only alleviate the sense of alienation however, they also can lead to a "challenging" response, and hence the emergence of the "militant". If "affirming" is the path to militancy and ultimate social change, then affirmation processes should be encouraged.

Perhaps the easiest way of doing this is for the ethnic community to provide resources and acknowledgement in aid of the various types of "affirming". Above, it was suggested that there are typically three types of "affirming": association affirmation, cultural affirmation, and intellectual affirmation. The second of these primarily serves the purpose of combating self-alienation, but is a necessary subsidiary to "challenging". The first and last of these can be exploited in aid of initiating a "challenging" response.

With regards to cultural affirmation, it can be seen that ethnic communities typically promote only one type of identity - the "exclusive" identity form (e.g., Chineseness defined in terms of speaking Chinese, reading Chinese and an understanding of Chinese history). Hence, resourcing is usually directed towards "identity maintenance" programs (e.g., ethnic language programs, the promotion of cultural festivals and the like) that promote this exclusive form. It was shown in this study, however, that many Chinese do not subscribe to such narrowly defined understandings of Chineseness.143 It would be better for ethnic communities to adopt more "inclusive" understandings of identity. This would prevent alienating those who subscribe to pluralistic identity forms and diminish the gap between the private Chinese world and the public European world.144 A diminished gap can be seen as a necessary prerequisite for better interethnic relations; and thus, a better foundation for the initiation of a "challenging" response.

143 This may be one of the reasons why the New Zealand Chinese Association has been losing youth interest over recent years (see New Zealand Chinese Association Spring Newsletter, 1999).
144 This could possibly stem the flow of declining youth participation within the Chinese community also.
With regards to intellectual affirmation, the community could place a new emphasis on this type of "affirming". It is normal for ethnic communities to only focus on the cultural aspects of "affirming", yet intellectual aspects are equally as important and often provide ethnics with a "bigger picture" of their social experiences. This "bigger picture" can help prevent pluralistic ignorance, where ethnics see their own situation as unique without realising other ethnics probably go through similar experiences. It can also help prevent ethnic competition for "most favoured minority" status, which serves no greater purpose than the maintenance of the status quo.

In a material sense, cultural and intellectual affirming may be promoted by the establishment of a library or website containing a diverse range of resource material (e.g., historical works on ethnic history, traditional literature, literature on ethnic migration, modern works of fiction and non-fiction, and intellectual works that describe, conceptualise and theorise ethnic experiences). One finding this study made was that informants often went through a haphazard process of looking for affirming aids. A library dedicated to such aids would resolve this haphazard process.

Finally, association affirmation could be catered for by the promotion of intraethnic and interethnic relations. The former tends to already occur as part of the identity maintenance exercise of ethnic communities. The latter, however, is not such a prominent feature. Yet, as stated, it is evident that coloured minorities tend to encounter similar life experiences. Bonacich (1973) was able to categorise Chinese, Japanese, Indians, and Jews as one type of minority. Likewise, Ogbu (1978, 1983) came to a similar conclusion. Recognised by academics, intellectuals and researchers, the ethnic minority experience has many similarities. Yet, promotion of "sharing" amongst minority communities is uncommon. In a similar manner to intellectual affirming, the promotion of interethnic "sharing" could prevent the occurrence of pluralistic ignorance and the demand for "most favoured
minority" status. Ethnic communities similarly informed could even initiate united challenges against the status quo.
"Why aren't you finished yet?". This was a phrase I heard all too often and one I hope never to hear again! Completing this dissertation was a torturous process with many "highs" and "lows", perhaps more of the latter. "Getting through" was never an easy task and certainly not one that could have been achieved alone. It is with a degree of satisfaction, then, that I now take the opportunity to thank those people that supported me and led me towards the path of completion.

First and foremost I would like to thank Tali, who always believed I would finish even when I did not. Tali has tolerated what must seem like an eternity of odd working hours, frustrations, moodiness and anguish. The past few years have been difficult and I thank her enormously for her support. This is as much her dissertation as it is mine.

I would also like to thank my supervisors, Dr John Freeman-Moir and Dr Ian Brooks, for allowing me the freedom to do research the way I wanted to do it. Their support and guidance has been immense and is much appreciated. I thank John for seeing me through from start to finish and Ian for agreeing to supervise my work over the past year. "Cheers".

This study would not have been possible without the support of the Canterbury Chinese Association, members of the Chinese community and all those individuals who agreed to be interviewed. I thank them all for making this study possible. A special thank you to James To and Dr Les Ding.

Finally, I would also like to thank Dr Barney Glaser for reading over early drafts and providing helpful comments, the people at the Grounded Theory Institute for their excellent "trouble-shooting" seminars, Professor Arieh Iserles for giving me that much needed "pep talk" in Cambridge, Dr Liz Gordon for encouraging me to pursue a doctorate in the first place, David Hughes and Professor Bill Willmott for their initial supervision, and my parents for their support.
References


Associated Press, (1996, July 1) 'Hong Kong Counts Down to Chinese Rule', The Dallas Morning News, pp. 4A.


Bogdan, R. C. and Biklen, S. K. (1985) Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods, Boston, Allyn and Bacon, Inc.


Church, J. (1997) Qualitative Vs Qualitative: How Useful is the Distinction? Paper Presented to the Annual Conference of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education. Education Department, Canterbury University.


Merriam, S. B. (1993) "What Can You Tell From an N of 1?": Issues of Validity and Reliability in Qualitative Research. Paper delivered at the Annual Qualitative Interest Group Conference at the University of Georgia, Athens.


Ng, B. F. (1959) *The Chinese in New Zealand: A Study in Assimilation*, Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press.
Ng, E. (1972) *The Yellow Peril: Myth or Reality (1878-1881)*, Essay Submitted for the Degree of BA Honours in History, Otago University.


Sell, H. (1997) Quars-L ListServe [Online]. Available e-mail: SELL@who.ernet.in

Serrie, H. (1985, Summer) The Familial and the Familiar: Constancy and Variation in
Chinese Culture with Reference to the Hsu Attributes, Journal of Comparative

Publishers Inc., Commack.

Korea, Nations and Nationalism, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp. 465-484.


Simmel, G. (1950) The Metropolis and the Mental Life, The Sociology of Georg Simmel,

Examples of Grounded Theory: A Reader, Edited by Glaser, B. G., California,
Sociology Press.

Simmons, O. E. (1995) Illegitimate Uses of the Grounded Theory Title in Grounded
Press, pp. 163-172.


# List of Appendices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPENDIX</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Interview Request Letter</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Letter to Informants Regarding Interview Transcript</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. A Brief History of the Overseas Chinese</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Mapping &quot;Interpretation Shifts&quot;</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A

(Initial) Interview Request Letter

«Date»

«Name»
«Street Address»
«City»

Dear «Name»,

You may recall completing a demographic questionnaire about two months ago. That survey is now complete, from it, I am nominating a select group of families for in-depth discussion on educational issues.

From the survey data, it is evident that your family fits the mould of a high achieving Chinese family. If possible, I would like to take the opportunity to hear you and your family's views on educational achievement. Some things I would like to discuss are:

• Educational background
• Career and educational aspirations for your children
• Childrearing practices
• Community and societal influences

This discussion can either occur with the whole family or on an individual basis, whatever suits you best. Preferably, your home would be the best location for any discussion but this is entirely up to you.

I will be contacting you by phone within the next week to confirm whether you wish to participate. Alternatively, you can contact me at the above address or by phone on xxx-xxxx or xxx-xxx-xx if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,
APPENDIX B

Letter to Informants Regarding Interview Transcript

«Date»
«informant name»
«address1»
«address2»

Dear «informant name»,

You may recall being interviewed by me on «date». That interview has been transcribed and is available for you to read over and comment on (transcript enclosed). The reasons I'd like you to look over the interview are: (a) it allows me to gauge the accuracy of the transcript; (b) it gives you the opportunity to comment further. Quite often people are surprised by the things they say or how they said things during an interview. This is an opportunity for you to amend your comments and give greater clarity to the transcript. You may want to ask yourself these questions: Did I say what I meant to say? Is what I said clear?

If you would like to amend or comment on the transcript then you can do so by writing in the margins or in between lines. Alternatively, you can call me should you wish to comment more extensively (ph. xxx-xxxx).

You are reminded that all comments you make are confidential. Nothing you said in the original interview or your additional comments can be used in my thesis without your permission. And, if any passages are used then all names and identifying information will be deleted first.

Please return the transcript to me in the envelop provided before the end of «date». Thank you for supporting this research project. I'll be sure to keep you up-dated with all future developments.

Yours sincerely,
APPENDIX C

A Brief History of the Overseas Chinese

The history of the Overseas Chinese is tumultuous. It starts with the divide between North and South China. Most of today's Overseas Chinese can trace their roots to the southern coastal regions of Chekiang, Fukien and Kwangtung (Seagrave, 1995). The landlocked nature of Northern China always made emigration more difficult, but cultural and political differences also played a part. The political base in China was always in the north, while the southern regions, south of the Yangtze River, emerged as the centre of mercantile activity (ibid). As a mercantile centre, its people became great seafarers making constant contact with foreign traders. Seagrave (1995) suggests the north labelled the south Yueh, literally meaning barbarian, and everything in the south, including its people, came under that title. So as the north was to be associated with political power and "cultured" people, the south was to be associated with economic power and a hypercapitalistic, "uncultured" people.

The Emergence of the Overseas Chinese

It was the divide between north and south that saw the emergence of the Overseas Chinese. During the Ming Dynasty [1368-1644], a mass migration off shore occurred throughout the southern coastal regions (ibid). The Ming Dynasty was renowned, especially in its later years, for its greed and extortion. Fearing the worst, the wealthy southern families and their followers fled to locations throughout Southeast Asia. The Ming restrictions on trade and travel meant even their descendants could not return to China. In more recent times, many southern Chinese fled into Hong Kong and further
afield fearing the worst from a communist takeover in 1949. The southern provinces of Kwangtung and Fukien were defiant of northern political power. Consequently, they were punished when the communist took control; state run factories and infrastructure were moved inland (ibid).

China's turbulent history was not always an internal affair. In 1839 the "Opium Wars" erupted after a trade dispute with the British. The British prevailed and the resulting 1842 Treaty of Nanking saw China cede control of Hong Kong; while by 1860, the British gained control over Kowloon followed by a 99 year lease over Hong Kong's New Territories (Parker, 1995). Shortly after, the Qing government began to disintegrate. The financial crisis that ensued eventually led to high taxation and eventual social chaos (Ip, 1995). Famine, internal rebellions and banditry became commonplace. The Taiping Rebellion resulted in 20 million deaths throughout the countryside (ibid). It was the socioeconomic breakdown during this period that set the scene for mass migration overseas (Parker, 1995). The peasant farmers of southern China were hardest hit, and it was in foreign lands that they were to seek a reprieve from a now perilous China (ibid). The northern Chinese remained where they were.

The southern Chinese were well adapted to travel. With centuries of seafaring experience, mercantile activity, and alienation from the power centre in the north, they became content to be left to their own devices (Seagrave, 1995). A self-sufficient culture emerged where reliance on family, clan, village and dialect group served as their only loyalties (ibid). This independence was to serve them well as they migrated throughout the Pacific Rim. Even to this day, the Overseas Chinese are bound by the pseudo-kin ties, village associations and dialect groupings of old. It was the clan associations that looked after the welfare of Chinese overseas, fighting discrimination, providing shelter and liaising between host society and the local Chinese community in matters of concern (Wong,
1992). Unlike their European counterparts, however, the migrant Chinese could not rely on their national government for protection; this lack of support further emphasised the need for self-sufficiency.145

The Chinese in Southeast Asia

Away from China, the Chinese faced circumstances as perilous as those they had escaped. In the Southeast Asia region, where some 57 million Chinese reside (approximately 80% of all Overseas Chinese), the Chinese were not openly accepted by the indigenous peoples (Dwyer, 1990). Chinese capitalistic expertise allowed them to establish successful businesses, yet they still saw China as home. They were on a sojourn, perhaps extended by more than one generation, by a sojourn nonetheless. It was these factors, as well as confrontations with the established Islamic governments that caused conflict in many Southeast Asian states (ibid).146 Anti-Chinese sentiment has been constant throughout the Southeast Asian region (ibid).147

Even where the Chinese have established political control regional unease remains. Prior to Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997, the territory was in a state of fear about the

145 The lack of support from China must be placed in context. China was often unable to provide support rather than unwilling. Political and economic crises litter China's history. The socioeconomic breakdown during the mid to late 1800s, for example, forced China to look inwards, rather than be concerned about external issues. Later in that century, the Chinese did send representatives to examine the plight of its overseas nationals (in 1890 a Chinese representative came to Australia and New Zealand for example (Yee, 1996a)). The right of Chinese citizenship was also offered to all Overseas Chinese until 1954. And although China was no longer obliged to aid Overseas Chinese after this date, they did come to the rescue when anti-Chinese rioting occurred in Indonesia in 1965 - an offer was made to evacuate all ethnic Chinese to the Mainland (The Economist, 22 Aug 1998).

146 The Chinese were mainly Christian or Buddhist, some were both.

147 In times of economic and political unrest, anti-Chinese sentiment has boiled over into rioting, looting, extortion and murder. The precarious position of the Chinese is best exemplified by the recent events on May 13 1998 in Indonesia. Dozens of Chinese women were raped and assaulted; 1188 people killed, mostly Chinese; Chinese houses and businesses burned in a wave of violence lasting over a week (The Press, June 12, 1998:10). Similarly, on September 1984 anti-Chinese riots resulted in 28 deaths. Muslim extremist agitation played a large role (Dwyer, 1990). This is no new phenomenon - it follows the massacre of Chinese after Sukarno was overthrown in 1965, unrest in Bandung in 1973, and again in Jakarta 1974 and in South Sulawesi and Central Java in 1980 (ibid, 1990). The most dramatic measure occurred in Vietnam, when in 1978, Chinese were expelled from southern towns resulting in a mass exodus. Thousands sought refuge across neighbouring borders and escaped seaward as boat people (ibid, 1990).
mainland (Associated Press, 1996). Many of the residents of Hong Kong were the wealthy business people who fled southward when the communist regime took control in 1949 (Seagrave, 1995). The Tienanmen Square incident of 1989 further exacerbated these fears (ibid). Similar to Hong Kong, Taiwan lives in a state of constant siege about the mainland's ominous presence (Winberg, 1997). In 1996, tension was heightened as the mainland held military exercises off the Taiwan Strait. The Americans supported Taiwan by sending aircraft carriers into the region. It was support that dated back to 1950; a means to halt the spread of communism throughout Asia (ibid). Likewise, Singapore, Southeast Asia's most successful nation, has reason to feel insecure. Singapore was expelled from the Malaysian Federation in 1965 because of the dominance of Chinese in the city (Dwyer, 1990). The relationship has remained an uneasy one. Singapore relies heavily on Malaysia for its natural resource needs, and also sits in the middle of a virulently anti-Chinese region (ibid).

*The Chinese in Europeanised States*

When the Chinese began entering the Europeanised countries of the Pacific Rim, they did so to avoid the social chaos in China and to seek their fortune in gold. In North America, Australia and New Zealand, Chinese first arrived between 1850 and 1870. As in the case of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, the Chinese who emigrated to the white colonial states were homogeneous in character. A reliance on family, clan, village and dialect group meant that, through chain migration, North America, Australia and New Zealand were mainly occupied by the Cantonese. The "clannishness" of the Chinese dissuaded the Cantonese from attempting to settle throughout Southeast Asia where other dialect groups resided. The Chinese who came to New Zealand were mainly from the province of

---

148 Some Chinese may have been present prior to these dates but official records made no mention of them. In Australia and North America, the Chinese first gained entry as labourers, but numbers only increased with the prospect for gold (see Ryan, 1995; Sandmeyer, 1991).

149 Southeast Asia is dominated by Teochiu, Hainam, Hokkien, Hakka, and Hokchiu. Each regional location is identifiable by Chinese of a certain grouping e.g., Hokkien people dominate Singapore. The Cantonese are present in Southeast Asia but only in small numbers (Price, 1974).
Kwangtung, more specifically, the districts surrounding the southeastern city of Guangzhou (Sedgwick, 1982). Of these, the Sze Yap and Sam Yap districts predominated. The Chinese in New Zealand mainly originate from Poon Yu (Sam Yap), Toy San and San Wui (Sze Yap), Jung Sing, Tung Goon and Fa Yuen counties (ibid).

The experience of the Southeast Asian Chinese was a harbinger for those who were to migrate to the white colonial states. Anti-Chinese sentiment emerged in all colonial societies taking on similar dimensions in each location. In the US and Australia, the Chinese experienced the worst hostilities as mob violence led to rioting and attacks on individual Chinese. The first notable riot occurred in Los Angeles in 1871. Angry mobs swarmed the Chinese quarter "firing into houses, hanging those whom they caught alive, and appropriating all movable property...the entire affair lasted only four hours, but in that time eighteen persons were killed, several buildings were burned, and a large amount of loot was carried away" (Sandmeyer, 1991:48). Similar riots occurred throughout the US up to the end of the 19th century (see Sandmeyer, 1991:97). In Australia, "bullying" and assaults were commonplace, particularly prevalent when newly arrived goldseekers began to increase in number between 1892-93 (Ryan, 1995)

Admittedly, these were "frontier" societies and a degree of lawlessness was almost expected. Also, the Chinese were not the only group to be subjected to discrimination, as Price (1974:228) writes: "sometimes there was agitation against Irish, German, and even English and Scottish immigrants...but the agitation was petty compared with that against the Chinese". The Chinese were a special case. They were willing to work longer hours for less pay, yet were unwilling to commit themselves to their adopted countries. They were not settlers like their European counterparts, but sojourners sending all earnings back to China. As sojourners, they saw little need to assimilate, remained within their tight-knit communities, and were prepared to relocate should trouble erupt. These factors
combined with the presence of Darwinian racial theories provided much of the force for anti-Chinese agitation (ibid).

**The Chinese in New Zealand**

By the time the Chinese came to New Zealand their reputation had well and truly preceded them. As a result, an anti-Chinese league (1857) formed before any Chinese even stepped foot in the country. When the Chinese did arrive in 1866 they were welcomed by newspapers headlines that read "Mongolian Filth" and "The Chinese Problem" (Ng, 1972). Unlike the other colonial societies though, the treatment of the Chinese in New Zealand was relatively tame. There were no mass riots or mass murders,¹⁵⁰ and no looting. Generally, there was not the lawlessness that was evident in Australia and the US. In spite of this, the Chinese did face more difficult circumstances than other migrant groups.

**The Goldmining Era**

Between 1867 and 1880, the Chinese presence in New Zealand was almost exclusively based around goldseeking. Numbers grew steadily and by 1871 there were 2641 Chinese present, almost all male (Sedgwick, 1982). The pace of increase caused alarm and public outcry resulting in a commission of inquiry that same year (Beatson and Beatson, 1990). The commission looked into claims of immorality and unfair competition, but exonerated the Chinese (ibid). The claims were grossly exaggerated. In spite of the commission findings, anti-Chinese sentiment remained. A government plan to import Chinese labour to help build a railroad network was quashed after another outcry. Still, Chinese already in New Zealand were hired. By the late 1870s, the goldrushes were over and the Chinese began to find other work (Ip, 1995). Those who did not work on the railways found farm

---

¹⁵⁰ Only one racially motivated murder was recorded. In 1905, Lionel Terry murdered an elderly Chinese in Wellington. His justification was to rid New Zealand of the "Yellow Peril". Terry was deemed insane and sent to an asylum.
work, others headed towards the main centres, mainly Wellington, but also Auckland, Dunedin and Christchurch (ibid). Competition for jobs and the threat of an urbanising Chinese population served as the impetus for working class discontent and the next phase of Chinese history in New Zealand.

For the next forty years after 1880, the Chinese were to suffer the height of anti-Chinese sentiment in New Zealand. In 1881 Richard Seddon, Premier and stern working class advocate, reintroduced the poll tax bill into parliament.\textsuperscript{151} It passed and became the first discriminatory law against the Chinese.\textsuperscript{152} In 1907, a reading test\textsuperscript{153} was introduced for the Chinese by Sir Joseph Ward, who succeeded Seddon as Premier. Migrants were required to read one hundred English words picked at random. In 1908 the right of naturalisation was revoked for all Chinese in New Zealand.\textsuperscript{154} Thus, regardless of whether you were born in New Zealand, if you were Chinese you were considered a foreigner. Those who were resident in New Zealand and wanted to travel had to apply for re-entry certificates, in which they were finger printed (Ip, 1995). Finally, this era comes to a close with the passing of the 1920 Immigration Restriction Amendment Act. This gave privileged entry to persons of British or Irish descent and all others came under the discretion of the Minister of Customs.\textsuperscript{155} Once and for all, the issue of Chinese immigration had been resolved. There was to be no more parliamentary debate. The Act was administered by one person and s/he alone could make amendments without Cabinet consent (Sedgwick, 1984). A brilliant piece of deceit, the Act’s non-racialised veneer

\textsuperscript{151} The Bill was modelled closely on the Queensland Act of 1877 (Price, 1974).
\textsuperscript{152} In this Act, immigration was limited via a "tonnage ratio". Each ship landing in New Zealand could only carry one Chinese for every 10 tons of ship weight. Chinese also had to pay a 10 pound poll-tax. In 1888 the tonnage ratio was increased to one Chinese per 100 tons, doubling again in 1896 (Ip, 1995). The poll-tax was also raised to 100 pounds in the same year, an exorbitant amount.
\textsuperscript{153} This was similar to the Australian reading test placed on Chinese in 1901, although the Australian test required intending immigrants to read any European language that was handed them (Wilton, 1997).
\textsuperscript{154} The right of naturalisation was initially granted to Chinese in 1873, but Chinese were the only group to ever be charged a fee for this right.
\textsuperscript{155} Chinese residents could not even apply for their wives and children to enter New Zealand. Effectively, the Act ensured the Chinese could not sink their roots into New Zealand.
gave it an egalitarian appearance. Its appearance, however, disguises its purpose. The Act was to serve as the cornerstone of New Zealand's "whites only" policy for the next 67 years (Ip, 1995). It was highly effective.

*The Chinese as a Marginal Community*

Between 1920 and 1930 a marginal Chinese community emerged. Immigration was now tightly controlled but Chinese numbers rose prior to the passing of the 1920 Act. Growing unemployment during this period caused more anti-Chinese agitation. The establishment of the White New Zealand League in 1926 combined with the returning soldiers of WWI to make a call for "unfair competition" against the Chinese (Wornall-Smith, 1970). A "race purity" campaign was launched. Of particular concern was the objection of Maori women working for Chinese market gardeners, and the prospect of intermarriage between them (ibid). Interestingly, the League managed to establish an alliance with Maori in support of their cause (ibid). Regardless, the Chinese were still sojourners hoping to return to China.

*The Watershed Years*

The period of 1931 to 1952 offered little hope of this occurring. In 1931, Japanese forces invaded Northeast China, and Chinese communists founded the Jiangx Soviet in the Southwest (Ip, 1995). China's instability remained. The Chinese in New Zealand were forever uncertain of their future. As Japan launched into full-scale war with China in 1937, the New Zealand government eased immigration restrictions allowing Chinese residents to send for their wives and children. The conflict with Japan galvanised the Chinese community. In 1937 the Chinese Association was established, consisting of 25 member branches (Sue et al, 1982). In 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbour and New

---

156 In 1916 there were 2147 Chinese and in 1921 there were 3266. Chinese women doubled during this period from 130 to 273 (census data from Sedgwick, 1982).

157 Permits were issued for two years with a 200 pound bond. The arrival of 249 wives and 244 children in 1939 was the result (Ip, 1990).
Zealand and China became allies. After WWII civil war broke out in China and the communists took control in 1949. In 1952, family reunification was permitted for Chinese residents and Chinese were permitted citizenship rights. In 1954 China made calls for all Overseas Chinese to seek naturalisation in their adopted countries and to relinquish Chinese citizenship. The Chinese in New Zealand were given a reprieve and most become New Zealand citizens. The anti-communist fervour marked by the McCarthy era placed suspicion on the Overseas Chinese (Ip, 1995). The Chinese may have been citizens of their adopted countries, but many still held suspicions of their loyalties.

Consolidation

The period between 1952 and 1986 were consolidation years for the Chinese in New Zealand. The population remained steady, natural increase maintaining the population. Few Chinese sought to return to China, but those who did had their hopes dashed as the cultural revolution between 1966 and 1976 purged all foreigners. Chinese that did return were treated with great suspicion (Wong, 1992). So the Overseas Chinese remained overseas. Buoyant economic times meant they were left relatively unhassled in their adopted nations. The public perception from the early Chinese migrants to the period after WWII was a shift from "undesirable immigrant" to a "model minority" (Chung & Walkey, 1988).

The "Asian Invasion"

In 1987, New Zealand's Fourth Labour government adopted a new immigration policy. No longer were there to be preferences for UK migrants; a new, non-discriminatory approach was introduced.158 Migrants were now to be selected solely on the basis of qualifications, economic status and personal merit. These changes saw large numbers of

158 New Zealand was the last of the white colonial countries to eliminate and implement a non-racialised immigration policy. In 1965 exclusion laws were eliminated in the US; Australia followed suit in 1973, dropping its "white Australia" policy. Although no racialised clauses were present in New Zealand immigration documents after 1978, its implementation took another 9 years. So, in effect, New Zealand maintained its "whites only" policy until 1987.
Chinese and other Asians enter New Zealand. Unlike the Chinese of old, however, the new Chinese were highly qualified, professional and middle class. They represented the latest wave of Chinese migrations into New Zealand and around the Pacific Rim.

The Chinese and Asian populations were increasing fast. In 1984, there were only 26,523 Chinese in New Zealand, most of whom were local born or resident in New Zealand for over 10 years. By 1991 this figure had increased to 44,793. There was a 70 percent increase and a growth rate of 87 percent between 1986 and 1991 (Statistics New Zealand, July 1995). The Chinese population doubled in under 5 years due almost entirely to immigration. In 1996, the Chinese population doubled again, standing at 82,320. Similarly the total Asian population went from 53,541 in 1986, to 99,576 in 1991, to 173,502 in 1996 (ibid, 1995; Census, 1996). Still in 1996, the total Asian and Chinese populations were only 5 percent and 2.2 percent respectively of the total.

In spite of their small numbers, the geographical concentration and the sudden nature of the increase caused growing unease amongst the host population, including the "local" Chinese. Anti-Asian sentiment began to emerge, reminiscent of that in the past. These new migrants came to represent the face of government reforms that had cut social spending, increased unemployment, and created a competitive atmosphere new to many. Critics mistakenly accused "Asian" migrants of stealing jobs, increasing crime, and draining New Zealand's social services (see Walker, 1996). Much of the criticism stemmed from the inability of "Asian" migrants to revitalise the New Zealand economy.

"Where is New Zealand's Silicon Valley?" asked one critic.159

Palat (1996:52-3) suggests "charges accusing Asians of not jump-starting the economy from the doldrums to which it [had] sunk [arose] from the hagiography surrounding the

---

159 Ranginui Walker in a television documentary entitled Instant Kiwis.
Asian 'miracle' economies in the mainstream media and in government propaganda". "Asians" came to represent the face of free market policies. That these "Asians" were wealthy and well-educated made it all the worse, as many ordinary citizens were now struggling under the reforms. As Raj Vasil wrote in 1993 (quoted in Chen, 1993:17):

The past eight years of recession have deeply wounded New Zealanders. The hurt is not only to their pockets, but also to their pride and self-esteem as they see Asia's rising wealth...Now they have to go to these countries with their hands spread, looking for trade...to rub salt into the wound, wealthy Asians are streaming in, and, right before their eyes, are buying up big houses and luxury cars.

The intensity of the sentiment seems to have faded in recent years, suggesting these were "growing pains". Certainly, the sentiment and reaction of New Zealand was less hostile than those in other colonial societies, as it has always been. Although, an English language test was introduced in 1995. Murphy (1998a) suggests the test was aimed specifically at Chinese migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan, and was implemented to restore New Zealand's "exclusionist pro-European" policy. Whether this was the case or not is debatable, but the end result was the same: the flow of Asian migrants into New Zealand was stopped. That such anti-Asian sentiments could arise so fast and with so little provocation was enough to keep Chinese wary of their precarious position in New Zealand society.

160 The test required all principle applicants and any accompanying family members aged 16 and over to pass the English Language Testing System (IELTS) exam at level 5. If applicants failed by the time they were approved for entry, each applicant must pay $20,000 bond, which is not refundable if the principle applicant fails. The stated purpose for the bond was "to encourage non-principle applicants to meet the minimum English language standard and help them adjust to New Zealand life" (cited from Goh, 1996). Ironically, the 1995 English language test was more demanding than the one introduced in 1907, when anti-Chinese sentiment was at fever pitch.
APPENDIX D

Mapping "Interpretation Shifts"

Studies by Chung (1983) in New Zealand and Sue and Kitano (1973) in the US have attempted to map these interpretation shifts through analysing changing stereotypes. An adaptation of their stereotype graph is presented below. I have added a pre-colonial phase and a post-1990s phase to expand the original time frame. The graph summarises nicely the changes in host perceptions of Chinese over time. Each shift relates to significant social, economic and political movements, both global and local.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilized</td>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>Model Minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exotic</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strange</td>
<td>Law-abiding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exotic</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>Model Minority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filthy</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Shy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immoral</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unassimilable</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treacherous</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cowardly</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foul-smelling</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheap Men</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricky</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathens</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sneaky</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminals</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sly</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrious</td>
<td>Slight</td>
<td>Wealthy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Hypothesising stereotyping patterns of Chinese over time (adapted from Chung, 1983; Sue and Kitano, 1973).