

THE INVISIBLE WHITENESS OF BEING
The Place of Whiteness in Women's Discourses
In Aotearoa/New Zealand
And
Some Implications for Antiracist Education

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Abstract

This thesis asks two central questions. First, what is the range of racialised discourses that constitute the subjectivities of some Pākehā ('white'/European) women? Second, can an examination of racialised discourses be useful for present social justice and antiracist pedagogy? The research examines and analyses a range of discourses of Whiteness that contribute to the constitution of contemporary Pākehā women as racialised subjects. Central to the thesis is an analysis of dominant discourses and the contemporary challenges that analyses of racism and aspects of identification present in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The study is qualitative and draws on insights from discourse analysis theory, critical Whiteness theory and feminist approaches to theories on racism and 'white' supremacy. The analysis is located in the historicised context of contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand where a Treaty, Te Tiriti O Waitangi, which was signed by some hapū, the tangata whenua of Aotearoa, and representatives of the British Crown in 1840, underpins current socio-cultural politics of biculturalism.

The thesis argues/contends that racialised discourses, in particular various discourses of Whiteness are available to contemporary Pākehā women. The analysis is grounded in both a preliminary focus group and individual interviews of 28 Pākehā women ranging in age from 24 to 86 years, the majority of whom were aged between 40 and 55 years. With few exceptions, participants revealed that they were constituted within discourses of Whiteness through their communication choices and discursive strategies in the interviews in two distinct ways: firstly in their perceptions expressed in their narratives and recollections, and secondly in the discursive forms used in participants' interactions during the focus group and interviews. These 28 women, some of whom had participated in antiracist education such as Treaty of Waitangi workshops, utilised discourses that exposed the pervasiveness and significance of racialised discourses as they attempted express how they learned to be 'white'. Participants maintained and reproduced discourses of Whiteness that had gendered and some class influences contained in their perceptions, talk and significantly in their silences.

The analysis shows how remnants of essentialist ideologies of 'race' based in the nineteenth century imperialism are constantly reworked and are seemingly invisible to those constituted

within these racialised discourses, apparently giving these outdated representations no chance to fade away. Based on the analysis, critical pedagogies of Whiteness in education that incorporate an epistemic approach are suggested, which have the potential to facilitate Pākehā women's ability to conceptualise their racialised discursive location. As an outcome of this understanding, the thesis maintains that Pākehā will have the capability to strategically reconceptualise their discursive constitution in order to address the complex forms of identity, understanding of difference and representation. Furthermore, these reconceptualisations have the potential to reveal the central relationship between dominant discursive formulations and social norms and structures, a vital constituent in contemporary social justice education.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother Patricia,
whose story has not been told,
but whose unlimited faith in and commitment to people
has taught me what is important in life.

He aha te mea nui?

He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata

What is the greatest thing?

It is people, it is people, it is people

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Glossary

Aotearoa	New Zealand
hāngi	earth oven in which food is cooked by hot stones
hapū	clan or section of tribe
hui	meeting, gathering, assembly
iwi	nation
Kaupapa	philosophy
mana whenua	people of the place, those who have authority in/stewardship over a particular place
Māori	indigenous New Zealander, ordinary, belonging to Aotearoa
marae	enclosed ground used as a meeting place
manuhiri	visitors, guests
Ōtautahi	the area of Christchurch City
Pākehā	originally applied to foreigners, usually applied to ‘white’ people, now commonly used for non-Māori European New Zealanders
Pōwhiri	ceremony of welcome, process of welcoming
tangata whenua	people of the land of Aotearoa, indigenous peoples of Aotearoa
taiuiwi	New Zealanders of ‘non white’ or non-colonial settler descent.
Te Tiriti O Waitangi	the Treaty of Waitangi. A Treaty signed by many Māori chiefs and representatives of the British Crown in 1840.
te māra	cultivated ground, garden
whakapapa	genealogy, genealogical table, lineage

Abbreviations

A/NZ	Aotearoa/New Zealand
NCNZ	Nursing Council of New Zealand
POW	Pedagogy of Whiteness
TOW	Treaty of Waitangi /Te Tiriti O Waitangi
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States of America

My project is an effort to avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject: from the described and imagined to the describers and imaginers; from the serving to the served.

Morrison (1993 p.45)

What is not seen cannot be discussed or changed.

Wildman & Davis (1996 p.316)

Prologue

My Journey into Whiteness begins....

Rather than using the privilege they have to crumble the institutions that house the source of their own oppression - sexism along with racism- white women oftentimes deny their privilege in the form of “downward mobility” or keep it intact in the form of guilt. Guilt is not a feeling; it is an intellectual mask to a feeling. Fear is a feeling, fear of losing one’s power, fear of being accused, fear of a loss of status, control, knowledge. Fear is real. Possibly this is the emotional, non-theoretical place from which serious anti-racist work among white feminists can begin.

Moraga and Anzaldúa, (1983 p.62)

Nineteen ninety-three was a ‘watershed’ year for me. In September, at an end-of-year postgraduate class presentation, I realised how our exploration into bicultural education had become itself a site of political struggle. That year I learned about bicultural education and the inherent difficulties of applying this pedagogy in an inequitable society. I also learned that our location as Māori and Pākehā students in this environment, replicated this political struggle by virtue of our different socialization and our interactions together - seemingly, we were a micro-representation of the power and politics of education in contemporary Aotearoa society. I learned that all cultural understandings and actions are political because they all symbolically represent particular perspectives or ways of viewing the world. I also faced the reality that it was extremely difficult to get outside these cultural understandings, as my hegemonic location secured me within these dynamic relations.

A challenging feature of that year was how students worked in small groups. My group faced major issues about our philosophical approach/our kaupapa, which we were unable to resolve, losing two of our group members in the process. A particular dynamic that initially engaged our group related to a stand that Pākehā students in the group had taken. Some students had connections to some Māori in another context outside the group and advocated their ideas in opposition to the wishes of the only Māori group member. At a meeting, which the Māori member was unable to attend, Pākehā group members tried to clarify what was an appropriate kaupapa in this context.

Some students could not understand the position that they were inadvertently putting both Māori in, and appeared unable to understand that they were inadvertently pitting the ideas of oppressed group interests against one another. Some students did not continue with our group and left with no explanation.

That year's experience deepened my appreciation of the many layers of understanding that constitute how we as cultural beings learn to understand our world and ourselves. In particular, I came to appreciate how I, as Pākehā, had learned to actively not see/understand my cultural and institutional power. These dynamics were disturbing for me. In an educational environment, I was able to understand and acknowledge these dynamics for what they were at an intellectual level, but the associated emotional work was difficult to do. It also seemed to me that we, as a class, avoided addressing this. It appeared to me that I had learned as a Pākehā, that when I made connections or even when I refused to acknowledge connections between my hegemonic location and others' disadvantages and exploitations, emotions and feelings were invoked that I had learned to avoid. I came to appreciate the extent to which dominant groups/I could maintain their/my naivety through avoiding/resisting situations or talk that revealed the inevitability and profundity of the affective processes involved. In a sense, the dynamics of that class were to be expected. I realised that I was just living out the reality, that as a student I had been learning, articulating and philosophizing all year. However, I realised that I was unprepared for the overwhelming and consuming nature of the process. As Pākehā, if I was committed to the pedagogy of bicultural /Treaty based education, I could not escape the reality that surrounded me. Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's quote introducing this prologue, confirms my emotional responses.

My reflections on the developments in that bicultural education class have stayed with me and have prompted me to try to come to grips with a fear that inhibits attempts to face, feel and understand past dynamics and the implications for the present. My realisation of Pākehā and Māori struggles in that bicultural education class galvanised my commitment to continue to explore and investigate my limitations in understanding hegemonic social locations.

PART I

Chapter One

Introduction

This thesis examines and analyses two central questions. First, what is the range of racialised discourses that constitute the subjectivities of some Pākehā.¹ ('white'/European) women? Second, can the examination of racialised discourses be useful for present social justice and antiracist pedagogy? Central to the study is an interrogation of dominant discourses and current challenges that contemporary understandings of racism and aspects of identification present in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

By racism, I indicate a series of ideological effects with a “flexible, fluid and varying content”, the importance of which for this analysis, are the processes through which the authenticity of claims of racism are understood as “fact” and empowered as truth (Wetherell and Potter, 1992, p.70). Margaret Wetherell and Simon Potter (1992) argue that because of the “definitional slipperiness” of the term racism that militates against a definition of its distinctive content, a more appropriate distinctive conception of racism is one that is not an intrinsic property of discourse, but as one that is “an effect of discursive practice and other social practices” (p.70). Racist discourse in this sense is a discourse of any content, which “has the effect of establishing, sustaining and reinforcing oppressive power relations” between those defined, such as Pākehā and Māori in Aotearoa (p.70).

This research analysis is located in a historicised context where present socio-cultural politics of biculturalism are underpinned by an historical Treaty, Te Tiriti O Waitangi, that was signed in 1840 by hapū, groups of tangata whenua, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa, and the British Crown. The study is qualitative and draws on insights from discourse analysis theory, critical Whiteness theory and feminist approaches to theories

¹ Pākehā is a term Māori used for the ‘first settlers’ who came to Aotearoa, who were usually European/‘white’, mainly from Great Britain. There has been much debate about the origins of the word and a common perception among some contemporary ‘white’ New Zealanders/Pākehā, which has been part of an imperialist discourse, is that the term is derogatory. This has resulted in many Pākehā refusing to use the term to identify themselves. The implications of the debate feature in other discussions in my thesis. I use the term Pākehā throughout this thesis to describe those members who can be described as ‘white’ and who belong to the dominant culture in Aotearoa.

on racism and ‘white’ supremacy. White supremacy in this thesis is identified as a political, economic and cultural system in which ‘whites’ (Pākehā) overwhelmingly control power and material resources. In addition, conscious and unconscious ideas of ‘white’ (Pākehā) superiority and entitlement are widespread within the system and relations of ‘white’ (Pākehā) dominance and ‘non white’ subordination are daily reenacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings (Harris, 1993). The thesis analysis is grounded in both a preliminary focus group and individual interviews with 28 Pākehā women.

The background that underlies this study relates to developments in the late 1970s, when Pākehā antiracism educators had taken up the revitalised Māori challenge to the legitimacy of colonialism. Explorations about identity and culture had become a significant part of social justice and Treaty workers’ pedagogy and the question of what it means to claim Pākehā as an identity and how the Pākehā group can respond to the post-colonial challenge of tangata Whenua, had been the focus of much of the Pākehā antiracism analysis and education (Spoonley, 1984, 1993). Pākehā antiracist pedagogy and academic research in community and institutional approaches focused on cultural identification and culture (as opposed to racialisation) as well as the politics of asserting and exploring in global geopolitical terms, a unique Pākehā identity.

I began to question the absence of specific explorations or analyses of contemporary ‘white’/Pākehā racialisation in any antiracist education that I had been involved with as a participant or facilitator.² By racialisation, I draw attention to the processes through which humans come to understand themselves and others, and to develop their views and beliefs about society and the world. These processes provide conceptual frameworks that accept the legitimacy of ‘race’ as a concept either biologically or culturally determined. A specific notion that Richard Dyer (1997) attributes to ‘white’ racialisation was his assertion that, “Whiteness is equated with normality and as such it

² Since my involvement in teaching Cultural Safety to nursing and midwifery students in 1999, I have endeavoured to facilitate some exploration of ‘white’ racialisation with students in their first course, Te Mara, which is translated to mean *preparing the ground/developing cultural awareness*. My initiative was a strategy that was intended to broaden (the mostly Pākehā) students’ conceptions of their own socialization and to extend their ability to analyse the power that, as future health professionals, they would have in relation to their clients.

is not in need of definition. Thus being 'normal' is colonised by the idea of 'being white' (p.22).³

Dyer suggests a need to look at the way subjectivities are racialised and how Whiteness is manifest in discourse, communication and culture of those who are located within these socialisation processes. An introduction to Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) groundbreaking work interviewing 30 'white' women in the United States intensified the appeal of investigating the possibility that Pākehā women were racialised. The opening assertion in Frankenberg's research states:

My argument is that 'race' shapes white (sic) women's lives. In the same way that both men's and women's lives are shaped by their gender, and both heterosexual and lesbian women's experiences in the world are marked by their sexuality, white (sic) people and people of colour live racially structured lives. In other words, any system of differentiation shapes those on whom it bestows privilege as well as those it oppresses (p.1).

Frankenberg's statement is significant and a challenge for Pākehā feminists in Aotearoa. Her work exposed a significant opening in the literature and research about the investigation of racialisation in Aotearoa. In addition, her research contained frameworks for analysis that included **conceptualisations and language** that were an important starting point.

As well as the development of antiracist research and education internationally in contexts with colonial histories outside Aotearoa, including our nearest geographical neighbour Australia, strategies evolved that include a critical pedagogy of Whiteness. This educational strategy recognises and deconstructs the power of contemporary racialisation in the form of ideology, institutional systems, discursive formulations and cultural practices among 'white' western subjects (McKay, 1998; Moreton-Robinson, 1999, 2000; Shore, 1998; Stephenson, 1997, 2005). Given the extent of contemporary international networking and exchange of ideas among academics, in particular educators in most western democracies such as Australia, Canada, United Kingdom, United States and Aotearoa, it was intriguing/puzzling that public debate/discussion of this new pedagogy, even a critique of it, has not gained momentum in Aotearoa.

³ Ruth Frankenberg's comprehensive definition of Whiteness that expands Richard Dyers description and that explains the complexity of the term is given in the Literature Review on page 23.

A considerable number of insightful research and educative processes that examine Pākehā and Māori relations in Aotearoa had been developed. However, no study reviewed specifically examined the racialisation of contemporary Pākehā, in particular an interrogation of discourses of Whiteness. It is imperative though, at the outset of this study that I acknowledge the significant research and literature on racism, in Aotearoa and the educational pedagogies that developed out of these initiatives. This vast body of work has contributed crucially to antiracist education in Aotearoa and has influenced my explorations in relation to antiracism generally. However none of this research, which I discuss in the following chapter, specifically addresses racialisation through discourses of Whiteness (Ballara, 1986; Bedggood, 1997; Bell, A.1996; Bell, C.1996, 2001; Dugdale, 1996; Dupuis *et al*, 1999; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Guy, 1986; Hughes *et al*, 1996; Jones, 1992; Jones, 1999, 2004; King, 1991, 1999; Lawn, 1994; McLennan *et al*, 2000; Nairn & McCreanor, 1990, 1991; Pearson, 1990, 1995; Pearson & Sissons, 1997; Pellew, 1995; Ritchie, 1964, 1992; Shannon & Spoonley, 1991; Spoonley, 1984, 1987, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1997; Spoonley *et al*, 1996; Spoonley & Lerner, 1995; Stasiulis & Yuval Davis, 1995; Thomas & Nikora, 1996a, 1996b; Taylor & Wetherell, 1995; Tilbury, 1998; Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Therefore, the overall purpose of this research is to examine and answer two questions. First, what are the discursive formulations that constitute some Pākehā women and that they employ as racialised subjects? Second, can the examination of racialised discourses be useful for present social justice and antiracist pedagogy, such as the relevance and applicability of a pedagogy of Whiteness that may complement present antiracist initiatives in Aotearoa? The Whiteness pedagogy incorporates a discursive analysis and, as many overseas theorists have argued, has the potential to reveal and address the significance of the invisible racialisation of hegemonic group members.

The data for analysis were gathered through an initial focus group discussion with five women, followed by two-hour individual semi-structured interviews with 23 women, ranging in age from 24 to 86 years. The women had variable experiences of antiracist/social justice education. Twelve participants had completed a Treaty of

Waitangi workshop, three of whom were involved in social justice or Treaty education⁴. The interview transcripts and memos generated ‘rich’ data, the aim of which was to identify the patterns and themes that emerged. As my thesis was an inductive study, the significance of what was surfacing, only became evident in the later stages of this process. This formal data collection process took place between December 1996 and October 1997.

Scope and Limitations of the Research

The scope of the study focuses on contemporary Pākehā Women and I used a “snowballing” technique to invite participation (see p. 60). The result was that mainly middleclass heterosexual women, the majority of whom were aged between 30 and 55 years, took part in the study. These apparent consistencies in class, sexual orientation and age were helpful, as they appeared to enable the salience/saturation of patterns of discursive formulations be drawn from the data gathered from these women. However, the apparent consistencies described above can be seen as a limitation because Whiteness is multiply located and as I discuss in the literature review, the concept can involve all other dimensions of difference. These other dimensions include Whiteness constructions, based on class, gender, European versus Pākehā and those who can be identified as ‘non white’ but who are located within a terrain of Whiteness. However, my analysis is focused on how and what aspects of a Whiteness discourse were specifically used in participants’ discussions.

⁴ Workshops on the Treaty of Waitangi, (Te Tiriti O Waitangi is the Māori term) have developed as community education to inform mainly non Māori/‘white’/Pākehā New Zealanders about this Treaty which was signed in 1840 by the British Crown as representative of the colonists, and many Māori chiefs. There have been numerous contraventions of this Treaty by the Crown/New Zealand Government since then. Most ‘white’ (Pākehā) New Zealanders in the age range of my participants generally had little knowledge of this document during their growing up years. The curricula of the State education system in place when most of my participants were of school age contained very little historical information about Aotearoa/New Zealand, particularly about Te Tiriti O Waitangi. This situation is gradually changing with the state education system incorporating more information about New Zealand history. The use of Māori language in this instance, and to describe the participants as Pākehā throughout this thesis expresses my acknowledgement of Te Tiriti O Waitangi, and Māori as tangata whenua, the first and indigenous peoples of this land.

The analytical focus of the gathered data was the racialised formulations of participants “talk”. A significant assumption that underpinned the analysis was the understanding that all subjectivities are constituted at the asymmetrical intersection of dimensions of difference such as ‘race’, gender, sexual orientation and class. Additionally, these dimensions are assumed to be experienced simultaneously even though their salience was contingent on varying contexts. Consequently, as already explained, elements of class, gender and sexual orientation were also evident in participants’ discussions and those that appeared to have significant influences on racialisation were included in the analysis.

The gendered qualities/inflections of participants’ racialised discourses were most evident throughout the interviews, although no participant specifically articulated their sexual orientation. All, but one participant who was a member of a religious order, were/had been married or in relationships with male partners. Some limitation of the scope of the study relate to the age range (30 to 55 years) of the majority of participants but as already mentioned this tendency assisted the analytical process. A similar study with some younger Pākehā women after a ten-year interval would reveal some useful comparative outcomes with this study.

A time lapse between the gathering of the data and the submission of the thesis may appear to put some limitations on this work, but time taken out for work commitments was beneficial as many of my research assumptions were borne out of my experience in teaching antiracist education for those intervening years. Although my thesis work was officially suspended over some of this period, my research problem was always “present” in the context of my teaching and my daily interactions with Pākehā New Zealanders. This development has provided many insights that influenced my approach to this study. In addition, the relevance of this research is applicable as there continues to remain a scarcity of research or educational pedagogy in Aotearoa on Pākehā racialisation at the time of writing/submitting this thesis.

Mapping the thesis

I divide the thesis into four parts: The first part introduces the thesis, outlining the chapters, describing the context, discussing the relevant literature, and detailing the theoretical analytical approach to the study as well as the methodological contours of the research process. Part II commences the discussion of the actual analyses of the data. An important variation in perspective permeates my approach from this section in the thesis. I incorporate an interweaving of analytical outcomes with comment on the process of analysis. This approach relates to my recognition of my location within the same racialised terrain as the participants. Consequently, I incorporate a reflexive approach that enables me to emphasize the situatedness of my analysis. As a result, discussion primarily focuses on the outcomes of the analyses made of the data, while some writing focuses on the process of developing certain analyses. I emphasize that as I approached the analysis I had few presumptions about the analytical outcomes other than an assumption that Pākehā women could have discourses available that constitute them as racialised subjects.

Discussion of the analysis in this second section is arranged in two chapters that address the first part of the research problem. This section focuses on participants' perspectives that they expressed in their accounts of their recollections about learning to be 'white' and their developing awareness of their racialisation, in particular their role in maintaining racialised boundaries. Part III continues with a focus on participants' racialised discourses, but concentrates on the detail of the actual communicative practices and discursive strategies that participants employed during the interviews. The two themes that emerged from this focus were firstly, in chapter six the influence of middle class ideology in the form of bourgeois decorum as constructions of Whiteness; and in chapter seven the power of silence as a discursive repertoire.

In part IV the focus changes and addresses the second part of the research question, exploring the implications of the analyses made in the previous four chapters. This section comprises two chapters. Chapter eight analyses the differences and similarities among the participants in relation to their participation in antiracist education. Chapter nine discusses the implications of expanding antiracist, social justice pedagogy to

include an interrogation of racialisation, in particular a pedagogy of Whiteness, outlining some practical suggestions.

Chapter two of the thesis begins by setting the scene, locating the cultural, gendered, and historical context of this study. I outline the major international and local literature that informs the research and I highlight the consequences of the paucity of research in Aotearoa, which investigates the racialisation of the dominant Pākehā population, in particular discourses of Whiteness. These local, contextual influences have inspired me to embark on this specific research.

Chapter three maps the contours of the methodological strategies I faced using feminist epistemologies as a basis of inquiry. I discuss each stage of the research process with its own particular methodological demands. The first stage explores the flexibility that I needed to adapt feminist principles to an inquiry that focused on potentially hegemonic constructions. Another section examines my struggles as an insider researcher within a hegemonic group facilitating the talk around Whiteness.

The assumption that racialisation is a social construction, which people consequentially learn to inhabit, underpins the discussion in chapter four. I discuss and analyse participants' accounts in order to gain an understanding of how the participants learned, even by default, to be 'white'/ordinary, to occupy the terrain of Whiteness. I examine participants' discourses that they inhabited as they described their 'growing up' experiences. This chapter investigates three significant themes in participants' articulations of Whiteness that reveal processes through which they 'became white'. I explore the discourses that worked to maintain and reproduce boundaries around Whiteness that participants experienced in their growing up years as well as their engagement with the possibilities and limitations that these discourses presented to them. I examine the content and meaning of some significant discourses of Whiteness that participants utilised in their accounts of their socialisation as into 'good/proper' 'white' women.

Chapter five focuses on participants' narratives and analyses the possible roles that their family members played in participants' socialisation as 'white'/Pākehā women in the

Aotearoa context. In a similar fashion to Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) participants, the women I interviewed, did not consider themselves particularly interested in the racial order, or especially implicated in racism. "However, they contributed much that was relevant to both" (p.236). An important dynamic that informs this chapter is the intersection of Whiteness and femininity, the juncture between "disembodied Whiteness and embodied femininity" (Moon, 1999 p.179).

I support the analysis in chapter six with the understanding that power relations can survive the formal dismantling of their more overt supports (Mills, 2003). Participants' accounts revealed that the 'white' middle class family home, as cultural space, was an important site of socialisation where the production of 'good' 'white' girls/women was reproduced and maintained. I consider how implicit ideals of racialisation **and** class, that of 'white' 'middleclass-ness' mediated the socialisation of these Pākehā women in Aotearoa. Seven of the 28 participants in my study specifically articulated that they grew up in working class families. I organize the discussion in two sections: the first section reveals the implicit but nonetheless effective means through which the notion of feminine bourgeois decorum mediated the maintenance and reproduction of Whiteness; the second section examines how 'white' bourgeois femininity was available to these Pākehā women regardless of class background.

In chapter seven, I focus on my struggle with the power of Whiteness and its many manifestations, in particular the silences that surfaced as important aspects within the interviews. An exploration and analysis of the rhetorical silences of Whiteness became important for this study. Crenshaw (1997) maintains these silences invoke the power of Whiteness. I use Mazzei's (2003) four modes of silence - polite silence, intentional silence, privileged silence, and veiled silence - as a guide for exploring participants' frequent discursive strategies of silence.

Part III answers the second part of the research question, which queries the relevance and applicability of a pedagogical approach that interrogates racialisation as a complement to present social justice pedagogy in Aotearoa. Chapter eight reveals the significance of the racialised discourses for all participants both Treaty educated and those who had no Treaty Education. Some complexities were evident in participants'

responses as they attempted to express their perceptions of their education about New Zealand history. I investigate participants' views about the Treaty of Waitangi and their reflections about the discussions that we had. I also discuss and analyse the responses of the three antiracist educators, Rebecca, Sheila and Zita, whom I interviewed about the usefulness of exploring Whiteness as a concept in anti-racist education.

Chapter nine begins by outlining important pedagogical frameworks currently used in social justice and Treaty education, which constitute a sound foundation for the development of an interrogation of Pākehā racialisation. Second, I discuss some critical premises that distinguish an interrogation of racialisation, in particular a pedagogy of Whiteness, from those social justice approaches presently used and already discussed. An outline follows of some initial practical strategies that have the potential to identify the range of participants' learning needs for implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness. The discussion then changes focus and addresses the "management" of associated interactional dynamics that can surface in an educational environment when facilitating this pedagogy. The final discussion highlights and reiterates the necessarily reflexive nature of this study.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Introduction

The vast literature that relates to and informs this research covers a broad range of disciplines and theoretical perspectives. In addition, sociocultural and historical developments in Aotearoa have exerted considerable influence on notions of cultural identity, on ideas about ‘race’ and racism, as well as on approaches to antiracist education. Consequently, significant attention and space is given to this literature and research. It is vital to introduce the unique contours of these sociocultural and historical dynamics in the New Zealand context, in order to prepare adequately the ground for the analysis that follows.

In the early 1990s there was a sudden increase in the international literature exploring ‘white’ racialisation, in particular the concept of Whiteness (Bannerji, 1991; Davy, 1995; Frankenberg, 1993; Giroux, 1992, 1993; Goldberg, 1990, 1993, 1994; Harris, 1993; Helms 1992, 1993, 1995; Hyde, 1995; Ignatiev & Garvey 1996; Jeater, 1992; Keating, 1995; Lipsitz, 1995, 1998; Mahony, 1995; Mazie *et al.*, 1993; Morrison, 1993; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995; Ramsey, 1994; Roediger, 1994; Tatum, 1992, 1994; Van Dijk, 1993; Ware, 1992; Wellman, 1993; Wong, 1994; Yudice, 1995). Despite this academic interest in the concept of Whiteness, the label ‘white’, has remained a ‘taboo word’ in Western democratic politics, particularly in Aotearoa. Paul Spoonley and Wendy Larner, (1995) suggested that there was an incentive for Pākehā New Zealanders to distance themselves from the associations of the descriptor ‘white’ because the racism embodied in such a label ‘white’ was more overt and obvious than the term Pākehā (Spoonley & Larner, 1995).

A preference for the term Pākehā as opposed to ‘white’ was evident in Spoonley and Larner’s work in 1995 as well as in other critical Pākehā literature. However further recent research in Aotearoa, has disputed the extent of New Zealand’s ‘white’ populations’ adoption of the term Pākehā (Bell, C. 1996; Dupuis *et al.*, 1999; Hughes *et al.*, 1996; Lawn, 1994; Pearson, 1990, 1995; Pearson & Sissons, 1997; Pellew, 1995;

Shannon & Spoonley, 1991; Thomas & Nikora, 1996a, 1996b; Tilbury, 1998; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). The usually self-claimed Pākehā label was described as contentious and by no means uncontested. There has been strong critique of this cultural identity from three authors. Jenny Lawn published an article titled Pakeha Bonding in 1994. Her analysis has not been engaged with as far as I could find, in the literature on Pākehā identity. Lawn (1994) interpreted such assertions of Pākehā identity as attempts to escape from the racist connotations that are attributed to ‘white’ ethnicity. Her point was that words do not change a material reality, and that unless an examination of structural advantage and privilege was the focus of this positioning, the claim as Pākehā only amounted to rhetoric.

Lawn’s (1994) main argument was that when members of a dominant group try to assert some form of collective cultural identity, this declaration masks the insidious way that dominant groups bond defensively, usually at the expense of their subordinated “other”. In addition, Lawn claimed that this assertion allows the imperialistic and capitalistic political relations of society to continue unabated. Lawn’s (1994) critique maintained that, “The concept of collectivity, so powerfully invoked as a resistance strategy by oppressed groups, becomes problematic when applied to hegemonic groups, for “group identity” almost always operates self-defensively. Pākehā as a group, like men, already bond in ways that often pass unacknowledged” (p.298). Lawn suggested that Pākehā/we need more rigorous self-interrogation about the political implications of the term.

The question of what it means to claim Pākehā as an identity and how the Pākehā group can respond to the post-colonial challenge of tangata whenua has continued as the focus for much of the Pākehā antiracism analysis and education in Aotearoa to the present day. Liberal accounts of Māori inequality tend to focus on the discriminatory practices of the state and the values of individual Pākehā, which prevent Māori from gaining equal access to the resources of society. Following Māori claims in cultural nationalistic terms, Pākehā, it was argued, found themselves in a crisis of hollowness/emptiness (Greenland, 1991). Evan Poata Smith (1997) described the development in Māori protest movement that explains in some way the nature of the Pākehā response. He argued that,

In the absence of mass struggles against oppression, owing to the international decline of the working class movement and the rise of the New Right, many of the assumptions of identity politics were reflected in New Zealand, in an emphasis on cultural identity as the determining factor in Māori Oppression. ...Such a “cultural” explanation for Māori inequality was easily accommodated by the state because, unlike the demands of the earlier movement, cultural nationalism did not present a fundamental threat to the underlying social relations of capitalism...Such accounts ignore the underlying structures of capitalist society that have generated and entrenched Māori inequality (pp. 176-177).

Poata Smith maintained that the cultural focus of Māori renaissance has hidden class interests of Māori because he believed that this masked the power of capitalist exploitation that entrenched Māori inequality. Janet Bedggood (1997) supported Poata Smith’s class analysis. Bedggood also questioned the usefulness of both Māori and Pākehā claims in cultural or ethnic terms as opposed to a class analysis for challenging social injustice. A significant aspect of these insightful critiques for my study is that none of these authors interrogated the racialised dimensions of the hegemonic relations that they analysed.

I support the above critiques concerning the subordination of a class analysis to cultural identity politics. However, a question that supports this research problem is the emphasis that Pākehā identity politics continues to receive in pedagogies of anti racist education while a real potential exists for the possible invisible and **silent racialisation** of Pākehā to remain unaddressed. Philomena Essed (2004) in her recent reflection on the particular direction that racism has taken in the Netherlands, has identified that,

Different from the USA, expressions of racism in the Netherlands are less about race purity and Whiteness than about cultural-ethnic differences and European-ness as representing a superior level of civilisation (p.122).

A similar development of a focus in cultural-ethnic differences has developed in Aotearoa as the prolific literature on Pākehā and Māori cultural relations has shown. Despite the paucity of attention on racialisation in Aotearoa, the main body of work on Whiteness has been written in the United States, the United Kingdom and some latterly in Aotearoa’s close neighbour, Australia (Hage, 1998; McKay, 1999; Moreton-Robinson, 1999, 2000; Shore, 1998; Stephenson, 1997, 2005). Over the last ten years

this Whiteness literature has grown to such an extent, some authors have treated the development with some scepticism and referred to it as the ‘Whiteness studies industry’ (Anderson, M. 2003; Hill, 1997; Howard, 2005; Wiegman, 1999). Ann Louise Keating (1995) suggested analyses of Whiteness might simply reify “the already existing hegemonic conceptions of race” (p.916). Her concern was that any discussion and analysis of Whiteness that does not historicise the term as well as demonstrate the relational nature of all racialised categories, was problematic. She advocated that an exploration of the political, economic and historical factors that shaped the continual reinvention of ‘race’ including Whiteness was necessary (Keating, 1995).

Following Keating’s (1995) advice, this study is located in the historical and sociocultural context of Aotearoa. An important aspect of my perspective is the relationship of Pākehā and Māori, the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa, based on the Treaty of Waitangi and the cultural politics that have been prominent around the Treaty claims of Māori and Pākehā responses to these initiatives. In this research, I examined participants’ views around the Treaty of Waitangi, in particular their views and understandings of antiracist education. I interviewed participants who have completed some form of antiracist education to investigate their understandings in relation to those participants who had no Treaty education. The research analysis also focuses on how participants articulated their racialisation in contemporary Aotearoa. As I had been involved in antiracist education, I wanted to examine the implications of my research findings for further development of this pedagogy. The tensions that arose in the feminist movement initially provided the impetus for the direction of my ideas for this research, for that reason I commence a detailed review with this literature.

Feminist Critiques of Whiteness

Some mainstream (‘white’ stream) international feminist literature in the 1980s to 1990s had developed a specific response to the challenges that ‘non white’ feminists, especially in the United States (US) had been making. ‘Non white’ feminists, who include women from under-represented groups and colonized communities such as Māori women in Aotearoa, had named and challenged their exclusion from the ‘second wave’ feminist movement (Awatere, 1984; Carby, 1981; Collins, 1990; Hill Collins,

1990; hooks, 1981, 1984, 1989, 1990; Irwin in Du Plessis, 1992; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983).

Bell hooks, (1981) claimed that ‘white’ feminists showed a distressing tendency to write as if ‘white’ women represented all women. She maintained, “the force that allows white feminist authors to make no reference to racial identity in their books about ‘women’ that are actually about white women, is the same one that would compel any author writing exclusively on black women to refer explicitly to their racial identity. That force is racism” (p.138). Marilyn Frye (1983) was among the first ‘white’ feminists to respond to the ‘black’ women’s critique. She acknowledged in her set of essays on feminist theory that equality with ‘white’ men meant being equally implicit with ‘white’ men in racial dominance. She recommended that feminists make “...disloyalty to Whiteness, an explicit part of their/our politics and embrace it publicly” (p.126). More ‘white’ feminist scholarship followed and two pieces of writing influenced my thinking from this period, although I did not become aware of them until the early nineties (McIntosh, 1988; Spelman, 1988). The critique from ‘non white’ feminists, provided some questions for me about, whether and how contemporary Pākehā women negotiated a racial “(dis)loyalty to Whiteness”.

Peggy McIntosh (1988) and Elizabeth Spelman (1988) both wrote influential analyses that shaped much of the work that ensued. McIntosh drew comparisons between sexism and racism, working from her experience that men often failed to see male privilege. She made several points about the operation of ‘white’ privilege, including her realization that she was taught to “remain oblivious to its existence” (p.3). She listed 46 specific situations in which ‘white’ privilege granted her racialised advantage. McIntosh maintained that the pressures on ‘white’ people to deny their privilege were high and that acknowledging ‘white’ privilege deems ‘white’ people newly accountable.⁵

Spelman’s (1988) important work responded to bell hooks’ (1984) challenge about feminists’ assumptions of universality and has had a special contribution to make to my

⁵ I have used McIntosh’s (1988) article in my teaching and I have found it invaluable for facilitating students’ consciousness of white racialisation and privilege.

developing ideas and to the articulation of the issues relating to ethnic/racial boundaries. Spelman critiqued the problems of exclusion in feminist thought and her work has provided a base for much of the subsequent feminist intellectual and theoretical work. I discuss Spelman's influence on my thesis in more detail in the methodology chapter.

Some feminist writers began to focus on identity and the politics of difference and their relationship to gender and racial identity, but very few of their critiques concerned dominant 'white' groups. Sneja Gunew & Anna Yeatman (1993) engaged my thinking on this issue. With a few exceptions, such as Haleh Afshar and Mary Maynard (1994) who focused on exploring the manifestation of difference, the majority of the works involve a theoretical approach to the topic. Gunew and Yeatman (1993) advocated the inclusion of marginalized groups. They emphasized the importance of the acknowledgement of difference among women without losing the impetus that derives from being part of coherent movement for social change.

However, Ien Ang (1995) critiqued some authors' assumptions of homogeneity that underlies much of feminist thought. Responding to the 'politics of inclusion' advocated by some, she argued:

While a politics of inclusion is driven by an ambition for universal representation (of all women's interests), a politics of partiality does away with that ambition and accepts the principle that feminism can never ever be an encompassing home for all women, not just because different groups of women have different and sometimes conflicting interests, but, more radically, because for many groups of "other" women, other interests, other identifications are sometimes more important and politically pressing than, or even incompatible with, those related to their being women.

Ang in Carie and Pringle (1995 p.73)

There had been little empirical academic inquiry into the construction of Whiteness up until that point. However, as my research progressed, a plethora of feminist writing exploring 'white' women and racism emerged, although none written by women specifically relating to Whiteness in the Aotearoa context (Allen, 1997; Edwards, 1990; Fowlkes, 1992; Laing & Coleman, 1998; McIntosh, 1988; Palmer, 1983; Perry, 1995; Roman, 1993; Stoddart, 2002; Thompson, B. 1997; Thompson, A. 1997, 2003; Walter, 2001; Ware, 1992, 1996; Wolff, 2005).

In the last fifteen years there has been a considerable expansion in empirical work by overseas feminists that has problematized the concept of Whiteness in relation to gender (Alcoff, 1998; Brody, 1996; Erdmans, 2005; Frankenberg, 1993; Griffin, 2003; Gustafson, 1999; Hunter & Nettles, 1999; McIntyre, 1997; Thompson, B.1997; Thompson, A. 2004; Walter, 2001; Ware, 1992, 1996, 2001; Wolff, 2005). The literature that caught my attention and significantly influenced this thesis, and which feeds into the questions that Ang (1995) had for ‘white’ Western feminist inquiry, was the work of Ruth Frankenberg (1993). As already outlined Frankenberg researched ‘white’ women’s life experiences in the US drawing on patterns and themes from stories that relate to unintentional and hidden expressions of Whiteness. These articulations involved a sense of supremacy in relation to those they identified as other than ‘white’.

Frankenberg’s (1993) analysis identified Whiteness as a cumulative name, which has a set of linked dimensions that were part of being ‘white’. These include its location of structural advantage (of ‘race’ privilege); its standpoint (a place from which ‘white’ people look at themselves, at others and at society); and it refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (p.1). She also drew some discursive repertoires out of the historical development of ‘white’ Americans’ understandings of ‘race’ and racism in the US. Frankenberg saw that these repertoires were available to ‘white’ women as they interacted with their material reality. The repertoires also included modes of naming culture and difference associated with Western European colonial expansion. Frankenberg described these discursive repertoires in the following manner:

- Elements of ‘*essentialist*’ racism again linked to European colonialism but also critical as rationale for Anglo settler colonialism and segregationism in what is now the United States of America.
- ‘*Assimilationist*’ or later ‘*colour-evasive and power-evasive*’ strategies for thinking through race first articulated in the early decades of this century.
- ‘*Race-cognizant*’ repertoires that emerged in the latter half of the 20th century and were linked both to US liberation movements and to the broader global struggles for decolonization (p.238).

The first understanding is based on the idea that the term ‘white’ describes a biological ‘race’ of people. Frankenberg states that “[these are] elements of *essentialist racism* [again] linked to European colonialism but also critical as rationale for Anglo settler colonialism and segregation” (p.14). Alastair Bonnett (2000c) and Jeff Hitchcock (1999) agree that this mode of thinking is about 400 hundred years old. This belief system is based on a “pseudoscience” that appeared able to prove ‘white races’ were superior and more advanced than all other so called ‘races’. Christian religious ideology of the time supported this belief as well. It was a belief system, which held that when “primitive” peoples, even those who were considered “noble savages” came into contact with “progressive, civilised” ‘white’ peoples, the primitive peoples usually died out (Ballara, 1986).

The development of *assimilationist* or later *color and power evasive* strategies for thinking through ‘race’, sometimes referred to as *colourblind*, [were] first articulated in the early decades of the 20th century (Frankenberg 1993). This change in ideology was the impetus for the assimilative policies of the Aotearoa government partly because the *essentialist* and racist ideology had failed- Māori continued to survive. The legacy of the assimilative ideology still has familiar understanding among many New Zealanders, and some Māori; sayings such as “we are all one, we are all the same underneath” are commonplace. This understanding formed the basis of an assimilative nationalism, a discursive formulation that is addressed in this study (Bell, 1996).

The third and least common understanding of ‘race’ and Whiteness or thinking through ‘race’ that Frankenberg called *race cognizant* repertoires or discourses, emerged in the 1960s and 70s and were linked both to liberation movements and broader global struggles for decolonization (p.14). This understanding developed in Aotearoa at a similar period and although premised on acknowledging difference, the differences are not considered biological. The differences among groups of peoples in this discourse are framed in terms of ethnicities and culture but most importantly they recognize the social and economic inequalities that some peoples are forced to endure in the present. Some Pākehā New Zealanders recognize that state institutions’ assimilative modes of operating resulted in discriminating outcomes for certain groups in society. Frankenberg

argues that a color-power evasive repertoire/discourse was dominant at least in public language in the times when (early 1990s) and places where (various states in the US) her interviewees grew up.

Frankenberg made two critical points about contemporary manifestations of these three discursive repertoires that are central insights for this study. First, the primary origins of understanding about ‘race’, just discussed, are based on a sense of biological superiority, for that reason, other discourses are forced to engage with this *essentialist* discourse by rejecting aspects of it, **but at the same time not being able to separate difference from domination**. Consequently, the first two discourses, that of a belief in biological superiority followed by the assimilative discourses, are commonly manifest in a closed binary opposition in the thinking of ‘white’ people or those located within the terrain of Whiteness. Many international researchers have shown that ‘white’ people believe that they are restricted to the options of being racist, or being *colourblind* (*power evasive*). This binary opposition is closed because difference is conflated with domination and ‘white’ subjects are forced to deny difference, so that they will not be seen as legitimising their domination (Frankenberg, 1993). Second, despite the sequentially historical appearance of the three discursive repertoires Frankenberg identified, the discourses were all available and in play in Frankenberg’s participants’ narratives.

Frankenberg’s work impelled me to continue and her ideas were useful analytical markers and starting points for my exploration. What was particularly relevant for my focus on the discursive system of racialisation that Frankenberg’s study revealed was her suggestion that regardless of whether people chose to be ‘white’, Whiteness was a particular ‘colonizer’ social identity in societies with a colonial history (p 24).

Another writer whose work has contributed much to the problematization of ‘white’ female identity and has influenced the direction of my inquiry is Vron Ware (1992). She examined the role of ideas/perceptions about ‘white’ women in the history of racism in the US and Britain. Her two principal themes were, firstly, the need to perceive ‘white’ femininity as a historically constructed category and, secondly, the importance of understanding how feminism has developed as a political movement

within racist societies. This involved acknowledging how the construction of a political identity around 'women', has denied crucial differences among them.

The paradox within this development of feminist understanding was that as feminists strived to be inclusive and non-racial/racist, they neglected to address the power implicit in their perceived right to include "other" women, in their attempts to 'incorporate' and universalize feminism. They also failed to see/address the significance of their Whiteness for those whose lives had been shaped by being unable to identify as 'white'. Ware confronted the historical meanings of Whiteness and proposed that 'white' women adopt 'strategic identities' when working out the dynamics of 'race', class and gender in situations that demand a political response (p.254). This work has relevance for the Aotearoa context as many women; both Māori and non-Māori have struggled with what is 'acceptable' as a claimed identity.

Ware (1992) argued cogently that feminism as a political and cultural movement had been moulded by particular forms of racism in the changing boundaries of British society. She contended that feminism's lack of awareness of its role in this process was responsible for the inability to address this aspect. Her position held that many of the women immersed in the women's liberation movement of the late 60's were daughters, granddaughters or nieces of women who were directly involved in the emigration/immigration of British people to different parts of the Empire, such as women in Australia and New Zealand. Ware also identified very different political concerns and priorities that developed for 'black' women who were more deeply linked to their **experiences of colonisation** than those priorities that influenced 'white' women of the same period.

Ware made an important insight, supported by Frankenberg's perspective and also confirming my commitment to the direction that I had taken. She maintained that the feminist movement had identified women's resistance to forms of **oppression** over time but had paid less attention to the 'role of historical memory in the development of the contemporary forms of **domination**' (p.229). This situation, she added, resulted in contemporary feminism being less effective in understanding and changing oppressive

ideologies of ‘race’, class, and gender (Breines, 1995; Fowlkes, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Frye, 1983; Ware, 1992).

The theoretical approach of Frankenberg, and Ware, not only came out of developments in feminist responses to the politics of difference but also came out of developments in academia related to poststructuralism. Significantly, feminist writing in the 1970s and 1980s tended to assume that gender and ethnic identities were discoverable, fixed and open to description. Later poststructuralist writers looked at identities as fluid, shifting constructions (Barrett & Phillips 1992; Bock & James, 1992; Gunew and Yeatman, 1993; Nicholson, 1990). These insights substantiated for me that Whiteness was not, therefore, an essence to be ‘uncovered’ or discovered, according to poststructuralist thinking, but was a constructed and discursive formation, which may be subverted as well as asserted. An important consideration within this approach was that Whiteness because of its structural hegemonic position within a racialised discursive system was still a relational hegemonic identity for those who identify as ‘black’ or ‘non white’.

An important western patriarchal ideology that underpinned the “inability” for many feminists to see the Whiteness of their socialisation was a philosophical tradition of thinking and defining categories in binary opposition. The value of postmodernist/poststructuralist deconstructive analysis is that it demands that a hegemonic group problematise and deconstruct previously assumed clear boundaries and authentic subjects. Some feminists theorists feared that this would lead feminist analyses down the path to relativism, but others considered that the development of the post-modern project with its ability to deconstruct categories and concepts, has facilitated the different conceptualizations of Whiteness that many feminists, including those who critique postmodernism, have found useful. The post-modern development facilitated a potential in theorisation and analysis to tease apart and expose the instability, contradictions and complexities within previous homogenized groups. Sneja Gunew (1993) states that the deconstruction of identity beyond the self/other principle by embracing difference “is not the deconstruction of politics;” according to Judith Butler (1990) quoted in her writing, “. . .rather it establishes as political the very terms through which identity is articulated” (p.18).

The feminist postmodernist approach demands that Whiteness is problematized and questioned, specifically in its implications for women by facilitating conceptualizations of difference. This understanding also allows the grounding of theoretical process in the participants' talk about the 'concrete' reality of their lives (Frankenberg, 1993). I expected that a postmodernist perspective to my research, in particular discourse analysis would enable the unpacking and investigation of 'white'/Pākehā women's interpretation of their lives and their racialisation through their discursive repertoires.

An important consideration that this approach revealed, especially in relation to the claiming of Pākehā as an identification, was the poststructuralist practice of constructing multiple and shifting identities that provide so many possibilities. This practice may discursively deconstruct old labels but this reworking of language does not make the impact/social dynamics attached to labels, disappear. The focus on identity politics that developed in much of the feminist writing at this time has had an important and potentially constraining influence on the direction of the Pākehā feminist literature, particularly the antiracist literature.

Feminists in Aotearoa

The development of feminist scholarship and engagement with poststructuralist ideas was also active among women in Aotearoa (Du Plessis, 1992; Du Plessis & Alice, 1998). The local development in feminist scholarship had an important influence on my developing ideas. Although none of the works referenced specifically analyse Whiteness, the analytical tools that I learned and utilised in this study came from my engagement with this scholarship. An important ethic that underpinned much of this local feminist scholarship has been the recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi as a foundational document that is embedded in contemporary Māori and Pākehā socio-cultural relations.

An early work in Aotearoa, which influenced my developing ideas was Angela Ballara's (1986) research titled *Proud to be White*. What is significant about Ballara's use of the descriptor 'white' to refer to Pākehā New Zealanders is that her choice of terminology reveals the changing salience of acceptable terminology to describe

dominant Pākehā population. In the 1980s, the term Pākehā was not in common usage and had not attained public recognition in Aotearoa. Ballara (1986) reviewed Eurocentric racial prejudice from colonial times to the 1980s. She examined articles in the New Zealand press, which dealt with European attitudes to Māori from colonial times to the 1980s. Ballara demonstrated how shifts in public opinion, regardless of gender, reflected changes in governmental policy and the important effects these have on New Zealand society. Her conclusion was that Eurocentrism was still a feature of Aotearoa society in the 1980s, which was similar to Frankenberg's findings that 'white' American understandings were based on racialised/racist thought.

There had been some constructions of Pākehā by non-Pākehā women such as Donna Awatere (1984) in her work *Māori Sovereignty*, in which she presented the notion of Pākehā hegemony and the need for Māori to undergo decolonization before they were able to exact economic and political change. Other contributors to the non-Pākehā literature at the time included Ann-Marie Jagose (1992) in *Broadsheet* who discussed being part Indian and neither 'white'/Pākehā nor Māori (Ip, 1998; Mahanram, 1998). She pointed out the difficulties for those later immigrants who were neither 'white'/Pākehā nor tangata whenua, of finding a place to stand in the current bicultural⁶ social politics in Aotearoa. Jagose contended that there appeared to be no provision for claiming a hybrid identity in the discussions of cultural identity, particularly by Māori.

Wendy Larner (1993), who examined racial and ethnic relations in the Aotearoa context, appeared to advocate a multicultural discourse. Her main theme, which was argued cogently much earlier by bell hooks, was that feminist politics 'should arise out of a politics of affinity' and that the impetus for this emerges from a common purpose rather than a shared identity (p.98-99). Larner based her discussion on the expanding nature of global capitalism, which results in increasingly complex social and spatial relationships. Taking account of the migrations of many European and Pacific peoples

⁶ The term 'bicultural' was originally coined to describe an honourable relationship based on the Treaty of Waitangi between Māori and all new comers to Aotearoa from 1840 onwards. But the term came to be understood in mainstream 'common sense' understanding, to exclude New Zealanders who are not Māori or Pākehā. The term is now the subject of much debate among Pākehā Treaty educators and has generally been superseded by the descriptors 'Treaty-based' or social justice in relation to education.

to Aotearoa since World War II, Larner argued that this development separated the location of identity from territory and blood, shifting the connections to those of ‘ethos’ or cultural customs and mores. Larner advocated a move away from the binary opposition of Māori and Pākehā although she qualified her shift away from biculturalism with this statement: “Feminist theorists who draw from poststructuralist debates to discuss ways in which situated actors construct multiple and shifting identities in relation to specific historical conditions may provide the basis for such an alternative” (p.91).

The question of what it means to claim Pākehā as an identity and how the Pākehā group can respond to the postcolonial challenge of tangata whenua was the focus of much of the writing about identity in Aotearoa. Avril Bell (1996) challenged claims that a postcolonial era has arrived and another Pākehā academic, Paul Spoonley (1995a) explained his view that the use of the term post-colonialism does not necessarily mean that Pākehā are ‘post’- after colonialism. He saw the Pākehā role as a continuous engagement with the effects of colonialism, one that included the descendants of the colonisers demonstrating their willingness to giving up privilege. Spoonley (1995a) also made the point that discussions of Pākehā identity were limited, especially as those who have provided the key texts or understandings are mostly male. A number of feminist writers have also suggested that Pākehā /’white’ men and women are quite differently invested in ‘white’ racism and that the nature of these investments needed more investigation (Jones, D. 1992; Lawn, 1994; Larner and Spoonley, 1995; Larner, 1996).

Debbie Jones (1992) contended that much Pākehā feminist attention had been focused on the practice of antiracist education and there has been more ‘doing’ than theorizing and writing. Until recently, Pākehā feminist writing has focused on analysing their relationship to men, the state, women’s status in law and how women are positioned in society. It was the challenges that come from ‘non white’ women and in Aotearoa, from Māori women that prompted some self-reflection, examination and action on the part of this female ‘white’ racialised identity (Awatere, 1984; Irwin in Du Plessis, 1992; Ramsden & Spoonley, 1993).

The gap in the feminist literature on exploring Whiteness in Aotearoa has been noticeable throughout the literature search and appeared to be related to some specific colonial, gender and cultural dynamics over time. The following discussion briefly outlines some literature that explored important historical dynamics, which are specific to Aotearoa and have implications for the development of racialised gender relations among the ‘white’ colonising community and their descendants. I contextualise the distinctive development of Pākehā feminism in Aotearoa and the distinctive development of antiracist education compared to international trends.

Colonial Ties: the role of Pākehā women

The signing of a Treaty in 1840 between the British Government and the indigenous people, constituted Aotearoa as a colony of the British Empire. The process of European imperialist expansion created new sites for gender struggles and relations within the European (‘white’/Pākehā) colonising community. In addition, the racist ideology of the colonists was also manifest in conflicted racialised dynamics between the colonists and the tangata whenua, the indigenous peoples. Daiva Stasiulis and Nira Yuval-Davis, (1995) in their exploration of the gendered and racialised character of settler colonialism generally point out that:

... [i] It was the arrival of European women [that was particularly significant in reinforcing the class and racial distinctions, in part because of the emergence of new sanctions against intermarriage between indigenous women and European men (p.70).

The role that immigrant/colonial women played in the building of a nation in the Aotearoa context has only recently been studied. In the last three decades, feminist historians have attempted to write Pākehā women into New Zealand’s History. This development created a gendered history by default as Pākehā women were interpreted as ‘the’ gendered subject and men’s gender was mainly implicit. Owing to Pākehā women’s early enfranchisement, many of these historical works described in rather celebratory style, party politics and government and some of this writing has focused on biographical accounts of individual Pākehā women's lives (Daley & Montgomerie, 1999; Laing & Coleman, 1998; Porter & Macdonald, 1996).

Much had been made of the predominant numbers of Pākehā men who, when Māori were the majority before 1850, formed liaisons with Māori women, but as Pākehā numbers increased through disease and dispossession of Māori, there was much less interaction between Māori and Pākehā and the two populations began to diverge (Macdonald, 1999). The numerical scarcity of Pākehā women during the period of ‘settlement’ had a significant impact on a common perception of the ‘national’ character of the New Zealand society at the time as based on the ‘Man Alone’. The colonial authorities in Aotearoa played a significant role in changing these demographics by actively promoting the immigration of single women mainly from Britain, and these women were perceived to fill the role as ‘the colonial helpmeet’ to these pioneer men (Dalziel, 1977).

Charlotte Macdonald (1999) argued that this imbalance between colonial men and women reached extreme proportions for only a short period, which coincided with the Otago gold rush. Overall, the predominant images and the perceived role of European women during this period of colonisation and nation building were those of “virtuous and dependent wives, ‘breeders’ and mothers of children, as well as of courageous yet feminine ‘frontier women’. The colonial authorities also fostered and reinforced these hegemonic images of immigrant women” (Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis, 1995).

The enfranchisement of Pākehā women in Aotearoa in 1893 has been heralded as the 1066 of Pākehā women’s history but this historical event has also been described as an anticlimax; the anticipated full acceptance of Pākehā women as equals to Pākehā men in society did not follow. Patricia Grimshaw (1987), in her historical account of Women’s Suffrage in New Zealand, states, “After the 1920’s the feminist movement made little progress... Women [they] opted instead to retain the private family structure, to rear their children in their own homes in which increasingly high standards of living absorbed the free time which modern appliances afforded” (p.122). The idea of the single-family household established by monogamous marriage “was central not merely to the rhetorical invention of New Zealand as a New World society but also to [Pākehā] socio-cultural practices” (Olssen, 1999, p.55).

A number of years passed before the emergence in 1970 of the first women's liberation group, which signalled the 'second wave' of public feminist action. Christine Dann (1985) described this upsurge in feminist mobilisation and action, as an opportunity for women to take up the suffragists' unfinished business. During this period of increasing feminist theorising and action in Aotearoa, the mainly 'white' middle class feminists paid little attention to Whiteness as a historically constructed category. They also failed to address the significance of their Whiteness for those whose lives had been shaped by not being able to identify as 'white'. Much of the overtly racialised discourse that was in common usage among the settler population in Aotearoa had been subsumed over time under liberal assumptions of a tolerance of difference among many contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders (Bell, 1996; Hage, 1998;). Margaret Wetherell's and Jonathon Potter's (1992) discourse analysis of Pākehā New Zealanders' racism confirmed Ballara's (1986) research and both works substantiated the discursive legacy that was available to contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders. Wetherell and Potter make direct reference to the links in Pākehā New Zealanders' discourses to their British origins in the introduction to their research, stating:

We want to show how the way in which modern Pākehā New Zealanders make sense of 'race relations' implicates British colonial history and works out the remnants of the broader discursive systems through which the Empire was made accountable. We also want to demonstrate how Pākehā New Zealanders have at their disposal, ready to be deployed in argument, traces of a great many of the general intellectual resources of the Western world (p.4).

As can be ascertained by the above account of their research, Wetherell's and Potter's (1992) contribution is hugely significant but is more primarily focused on understanding Pākehā New Zealanders' beliefs and attitudes to '**race relations**' in Aotearoa. Now in 2005 in Aotearoa, a nation with a troubled colonial past and an uncertain future, Tangata Whenua is making ongoing challenges. Māori continued to assert their claims as members of tribes to land, language, fisheries, and most recently ownership of the foreshore and seabed, and their sovereignty relative to all immigrants, manuhiri or Tauīwi, whether or not they are 'white'! These claims come out of the uniqueness of the New Zealand context based on Te Tiriti O Waitangi. The Māori claims were framed in a language of justice, rights and contract and not in a language of redistribution or underprivileged status that were the bases of many other

indigenous/black/minority/immigrant peoples' claims in other societies such as the US (Awatere, 1984; Irwin in Du Plessis, 1992). These accounts of the history of the role of Pākehā women in the apparent reproduction and maintenance of racialised discourses are important to consider as a contextual background to this research.

Antiracist Education

As already discussed, Pākehā feminists recognized in the 1980s and 90s that there was a need for analyses to acknowledge the importance of understanding how feminism developed as a political movement within racist societies (Rankine, 1983). Some Pākehā feminists in Aotearoa began to address the personal prejudice and institutional racism that underpinned the iniquitous social relations in Aotearoa society. Camille Guy (1986), Jones, (1992) and Mitzi Nairn (1995) in her Programme on Racism, to name a few, published cogent feminist analyses, and opened up the dialogue for feminists to unlearn their/our privilege as loss (Spivak, 1984, p.177).

It is important to emphasize that many Pākehā women involved in anti-racism and Treaty work have learned their politics and pedagogies through their political engagement in the feminist movement (Du Plessis, 1992; Du Plessis & Alice, 1998; Prentice, 1995). Both feminism and anti-racism are theoretical approaches, which although they had their origins in movements established before last century, took hold through the social movements of the 1960s and 1970s. The developments in education prompted by these two movements were based on a significant rethinking and reformulation of existing knowledge and pedagogy and not just an “add ‘race’/culture and stir” matter. These movements have precipitated the development of more specific theories that had distinctive views about the “good society” and their common theme **was their preoccupation with the marginalisation of significant groups** and the neglect of the experiences of those groups in mainstream education and learning environments (Du Plessis, 1992; Du Plessis & Alice, 1998).

An enduring question that underpinned this study was how theories that were developed for marginalised groups might fit for exploring hegemonic positionings. Māori as colonised peoples rightfully use this politics of identity to assert their

difference/sovereignty in relation to Pākehā. Pākehā antiracist educators responded in a critical and transformative way, using a corollary identity politics around the term Pākehā. Understandably, from this perspective a pedagogy developed around ‘white’ identity could seem regressive and may explain why many feminists had not regarded Whiteness as a potential for exploration. Jones (1992) when voicing her concern about the lack of feminist engagement specifically in antiracism analysis of the Aotearoa context, made this evaluation. “It has disturbed me that Pākehā antiracist work, especially antiracist education, [was] is acknowledged to be a largely female activity, yet very little direct attention [was] has been paid to a specifically feminist analysis of antiracism” (p.291).

Antiracist education in Aotearoa had been the subject of great interest and debate in the 1980s and 90s. Within this debate, a specific area that has been highlighted as an appropriate focus for non-Māori was the relevance and understanding of the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi. This historical document was considered a covenant that was agreed to by the governing body of the settler community who are the ancestors of many non-Māori living in contemporary New Zealand (Kelsey, 1994, 1995; Wilson & Yeatman, 1995). In 2005 there still seems to be a greater number of Pākehā women involved in antiracist education and developing theory. The educational philosophy of this community of educators, in particular the Treaty educators, employ a pedagogy of working models (discussed in chapter nine). This group regularly network and compare teaching strategies to develop and adapt their pedagogy. I have found no published work that indicates that this group was addressing the ‘white’ racialisation of Pākehā.

One innovative research article that has opened up exciting possibilities within Aotearoa, is Alison Jones’ (1999) analysis. The paper builds on several years of her and a Māori colleague, Kuni Jenkins’ experimentation with structuring the facilitation of ethnically diverse student classes in the interests of democratic dialogue. In 1997, these educators initiated a plan of separating the mostly female students into two groups based on ethnicity, one with mainly Māori and Tagata Pacifica students and the other comprising mainly ‘white’ Pākehā students. The outcome of this educative strategy revealed distinct responses from the two groups. The Māori group responded positively

whereas the Pākehā students indicated through their journaling their resentment toward the strategy of group division.

Jones' particular reading credited their responses to the dominant group's desire for the "other" and their sense of disappointment at feeling excluded from the "heard voice" of the "other". Jones' evaluation in this analysis suggested that a desire for accessibility to the "other" in the form of dialogue, "can be simply another colonising gesture" (p.305). The significance of Jones' (1999) paper for my research, including the insightful reading and analyses of the dangers of dialogue in the multiethnic classroom, is her suggestion that "...liberal and radical Pākehā have little choice but to engage in the hard work of learning about their [ethnic others] and our own histories and social privileges in relation to ethnic others..." (p.305). As an educator and researcher working within "epistemologies of uncertainty and multiplicity", my hope is that this study as an engagement with the "productive tensions" that Jones' identifies, "...will lend powerful insights into ethnicity, colonization and culture" (p.306).

Another significant body of work that has developed in Aotearoa and which I have personally been involved in teaching is Cultural Safety education (Coup, 1996; Nursing Council of New Zealand, 1996; Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Papps, 2002; Ramsden, 1990, 1994a, 1994b, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2000; Wood & Schwass, 1993). Māori nurses developed the concept of cultural safety in the late 1980's. They were concerned about the continuing negative health statistics of their people in Aotearoa. Irihapeti Ramsden (Ngai Tahu/Rangitane) introduced and developed this theory over twenty years and the programmes have been a compulsory inclusion in the nursing and midwifery degree programmes nationally since 1996. The New Zealand Nursing Council (NCNZ), the legal regulatory body for Nursing and Midwifery in Aotearoa, required and supported this pedagogy in Aotearoa in their Guidelines for Cultural Safety in Nursing and Midwifery Education 1996. Their definition of cultural safety is:

Cultural safety education is focused on the self-knowledge of the nurse or midwife rather than on attempts to learn accessible aspects of other groups. A nurse or midwife who understands his or her own culture and the theory of power relations can be culturally safe in any human context. (p.10)

The discipline of Cultural Safety is now recognized in nursing internationally, although there has been some published debate comparing Madeleine Leininger's Culturally Congruent Care for Practice with Cultural Safety (Anderson *et al.*, 2003; Cooney, 1994; Horton & Fitzsimons, 1996; Hughes & Gray, 2003; Jiwami, 2000; Kearns, 1997; Leininger, 1997; Lynam & Young, 2000; Murchie & Spoonley, 1995; Papps & Ramsden, 1996; Polaschek, 1998; Ramsden, 1990, 1995, 1996, 2000; Reimer Kirkham *et al.*, 2002; Richardson & Carryer, 2005; Smith, 1997; Spence, 2005; Swendson & Windsor, 1996; Wepa, 2005; Wood & Schwass, 1993; Wright, 1995). This initiative remains a compulsory component of Nursing and Midwifery education in New Zealand, but since the death of the main promoter of Cultural Safety, Irihapeti Ramsden (Ngai Tahu/Rangitane), the pedagogy is at risk of being appropriated/diluted. New Cultural Safety Guidelines were developed by the Nursing Council of New Zealand, a draft of which was heavily critiqued by attendees (mainly cultural safety educators) at a Cultural Safety conference in Wellington in 2004. In 2006 some institutions have withdrawn specific Cultural Safety papers and have purportedly "integrated" the content into the general nursing curriculum.⁷

Overall, the literature within the international feminist community has grown to include many insightful analyses. Frankenberg's analysis was particularly useful when gathering the data, and along with her analytical approach, as the research process progressed, a number of other feminist researchers' analyses and critiques as discussed have assisted with the investigation of a hegemonic group. The silence about Whiteness in the local literature has provided an opportunity to research this problem, which has the potential to contribute to antiracist education development in Aotearoa.

International Critiques of Antiracist Education

In addition to their critique of a 'white' worldview, 'black' academics and educators have also highlighted some gaps in 'white' antiracist education (Afshar & Maynard, 1994; Caraway, 1993; Essed, 1991; hooks, 1984; Lorde, 1984; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). They proposed that the content and processes of antiracist education have not

⁷ This recent development in Nursing and Midwifery education is of concern to many cultural safety educators.

challenged in any substantive way the 'white' view that culture belongs to "others". My review of the literature on anti-racist education, and my exploration into the aims, philosophy and pedagogy of this development up to the 1990s confirmed that 'white' identity or Whiteness had not been included or discussed in any depth by 'white' antiracist educators.

In the more recent international 'white' literature, Bonnett (1996) outlined a specific critique that supports the 'non white' writers' views about the effectiveness of 'white' antiracist education. His summary was that antiracist education usually restricts its brief to encouraging dominant 'white' subjects or groups to rethink their understanding of non-'white' people but not to understand themselves as racialised subjects. He stated that this reifies Whiteness, allowing 'white' groups the luxury of being passive observers so that they can pay attention to racism, or if it suits, ignore it (p.98).

Susan Friedman (1995) argued from a similar perspective to Bonnett and she suggested that a metanarrative exists that binds so many who engage in discussions and critique of hegemonic relationships based on 'racism'. Friedman challenged the binary construct of 'white'/'other" (also discussed on pages 23 -25) that commonly features in the critiques and practices of those active in feminist politics and antiracist education. She saw a common metanarrative, which includes both sides of this binary opposition and which also, incorporates the scripts of denial, accusation and confession. Despite the important contributions this binary construct of 'white'/'other" makes to cultural discourse, Friedman saw that these approaches operate within a victim paradigm of 'race' relations and the resulting metanarrative by itself represented a dead-end.

Friedman's suggestion was to move away from the metanarrative described above. She suggested the use of scripts of relational positionality in which power circulates in complicated ways rather than unidirectionally. The resulting contradictory subject positions allowed for the possibility of connection across racial and ethnic boundaries. These scripts were also flexible and nuanced and did not always assume already-constituted statuses of fixed power and powerlessness. Bonnet and Friedman, as well as other writers such as Ware (1992) and Frankenberg (1993), also argued that there is a need to look at the historical and geographical contingency of Whiteness as well.

This view enables a reconceptualization of Whiteness as a diverse and mutable social construction and includes a willingness to contemplate the hybrid/contradictory nature of ‘white’ identities. These writers argued that retaining Whiteness as an identity can undermine the objectives of antiracist education, which include the eventual eradication of racism, specifically the hegemony of Whiteness. It can be seen by this discussion that empirical inquiry into what is happening in antiracist education and efforts to expand the knowledge base in this area are relevant for developing strategies that can transform ‘white’/hegemonic identities.

The focus of antiracist education programmes that Bonnett reviewed had been on the so-called racialised “other”. This is also evident in much of the antiracist education in New Zealand – although an inclusion of Pākehā identity is included as already discussed- which commonly consists of education in schools, some tertiary institutions, Government workplaces and in adult community workshops about Pākehā/Māori history and the Treaty of Waitangi. Following Bonnett’s critique and the prolific writing and research that is now called ‘critical Whiteness studies’, explorations of Whiteness are now included as substantive aspects of many antiracist education programmes outside of Aotearoa; this focus, however, has not been taken up in Aotearoa in any significant way. Bonnett’s attention to the different forms of antiracist education has been followed by considerable research and scholarship internationally (Aal, 2001; Chávez & O’Donnell, 1998; Clark & O’Donnell, 1999; Cooks, 2003; Giroux, 1992, 1993; 1997a; 1997 b, 1997c, Hytten & Adkins, 2001; Leonardo, 2004; Norquay, 1999; Rodriguez, 1998; Rodriguez & Villaverde, 2000; Schick & St. Denis, 2003; Shore, 1998; Sleeter & McLaren, 1995; Stephenson, 1997, 2005; Thompson, A. 2004; Trainor, 2002).

An important consideration at this point is to discuss the literature that places the development of Whiteness discourses in historical and geographical context. The production of a racialised European ‘white’ identity, in its postmodern form, is infrequently addressed in contemporary antiracist education. Bonnett (1998), an international commentator on the shape of antiracist education at the time, has researched the development of western European, racialised Whiteness over time and he warns that the historically and geographically narrow focus in present debates on

Whiteness means that the particularity of its present form continues to evade analysis (p.1030). My intention is to heed Bonnett's caution and to provide a background that traces the construction of Whiteness over time and location. This discussion will map the concept of Whiteness and its reproduction as an ideology, on its temporal and geographical travels from its source to contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand, a small pacific island nation. My purpose is to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding about the problematic of shifting but persistent racialised discourses among contemporary 'white' Western dominant groups, which may include Pākehā New Zealanders.

An obvious gap in the literature and research on Whiteness is that this concept and its contemporary significance has not been examined or researched in any explicit way in Aotearoa, a nation with a similar colonial history to many nations that have British Colonial links.⁸ I was motivated to address the notion of racialisation in contemporary Aotearoa because of this lack of attention and analysis in contemporary research. Consequently, the research presented here investigates how the legacy of colonisation in the Aotearoa context, specifically discursive patterns of Whiteness, is manifested.

Bonnett (1998) a social historian already mentioned, cautions contemporary antiracist theorists and educators, that "only by positioning European identified and racialised Whiteness within a longer and broader view of 'white' identities can the power of European societies to assert and insert their social categories and symbolism **across the globe** be properly understood" (p.1030) (My emphases). I concur with Bonnett that contemporary patterns of racism need to be understood within a broad, historical sweep of imperialism and colonisation and question how that racism is evidenced in contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders. The discussion in the next section outlines the historical racialised discourses that may be available to contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders in particular through the historical and geographical context of British colonial "settlement".

⁸ These nations include Australia, Canada, India, Africa and many more.

Historical Development of Racialised Whiteness

The concept of ‘white’/pale/fair skin was a common descriptor for people in many continents in ancient and premodern times. In premodern China and the Middle East, Whiteness was a valued physical attribute and was incorporated into dominant groups’ collective identities. Indigenous people of the North and South American continents were called ‘white’ until the racialisation of difference gradually occurred over several centuries and necessitated a change. These non-European (and non-racialised) ‘white’ identities were gradually marginalized or erased by an increasingly hegemonic, European identified, and racialised Whiteness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The fetishisation of Whiteness with its positive connotations was produced in Europe and reified into a natural attribute (Bonnett, 1998).

The development of an exclusionary association between being ‘white’ and being European, was based on two pre-modern legacies that have significant implication for the development of racialised Whiteness, they are the associations of Whiteness with religious devotion and purity and the related association of Whiteness with high social status (Bastide, 1968; Chevalier and Gheerbrant, 1996). The latter, although somewhat less well known, links this developing racialised Whiteness to the aristocracy, leading a leisured and sheltered life and possessing pale skin. Bonnett (2000a) refers to Cohen’s (1997) attribution that Lord Milner, on seeing English Soldiers washing during the Battle of the Somme remarked, “I never knew the working classes had such white skins” (p.256).

Bonnett (1998) when describing the historical transformation of Whiteness in Europe and particularly Britain, points out that over time this process resulted from the presence of ‘non white’ immigrants into Britain but was primarily related to the changing symbolic constitution of racialised capitalism. Drawing on published sources written for middle class and uppermiddle class Victorians, Bonnett identified the different articulation of Whiteness that emerged in the nineteenth century between Britain and her colonies. He states that “Whiteness was fetishised and idealised as an ‘extraordinary’, almost superhuman identity; an identity developed in the main by and for the bourgeoisie” (p.30). Bonnett made the distinction that the British working class

were not considered ‘white’ but those Britons who went to the colonies **were** considered ‘white’.

As Bonnett (2000a) explains, “Even by the early nineteenth century, discussion of racial Whiteness in Britain was focused outwards, being dominated by references to colonial and settler societies and more generally to Europe’s role on the world” (p.30). The metaphorical and literal depictions of racial Whiteness were employed as a new paradigm of class hierarchy, a paradigm imported into Britain from colonial and settler societies. Although this ‘white’ racialisation of the British working class was influenced by foreign and colonial societies, it was also mediated and enabled in Britain by Victorian capitalism (Bonnett, 2000a).

In the colonial context of Aotearoa, this new racialised Whiteness was evident. Porter and Macdonald (1996), in their collection of accounts from letters written by nineteenth century British immigrants to Aotearoa, give many examples of the manifestations of Whiteness that were common in the understandings of the new arrivals (settlers). They explain that,

From their personal encounters with Māori, there is little indication that settler (as distinct from Missionary) women felt as if they were aliens in an existing society with which they might have to come to terms. The expectation was that Māori would either adopt, or adapt to, European customs and ways of doing things... For the missionary wives, things were a little different. Māori society was not only recognised, it was to be ‘saved’: the error of all heathenish ways had to be clearly pointed out and converts’ wayward feet guided along paths of imposed decency and good order (p.58).

As already described, much of the overtly racialised discourse commonly deployed among the settler population, has changed through liberal ideologies of “tolerance” and a common belief among many contemporary Pākehā that racism is a matter of personal prejudice. Ballara’s (1986) historical study, and Wetherell and Potter’s (1992) discourse analysis already outlined, trace the maintenance and reproduction of ethnocentric and racist forms among contemporary Pākehā. These authors research, suggest a racialised discursive legacy that is available to contemporary Pākehā.

Global Whiteness: the internationalization of Whiteness

Along with questions about the direction and importance of addressing Whiteness in antiracism and social justice education in the last thirty years or so, there have been some pertinent arguments that have been volunteered by Raka Shome (1999, 2000) in the international literature about the need to consider the globalisation of Whiteness. She also includes a critique about the continuing normalcy/invisibility of Whiteness. Shome (1999) reminds those of us/ Pākehā who are descendents of the colonising force in far flung lands that,

While these [US and UK] and other studies have made significant critical interventions into the discourse of Whiteness, what has not been sufficiently addressed in this literature is the internationalization of Whiteness and the hegemonic ways in which Whiteness, as a consequence of imperialism, can articulate identities and spaces in “other” worlds

(p.108) (My addition in brackets for clarity).

Her claim is that through historically sustained by forces of imperialism and global capitalism, Whiteness has affected and impacted identities and cultural spaces well beyond the shores of Western countries and of course this research evidence shows that this includes Aotearoa. In addition to her claim about the limitations of international research and analyses, Shome (2000) also demonstrates the way that Whiteness as an organising principle remains dynamic in different contexts and resecures its positionality even to the extent of drawing attention to itself when its normalcy and dominance is contested (Scully, 2005). This dynamic has relevance for the developments in cultural politics in Aotearoa, (just discussed) in the last three decades because the ascendance of Māori nationalism and the State demands for biculturalism have affected the Pākehā community psyche. As Shome (2000) so aptly describes,

However, when the normalcy of Whiteness gets contested (even if it constitutes a very small challenge to its power) when Whiteness begins to feel insecure about its power and future, different strategies of self-naming emerge. Instead of positioning itself as the norm it begins to mark itself as the “other” as “different” as an identity in crisis and therefore having a particular location...It is in such visible markings of itself that Whiteness often promotes a rhetoric where it begins to construct itself as “not the norm”, as something particular, full of unique challenges and struggles that need attention (p.338).

I agree with semantic politics that the claiming of Pākehā has had, as already discussed, a label that declares its acknowledgement of Te Tiriti O Waitangi. However unfortunately, this term has now been co-opted by right wing conservative politicians and in is common terminology the media in 2005. The political radicalism of the term is now lost.

Along with Shome's warnings about ability of Whiteness to resecure its positionality even to the extent of drawing attention to itself, when its normalcy and dominance is contested, another theorist Philomena Essed (2004) researched everyday racism in the Netherlands (1990, 1991). Essed also highlights the tendency that many communities have, to differentiate specifically hegemonic relations in their particular context, such as the Netherlands in her case, from the role of the dominant groups in the rest of the international scene. Essed (2004) recounts, in her review of literature on "the international crusade against the term racism". Striking similarities exist in Aotearoa in relation to racialisation and what she thought was a peculiarly Dutch phenomenon, turned out to be an international trend. Essed states that, "In each and every country - South Africa, the USA, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Europe and other locations- exposure is and has been the result of persistence and stamina against national forces insisting that 'our case' is special, not as bad as the others" (p.121).

Whiteness Pedagogy

The most recent literature, mainly current in the US, that proposed analyses and pedagogies of Whiteness, can be divided into two main streams: the abolitionists or 'race' traitors and the intersectional approach to Whiteness studies. These theories are quite distinctive and the intersectional approach is a useful basis from which to approach this study. I will discuss these two streams in turn addressing the abolitionist first. An explanation of the theoretical assumptions and conceptual premises of this approach reveal its incompatibility with discourse analysis.

Some writers, of the abolitionist approach; in particular, John Garvey & Noel Ignatiev (1997), Ignatiev & Garvey (1996), and David Roediger (1994), have put forward arguments for providing the possibility of mutation, and the eventual abolition of Whiteness as an identity in the future. This position is based on the premise that the association of colour with Whiteness implicit in the construct irrevocably binds it to assertions of *essentialist* racism (it is biological) (see p. 23), as well as to understandings of ‘white’ identity as a static construct (we cannot change our colour).

Dreama Moon and Lisa Flores (2000) maintained that the abolitionist emphasis on making, re-making, and un-making ultimately recentres Whiteness. “In ‘making’ Whiteness ‘race’ traitors rely on a monolithic notion of Whiteness that assumes Whiteness is the foundational oppression” (p.110). What is significant about this approach is that Whiteness is positioned as a choice, as a state of mind. In this way, the argument among ‘race’ traitors that Whiteness is a social formation extends the social constructionist argument to its extreme. Within the ‘race’ traitor discourse there is an assumption that people have individual choice and that intentional action was the foundation upon which people decide and determine who is, and is not, ‘white’.

Another important aspect of this approach is the emphasis on Whiteness to the exclusion of other axes of domination with the argument that Whiteness is the foundational source of oppression, and that once eradicated, social justice will emerge. A final constraint of this approach is proponents’ unwillingness to work in alliance with other liberatory movements such as antiracism, feminism, and the gay liberation. Their perspective prevented dialogue and co-strategizing between themselves and other liberatory movements. A number of authors have critiqued the limitations of this approach because of its limiting binary framework (Chubbuck, 2004; Moon & Flores 2000; Winant, 1997).

The intersectional approach involves analysing the interlocking nature of oppression (also see Collins, 1990, Weber, 1997; Wildman & Davies, 1996; Williams Chizhik & Williams Chizhik, 2005). Carrie Crenshaw (1997) argued that ‘race’, class, gender, age, sexual orientation, and other social identity categories did not operate in isolation. Moon and Flores (2000) comment that we can no more talk about our experience as women, separate from our ‘race’ or class, than we can identify those parts of our bodies

that represent particular and singular identity positions (Collins, 1990; Michalove, 1999; Spelman, 1988; Weber, 1997). Intersectionality also required a critical self-reflexivity, or a holding up of our own practices to question and critique. In addition, Moon & Flores (2000) directive to ‘ask the other question’ was an insightful suggestion that sustained my research through a number of apparent barriers, which I will discuss in the methodology chapter. The intersectionalist approach seemed appropriate for my study as I intended to examine the intersecting dynamics through discourses that may constitute the participants as racialised, gendered and classed subjects in contemporary Aotearoa.

Whiteness Studies

The literature that I reviewed about the explorations of Whiteness revealed that it is by no means an intellectually homogeneous body of thought. Generally, this work seems to share at least three characteristics. These elements include an impulse to mark and thus, come to understand Whiteness; a commitment to anti-racist or anti-‘white’ supremacist politics; and a desire to build emancipatory notions of Whiteness (Alcoff, 1998; Bonnett, 1996, 2000b; Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993, 1997; Giroux, 1997b; Hartigen, 1997; Hill, 1997; Johnson, 1999; Kaufman, 1996; Kincheloe *et al.*, 1998; Kincheloe, 1999; Lipsitz, 1998; Nakayama & Martin, 1999; Sleeter, 1995, 1996; Winant, 1997).

Within the current wave of Whiteness studies, writers Richard Dyer (1988), Ruth Frankenberg (1993), bell hooks (1990) and Toni Morrison (1993), were among the first to argue that an important element of the antiracist agenda was the need to map the terrain of Whiteness. Each in their own way argued that those wanting to preserve ‘white’ supremacy are likely to insist on Whiteness remaining invisible and unmarked.

Along with Dyer (1988), Nakayama and Krizek (1995, 1999) argued that once the space of Whiteness is exposed, culturally positioned, delimited, rendered visible, and deterritorialized, then, Whiteness would lose its power to dominate. Crenshaw (1997) further suggests that the rhetorical silences of Whiteness need to be overturned if racism

is to be effectively resisted. Prophetically for my research, Crenshaw held that it was within these silences that the power of Whiteness was invoked.

By rendering Whiteness visible, these scholars believed that ‘whites’ will come to understand that “their experiences, perceptions, and economic positions have been profoundly affected by being constituted as a white” (Alcoff, 1998, p. 8), and that by getting in touch with Whiteness and its attendant privilege, they will identify and reduce/eliminate their racism (Katz, 1999; Marty, 1999). For this reason, antiracist politics are a central part of the Whiteness studies agenda (Marty, 1999). However, a central concern among Whiteness scholars is that, to date, a compelling vision of a liberatory Whiteness and/or ‘white’ identity has yet to be articulated (see also Alcoff, 1998; Giroux, 1997b; Kincheloe *et al.*, 1998; Kincheloe, 1999; Lipsitz, 1998; Winant, 1997). This large body of literature had much to offer my study and I have discussed those concepts that were specifically relevant to this research.

Conclusion

This review of the literature suggests that historicised racialised discourses inform contemporary ‘white’ subjects in a number of Western societies. I intended to talk to some Pākehā women in Aotearoa who have ‘white’ colonialist ancestry. The literature implies that these woman **may** have available to them discourses that constitute them as racialised subjects - ways of relating from the past such as their sense of themselves, others, identity and worldview, which are shaped by their identities as Pākehā /‘white’ New Zealanders. I wanted to ascertain if the legacy of colonisation existed in the Aotearoa context, specifically discursive patterns of Whiteness, might be manifest.

The second question that emerges from my review of the literature is whether empirical support exists for international authors’ critiques of antiracist education, such that much of the racialisation/‘Whiteness’ remains unexamined. Is there a need for social justice education in Aotearoa, which includes a focus on racialisation, on Whiteness discourses?

Overall, I wish to investigate how some Pākehā women talk about their identity and their view of others and their world using racialised discourses. Does the label 'white' woman have any significance for them? Given that subjects are constituted through relations of power, through a process of compelled reiteration that maintains and sustains normative social structures, what is the significance and salience of contemporary racialised linguistic system in contemporary Aotearoa. Is there any significance in the racialisation process such that a discursive analysis of 'white' racialisation as an antiracist educational strategy can contribute to the interrogation and transformation of present hegemonic relations in Aotearoa?

Chapter Three

Theoretical and Methodological Premises: feminism's trojan horse

The consciousness of what one really is [entails] 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date which has deposited in us an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory.

Gramsci (1971 p.324)

Introduction

Antonio Gramsci's (1971) assertion about the historical significance of subjectivity devoid of a clear inventory, highlights the importance of appropriate methodologies and analytical frameworks to address the range of racialised discourses available to Pākehā women. Gramsci's statement also appears to suggest the applicability of an analysis of these discourses for social justice education in contemporary Aotearoa. This chapter outlines the methods used to gather and analyse the research data followed by a detailed discussion, of the theoretical assumptions underpinning the research analysis and the methodological contours of the research process.

Data Gathering and Method Outline

I obtained the data for the research using the following methods. First, I carried out an initial two and a half hour focus group discussion with five women in September 1996. I knew all these women and most knew one another. They all had participated in some form of Treaty education, mainly Treaty of Waitangi Workshops.⁹ The participants were tertiary educated and some had been involved in Treaty work at some time in their lives. The women were all over fifty years old and described themselves as middle class.

I initially wrote to the women informing them of my research and inviting them to participate. I then prepared a list of questions that I sent to the participants a week

⁹ Te Tiriti O Waitangi/ Treaty of Waitangi/ workshops are usually spread over two full days. The pedagogy is usually interactive and incorporates experiential activities

before the focus group for them to consider. The focus group was audiotaped and then transcribed verbatim. One reason for initially using a focus group method was to facilitate some preliminary discussions of ethnicity and identity generally in order to develop guiding questions for the interviews.

I followed the focus group with 23 individual interviews with women from a different community. I invited interview participants through acquaintances and by word of mouth, using a common technique called 'snowballing'. Most interviews were approximately two hours long and were audiotaped and transcribed. The interviews were semi-structured and I used some questions as a guide. The interview participants' ages ranged from 24 to 86 years, the majority of whom were aged between 30 and 55 years. Fifteen interviewees had tertiary qualifications. The women had variable experiences of antiracist/social justice education. Eight interviewees had completed a Treaty of Waitangi workshop, three of whom were involved in social justice or Treaty education. Of the total 28 participants in the study (focus group and interviews), 26 described themselves as middle class, although seven claimed a working class upbringing. This formal data collection process took place between November 1996 and October 1997.

Data Analysis

I used a modified analytic inductive approach, in which I began with specific questions for the specific focus group community. As I proceeded, both the types of questions were adapted and the community changed for the individual interviews (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Lopez & Parker, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Both data collection and preliminary analysis ran in tandem. As the research progressed, I collected less data and continued the analysis. The analysis involved organization of the information into categories that emerged from the data with the aim of gradual data reduction. I organised the data by sorting it into different discursive categories using Bogdan and Biklen's (1992) coding families. I divided these categories into subcategories. This process continued until the point of data saturation, and no new patterns or discursive themes emerged from the data. The overall data analysis was a

process of organization, description and synthesis (Davison & Tolich, 1999; Lincoln & Denzin, 2000).

Theoretical Assumptions of Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis theorists, such as Barbara Applebaum (2004), Judith Butler (1990, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b), Michelle Foucault (1972, 1980), Stuart Hall (1988), and Margaret Wetherell & Stephen Potter (1992) and offer valuable insights into the dynamics of discursive systems and the usefulness that analyses of these discursive systems have for understanding hegemonic social relations. Their premises make assertions about power, subjectivity and the relationship between discourse, subjectivity, social systems and change.

The first group of premises relate to power, which Foucault (1972, 1980) maintains is located within in the norms and conventions that regulate discourse. Power, Foucault also asserts, is outside subjects' conscious or intentional decision and installs itself through discourse that produces material effects. In addition, power is dispersed through social practices and rituals of normality and is not outside social relations. Significantly, power is interpreted as a dynamic process, which has an embodied, lived existence, which finds its ethical legitimacy from historical experience (Applebaum, 2004; Wetherell and Potter, 1992).

Second, Foucault (1980) and Butler (1990, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b) assert there is no prediscursive subject who stands outside of power. To be more specific, subjectivity is constructed through power, through the process of subjugation. Power, in this sense, is productive and provides the very conditions of the subject's existence. Consequently, the notion of a sense of identity and subjectivity is constructed from the interpretative resources – the stories and narratives of identity – which are available, in circulation, in a culture. Wetherell and Potter, (1992) stress that identity and forms of subjectivity, which become instantiated in discourse at any given moment, should be seen as “a sedimentation of discursive practices” (p.78).

Applebaum (2004) in particular, makes a distinction between agency and choice that

underscores the understanding that subjects/identities are never outside social structures. Applebaum asserts that power and privilege are not things that hegemonic identities can give up by an act of good will or ethics that are more humane. She asserts that hegemonic identities cannot escape their social location because they always work within social systems and not from an external point of view. For that reason, dominant subjects need to continually interrogate their political practices for exclusions and omissions that may be obscured by their social location. This rationale is significant for my research in relation to my contention that social justice education needs to continue to interrogate Pākehā discursive practices for exclusions and omissions that may be obscured by their/our social location.

Applebaum's proposal also advocates an embedded reflexivity within the research process and affirms the importance in conceiving of a self-reflexive subject that is understood as encumbered and influenced by constituting discourse. Thus, reflexivity is not seen as transparent or outside power matrices and the implications of this premise were constant companions in my study. The implications were borne out in my interactions with participants and my initial "in/capacity" to analyse some data such as the silences. Discourse analysts contend that discursive construction processes are constrained, of course, by other social practices (Applebaum, 2004; Butler, 1990, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1997a, 1997b; Foucault, 1972, 1980; Hall, 1988; Wetherell & Potter, 1992). These theorists maintain that some accounts of self are more readily available than others, as identity can only be constructed through available narratives. This particular interpretation reveals the complexities of "available narratives" and how a focus on narratives/speech, can conceal the conception that silences operate as discourses. I discuss the significance of silences as discourses in another section of this chapter.

Another theoretical assumption underpinning discourse analysis emphasizes that social norms are expressed as discursive formations and therefore having subject status depends upon complying with and participating in dominant norms and conventions. The discourses that all subjects use are the effect of "historically sedimented linguistic intentions" (Butler 1995b:134).

A concluding but critical theoretical premise for this study concerns the notion of social change. Wetherell and Potter (1992) and Applebaum (2004) maintain that language should not be viewed as an imposed and fixed system of meaning, but as a site of contestation and struggle where different articulations of meaning compete for hegemony. These authors agree with Butler (1995b) that subjects are never outside social structures and power relations, are encumbered and influenced by constituting discourses and can play a role in resistance. Therefore, change is possible because of the instability of symbolic and discursive norms. Their argument contends that subjects can find the discursive space to challenge and disrupt social norms. This analytical perspective also draws on Butler's understanding of agency, which involves resistance in the sense of "locating strategies of subversive repetition that challenge norms and conventions by showing how their constitution and organisation are social and hegemonic and not neutral and natural" (Butler, 1990, p.147). This premise highlights the potential applicability of a pedagogy that has the capacity to reveal the social constitution and organisation of racialised discourses as significant and open to change.

Contemporary international research analysing the notion of racialisation, much of which was discussed in the literature review, provide compelling evidence that the processes of social hegemony are maintained and reproduced by the linguistic constitution of racialised subjects through an assemblage of racialised discourses, named by many as discourses of Whiteness. Consequently, a key endeavour of this research was to find out whether and in what ways a racialised discursive system was manifest within the contemporary Aotearoa context through an examination of the discourses of some Pākehā women. The qualitative method used, examined rhetorical linguistic strategies deployed by these women to ascertain whether they were constituted as subjects within a racialised discursive system. Discourse analysis theorists argue that within a racialised system, along with other discursive systems such as a gendered discursive system, social norms are expressed as discursive formations and subjects are thereby associated in the maintenance and reproduction of the salience/dominance of the system. Discourse theorists' contentions about the significance of discursive formation of the subject and their assertion that discourse analysis offers potential for change, were important insights that underpin this study.

Four additional principles, outlined in the following discussion, underpin the theoretical foundations of this research and contribute the analytical framework used in the study. An important aspect of my approach, linked to the previous discussion, was to maintain an analytic distinction between the process (constitution of subjects through discursive racialisation) and the population (Pākehā middleclass women) to which it pertains: trying not to confuse ***Pākehā dominance within a system with the domination of the racialised system***. In this respect, my research is an interrogation of the processes through which Pākehā middleclass women could be constituted as racialised subjects and to ascertain which discourses at any given period come to predominate and how.

Wetherell and Potter's (1992) specific approach was particularly useful for this research. They conceived of discourses as actively constitutive of both social and psychological processes and that action, the individual and the social, the topic of the sociological cannot be easily separated from discursive practice. Wetherell and Potter's theorization incorporates the concept of ideology which they conceive "as primarily a form of the practical, instantiated in policy statements, in memos, in speeches, in documents newspapers in conversations, accounts, explanations, versions, anecdotes and stories" (p.61). This formulation was relevant for this study because discourses are conceived as active, compelling and a pervasive part of the fabric of social life and every feature of the conventional sociological landscape is imbued with ideology and discourse. These theoretical premises facilitate investigation in a localised fashion, and are able to show how different ideologies actively construct and create group and class alliances and new types of identity and subject positions in context. In other words, these conceptions promote interrogation of how ideological discourse becomes a popular discourse, a recognised truth and is therefore able to work as effective rhetoric (Hall, 1988).

A further premise associated with this theoretical framework that engages with critiques made about abstract nature of discourses analysis, is Wetherell and Potter's (1992) assertion about the construction of discourse. They state that the discursive is not all that exists and suggest that realities exist outside of discourse. They draw on Stuart Hall's (1988) succinct point that, "events, relations, structures do have conditions and real effects outside the sphere of the discursive; but it is only within the discursive and

subject to its limits and modalities, do they or can they be constructed within meaning”(p.27). This argument reveals a connection that a combined analytical approach incorporating the discursive and the material enables, facilitating a grounded analysis that clearly shows the interrelationship between the discursive and the material within the construction of meaning.

My approach to the analysis of the participant’s accounts also related to my interpretation/reading of how ‘white’/Pākehā subjects as linguistic beings are constituted within contemporary hegemonic social relations in Aotearoa. Judith Butler's (1990) conception of subjectivity is useful because her analysis offers insights into how dominant group identities are unintentionally complicit in the perpetuation of hegemonic social norms through compelled reiteration. Applebaum, (2004) using Butler’s theoretical argument, contends that, “as linguistic beings, our existence is unavoidably dependent on a ‘language we never made’, that the subject is constructed ‘all the way down.’ There is no transcendental, prediscursive subject – no ‘doer behind the deed’” (p.60).

Applebaum (2004) adds that:

Evasions of complicity do not result simply from personal and individual short comings; instead they are grounded in powerful ideological structures that ensure that ‘nice’ ‘white’ people, those who have no prejudice or intention to harm are innocent of any responsibility in sustaining systems that constitute and marginalize “others” (p. 62).

An aim therefore of this research was not to analyse/evaluate the agency or otherwise of participants as subjects, but to examine the manifestations and dimensions of racialised discourses that they may deploy/inhabit. An additional aspect that relates to antiracist/social justice education was to ascertain whether there was consistency of these discourses, such as the dominance of a system of racialised subjects to clarify whether a discourse analysis that assumes theories of subjects as a linguistic beings, can reveal the complicity of ‘white’ racialisation within interlocking systems of social inequity. I wanted to find out what racialised discursive systems, discourses that “put us in our place even as they make us feel at home” (Butler, 1997, p.5).

Methodological Approach

As I prepared for and progressed through the study, a number of important methodological complexities emerged because I intended to investigate a primarily hegemonic construction, that of racialisation (Best, 2003; Hurtado and Stewart, 1997; Tappan, 2005). Each stage of the research process revealed its own particular methodological demands. The first stage involved the flexibility that I needed to adapt feminist principles to an inquiry that focused on potentially hegemonic constructions as feminist principles were commonly employed to examine the marginalised and under-represented (Allen, 1997; Best, 2003; De Vault, 1990, 1995, 1999; Frye, 1983; Hurtado and Stewart, 1997; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995, 1999; Tappan, 2005).

Second, the intricacies I navigated as I facilitated talk around Whiteness and my location within the terrain of Whiteness in a similar way to the participants, exposed my incapacity for recognising the significance of the silences as data (Best, 2003; DeVault 1990, 1995; Jackson II, 1999; Mazzei 2003; McDowell, 1992; McIntyre, 1997). The final methodological matter related to the permeable boundaries between my teaching and the research, including my efforts to manage/integrate the boundary blurring.

Feminist Methodologies

A primary methodological complexity of this research related to the flexibility needed to adapt important feminist principles, since the central focus of my research was possibly hegemonic constructions. Feminist methods had been developed to bring women, traditionally usually absent, to the centre of research as well as having women studying women to provide ‘accurate’ reflection of women’s lives (Bowles & Klein, 1983; Hurtado & Stewart 1997). I had accepted that feminist methodologies expose and address power dynamics in the research process particularly the presumed powerlessness and marginalization of women within patriarchal systems (Anderson, 2000; Dann, 1985; Jones, 1992; Lather, 1991; McIntyre & Lykes, 1998; Mies, 1983; Neilson, 1990; Oakley, 1981; Reinharz, 1992; Roberts, 1981; Twine, 1996). Elizabeth Spelman’s (1988) statement in the preface to her ground breaking work, addressed the limitations of this premise when she wrote, “Indeed, I have come to think even of the phrase ‘as a woman’ as the Trojan horse of feminist ethnocentrism” (p.x).

Spelman (1988) had articulated a convincing critique on what she termed ‘feminism and the ampersand’, the premise that constructed woman as the base on whom one could add difference, such as ‘black’, lesbian, working class etc. She showed how “additive analyses on identity and oppression could work against an understanding of the relations between gender and other elements of identity, between sexism and other forms of oppression” (p.115). This usually worked she claimed, to hide the assumed universal positioning of the descriptor ‘woman’ as ‘white’ and middle class.

Spelman’s (1988) metaphor of the Trojan horse was enlightening. I was attempting to investigate whether a racialisation process such as an invisible Whiteness of feminism’s ‘universal woman’- a Whiteness that a number of scholars researching in this area described as an absent presence, a norm, as unremarkable, ordinary, a reality and experience that refuses to be named (Dyer, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Wellman 1993, 1996). The notion of an absent presence highlighted the huge power and elusiveness that was inherent in the discursive elements that I was to learn were a fundamental aspect of racialised discourses (Nakayama and Krizek, 1995).

Engaging Participants

At the outset of this project, I faced two possible interconnected complexities related to both the focus group and the interviews. The first, related to whom I could invite to participate and following that, how I could facilitate racialised ‘talk’ that participants might not usually engage in, especially on a topic that would be avoided by those who deployed/inhabited in a *colour/power evasive* discourse (Frankenberg, 1993).

The Focus Group

I had decided to carry out a focus group discussion as a precursor to the individual interviews. I chose a focus group as an initial strategy because the technique seemed appropriate as a means to encourage women to talk about how their perception of ‘race’ and their racialisation featured in their lives. My intention in using a focus group was to

evaluate the sorts of questions that might prompt talk about ethnic/racial identification (Morgan 1993, 1997).

I chose a group of women with whom I had worked on the planning of an intercultural and interdenominational church service for a women's celebration in the early 1990s. These Pākehā women had already addressed who they were in the context of bicultural relations in the discussions that they already had. I anticipated that these women might have been better able to articulate their ideas/feelings when invited to do so for this project.

Morgan (1993) attributed a number of advantages to a focus group technique. The most significant for this study was that this type of interview technique is useful to explore research ideas used to prepare for specific issues in a large project. The technique could test ideas, questions and particular approaches to the interviewees with less time, effort and inconvenience for everyone concerned while still producing helpful information. Notes were taken during the focus group and were combined with tape recording. The preparatory stages involved planning a suitable approach to invite the women to participate, gaining University Ethics Committee approval (see Appendix I) and formulating a set of questions to discuss in the focus group meeting.

The Focus Group Method: I initially contacted six women from the planning group. I sent the women a letter inviting them to participate in the study, as well as explaining the topic and purpose of the research (see Appendix A). A week later, I phoned the six women to find out whether they were interested and to check for questions. One woman had shifted to Auckland and was not able to participate: The rest agreed to participate. The women were sent some guiding questions a week before the focus group in order to confirm the date, time, place and a consent form including with some further information about the use of pseudonyms in my report to protect their anonymity (Eisner, 1991) (see Appendices B, C and D). Morgan (1993) suggests that “this approach is useful when discussing a sensitive topic as it gives people a chance to think about what they may wish to say” (p.169).

The Focus Group Questions: The format of the questions for the focus group followed a pattern that moved the discussion from talk about cultural identity generally to responses to the differing labels available to the participants in the focus group discussion. Then we progressed to a discussion about difference among New Zealanders and the relationships between group participants and those with other ethnicities. There was a particular focus on the specific relationship with Māori and women's responses to the issues that this entailed. The final questions related to ways that these women's ideas had changed in the last five to ten years and what had prompted this change. The data from this focus group was invaluable and pivotal to the formation of the guiding questions for the individual interviews. As this group had participated in Treaty education, I was able to analyse the patterns and themes in their talk compared to those participants who had not participated in this education.

Individual Interviews

Interview participants were engaged using a common technique called "snowballing" (Davidson & Tolich, 1999; Ely, 1991; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992; Lopez & Parker, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Morgan, 1993, 1997). Carl Davidson and Martin Tolick (1999) explain that "snowball" sampling is a common means by which qualitative researchers generate a sample: "a small band of likely informants having been identified, these informants are relied on to generate contacts with other people who share the activity that the researcher is interested in exploring" (p.35). Apart from the antiracist educators, I wanted to interview women who had no connection to the Pākehā Treaty workers' community. I asked some acquaintances to suggest other possible participants. I gathered more potential participants as I discussed my topic and I was able to quickly make a list of possible participants.

Engaging Interviewees: Ruth Frankenberg (1993) wrote of her initial difficulties in obtaining participants for her research. As discussed in the literature review, a number of international researchers have identified that 'white' culture preserves and maintains its dominance in most Western societies through the silence that surrounds its dominance (Crenshaw, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Mazzei, 2003; Nakayama & Krizek, 1995; Roman, 1993, 1997; Sleeter, 1996). Frankenberg (1993) consequently modified

her questions in order to question women in ways that was close enough to her purpose but that did not foreclose speech. She asked:

I'm interested in whether you have had contact with people of racial or cultural group different from you, and whether you see yourself as belonging to an ethnic or cultural group (p.35).

This was an effective strategy although Frankenberg commented that this compromise was a retreat from her goal of being more open about the questions that were of concern to her.

My letter to the possible interviewees was supportive and encouraging (see Appendix E). My intention was communicate to the prospective participants that I was interested in exploring with them their experiences as 'white' women. I followed the letter with a phone call a week later. I had assumed like Frankenberg, that asking women to talk about being 'white' might evoke some response, as participants might be less likely to deny being 'white' than to acknowledge being implicated in racism. I also used an overtly feminist strategy of creating the space for women to talk about their lives. This was a genuine attempt to give these women an opportunity to talk about their 'ordinary' experiences, – experiences that were usually seen as not worth talking about let alone researching (Bowles & Klein, 1983; Furnow & Cook, 1991; Neilson, 1990; Reinhartz, 1992; Roberts, 1981).

I initially approached three acquaintances personally, two of whom knew about my research. I followed this up with a formal letter and a consent form. I rang people a week following to find out their response and to make an appointment for the interview. All three women agreed to participate and two gave names of other women who would be interested. This chain of events activated the process of 'snowballing'. All the 22 women I sent formal letters to agreed to participate. One interview did not record and the participant Helena offered to repeat the interview, which we did.

The Questions: The development of the individual interview questions took some time and I made some alterations as I progressed through the interviews (see Appendix F). In the focus group, I had focused on cultural identity and the labels that were available for participants to identify themselves. It was clear from the focus group that I

would need to ask questions that are more direct about Whiteness in the interviews. I anticipated that the interviewees might have similar difficulty in talking about being 'white' as the focus group participants had.

I began the interviews with questions about participants' first recollections of being 'white' and their perceptions of their family's understanding of being 'white'. However, productive Whiteness 'talk' appeared more commonly evident when participants had the experience/background of difference with which to compare their Whiteness. Consequently, I asked a number of questions about interviewees' experiences of and relationship with different people and the family dynamics around these relationships (Frankenberg, 1993). I initially believed that I had gathered little useful data in the interviews. However as I progressed through the analysis the richness of the data became evident (Best, 2003; Mazzei, 2003).

Facilitating Talk on Racialisation: implications for analysis

Even with some questions planned, the dilemma of how to encourage/recognize talk about Whiteness was complex. My engagement with Aida Hurtado and Abigail Stewart's (1997) problematisation of feminist methodology revealed my continuing engagement with the complexities of studying a hegemonic location in a critical way. A corollary to the developments in feminist methodologies and one that was critical to this study was the necessity seen to provide the space for the participants to speak for themselves. Consequently, many feminist researchers quoted interviewees extensively in their written analyses - using the women's own voices. A difficulty I could see was the question of the ethical legitimacy I would have to include and justify lengthy quotations of a possible racist nature. Hurtado and Stewart 1997 in their discussion about the appropriateness of feminist methodologies for researching privileged groups, have supported my query. Another problematic adjunct to this feminist initiative, was the focus on rich, detailed description of the context, as in ethnography, and furthermore to include the responses of participants and their reflections on researcher's claims (Franz & Stewart, 1994; Stacey, 1990).

These empowering initiatives were problematic for research with women who although discriminated against through the patriarchal lens were empowered within a racial hierarchy. These feminist methodological suggestions worked to reverse the power relations between researcher and the researched and in society generally. A focus of this research was to investigate whether the participants employed hegemonic racialised discourses. Stephanie Wildman and Adrienne Davis (1996) made an important point about the contradictory location of ‘white’ women that revealed the risks in applying an ethical stance to all women without examining the relationship of research participants to power. These researchers emphasize the importance of exposing the power of hegemonic racialisation. They state:

The experience of both privilege and subordination in different aspects of our lives causes the experiences to be blurred and the presence of privilege is further hidden from our vocabulary and consciousness. Everyone resides at the intersection of many categories. Language masks the privilege and makes the bases of subordination themselves appear linguistically neutral. The hierarchy of power implicit in terms such as ‘race’ and gender is banished from the language (p.318).

I had contracted with the participants to maintain confidentiality by using pseudonyms and generalising any easily identifiable demographic information about them. These ethics underpin my intention to draw on women’s experiences of their daily lives as a resource for analysing society. I base my assumption on the conviction that women’s lives are a ground for the construction and critique of theory and strategy. An additional but no less important epistemology inspiring this research was my wish to participate in an activist scholarship. My incentive was to question the relations of power that may be present in the discourses of Whiteness.

Hurtado and Stewart (1997) also challenged any tendency to reproduce blindly feminist methodological assumptions with a group “already empowered at least in respect of their location in the racial hierarchy” (p.304). In their opinion, unless rigorous critique and analysis accompanied racist views, there was doubt about the moral or ethical standing of this research methodology. As they succinctly added, “[F]ew feminist researchers have been interested in documenting sexist views in rich detail” (p.307). Hurtado & Stewart’s (1997) suggested that minimal documentation of that which is all-

too-familiar and oppressive be provided: “Whilst [the researcher and participants] hold[ing] ourselves and others to a very high standard of analytic depth when our work, carries such a high risk of causing suffering in those already the objects of daily racism” (p.308).

Hurtado and Stewart’s position though, did not address how to validate women by bringing into visibility their experience/voices/lives. These authors’ seemingly incongruent expectation demonstrated the complexity of how women experience their lives. Any comprehensive analysis needs to attend to the process of how the different systems of differentiation crosscut one another and affect our lives. This expectation also demonstrated the limitations and reductionism of Hurtado & Stewart’s (1997) methodological strategies. They restrict the possible responses and discursive practices that ‘white’ women utilised to the limiting dichotomy of overtly racist or not racist. There was no space given for the probable subtle nuances and contradictory positions that most subjects express in their talk (Frankenberg, 1993).

My contention in this research was that I needed to allow myself, as researcher, to be open, as Frankenberg suggested, to the ways that ‘white’ women have available, at different times and situations “the three discourses of essentialist racism, colour and power evasive racism and race/power cognizance” (p.188)(see page 23-27). All three of these discourses/repertoires might co-exist in the present in complex and uneven ways. Frankenberg found that the women she interviewed deployed an entire range of these discursive repertoires sometimes consciously and at other times rejecting them. As already commented, my analysis of the pilot study demonstrated that *colour/power evasive* discourses might be the dominant discourse that I might expect in the interviews. I anticipated that I might have encountered some but not an overwhelming number of overtly racist comments or stories.

‘Doing Race’

Through this process, it has become clear that feminist challenges to traditional assumed “objectivity” which entails the researcher addressing their position in relation

to their participants, was not straightforward. There could be a temptation to acknowledge one's subject position in this research, that I was a 'white woman' interviewing other 'white women' as an insider (Duneier, 1999; Fine, 1992; Reinhartz, 1992; Twine & Warren, 2000; Van Maanen, 1988, 1995). I might assume that once I had acknowledged my subjectivity, I could proceed as though I had dealt with the question of subjectivity. However, I could not assume that because I was **not** interviewing Māori women, I was not actively engaged in '**doing race**' throughout the research process (Best, 2003)

Amy Best, (2003) along with many recent feminist researchers, has highlighted how the identity of both the researcher and the researched are *actively* managed, negotiated and solidified in the field (Arendell, 1997; Bowles & Klein, 1983; DeVault, 1999; Fine, 1992; Long, 1999; Neilsen, 1990; Roberts, 1981; Rodriguez, 1998; Stacey, 1988; Wolf, 1996). Best asserted that racial identity also shaped the interpretative and theoretical claims after leaving the field as well. Prompted by Best's (2003) research, two questions guided my developing ideas as I contended with the messy work of analyzing empirical materials. Firstly, how did my researcher role in the shifting terrain of racialised discourses constrain, and shape the research process? Secondly, in what ways as a researcher, did I collude in and/or work against the symbolic practices of Whiteness in interaction with the participants (Best, 2003; Schulz *et al*, 1997; Field, 1991)? These questions emerged because I initially did not see and subsequently I had difficulty getting outside of the invisible terrain of Whiteness, the context for this thesis.

It became evident in the process of analysing the interviews that the interactional strategies of Whiteness that the participants and I deployed/inhabited were at times contradictory. Despite my understandings of the theoretical requirements of a *race cognizant* analysis, I was unprepared and lacking some of the necessary resources/skills to negotiate and manage my discursive racialisation, my Whiteness, because the racialisation process contributed the actual arrangement of our social interactions in the interviews (Best, 2003; DeVault, 1995; Frankenberg, 1993; Stoddart, 2002).

At times, in the interviews, I was conscious of, and felt some dilemma about some contradictory ethics embedded in this research. My dilemma concerns the ethical

accountability that I felt to address participants' prejudicial remarks or logic, the ethical imperative within the research process that I provide a 'safe talking space' for participants to interact spontaneously, and most importantly, a procedural requirement that I minimize the potential for participants to withhold their ideas and opinions (Corbin & Morse, 2003).

The consequence of this dilemma was that I chose when to address a remark or rationale, and when to let it pass without comment so as not to interrupt participants' narratives. As I listened to the recordings and read the transcripts of the interviews, the communication practices and discursive strategies that the participants and I engaged in were so subtle that these discourses were often indiscernible to me during the actual interviews. It was only in the course of the analysis process that these strategies and practices become visible and significant. I was also surprised at the spontaneity with which I obviously joined the participants' in these discourses.

Ghassan Hage (1998) makes a useful observation about his approach to the dilemma of maintaining a counter-hegemonic presence when he was researching racism and discrimination in Australia. He refers to Spinoza, stating, "Spinoza invites the intellectual not to deplore, not to laugh, not to detest, but to understand" (p.21). As my primary goal in this thesis was to develop some understanding of whether racialised discourses were available to Pākehā middleclass women in A/NZ, my main concern was to attempt to capture every opportunity that I was aware of, to facilitate participants' talk about their interpretation of what constitutes Whiteness.

Another powerful communication practice that participants and I negotiated was related to discourses of class that intersected and, were sometimes, conflated with racialised discourses. These confluences were particularly evident as we participated in discourses of 'bourgeois decorum' and the implicit ideals of 'white' 'middleclass-ness,' which influenced my position as researcher. This tendency to 'maintain the party line' was evident in the research relationship between the participants and me, as 'white' middleclass women and in the process of analysis; I became aware of how I was often unconsciously participating within this discourse (Moon, 1999).

‘Doing Middle Class’

The intersection of socioeconomic class relations with racialisation was significant in some aspects of participants’ accounts, in particular discourses of bourgeois decorum, an element of ‘white’ middleclass gentility, which is discussed in detail in chapter six. Generally, all participants described their class identity in response to a question about their class identification. Significantly, participants were able to identify if they believed that they had changed class location between childhood and adulthood and this was consistently attributed as a progression from working class to middleclass identification. There were some accounts by a small number of participants that could be read as references to their “class location” in terms of their recognition of their comparative “wealth” in relation other children’s presumed poverty. These articulations and the classed interpretation of participants’ accounts are addressed in relevant excerpts in recognition of the significance of socio-economic class relations. Time and space considerations prohibit any detailed analysis of some elements of class relations in participants racialised discourses in this research but an investigation of these elements could be followed up in future work.

The Researcher’s Perspective: dilemmas

My own personal ties to the dominant system presented a difficulty in being able to create enough distance for me to see its dynamics

Stoddart (2002 p.2).

The methodological implications for a researcher who was an insider interviewing some members of a dominant group, have had a significant influence on the process of my research. Given that, this study’s focus is discursive ‘white’ racialisation, possible expressions of negative/racist views on ‘non whites’, that I as a ‘white’ feminist researcher might evoke, could be problematic. Nancy Caraway (1993), who addresses the limitations of a similar location, has suggested a supportive methodology. She advocates that researchers in this position actively seek out literature from different standpoints. Caraway employs a strategy of combining her stated position as a ‘white’ feminist with literature from ‘black’ feminists or ‘feminists of colour’. This ‘crossover politics’ as she names it, means that ‘whites’ studying ‘whites’ carry out more

defensible research, by reading, taking seriously, citing and quoting the scholarship of ‘non whites’ about ‘race’ and racism. I have underpinned analyses in this study on the insights of indigenous, ‘black’ and feminist theorists as they relate to participants’ discourses in order to hold the analytical process accountable to their critiques.

Covering the Silences

What became apparent to me in the process of analysing the data was the powerful role that I played as researcher, in doing Whiteness in my interactions with the participants Crenshaw (1997). Some of these strategies - for example, not foreclosing speech - as already pointed out, were quite deliberate and I deployed them throughout the interviews. I frequently made spontaneous decisions whether to insist on or to resist pursuing a particular line of discussion. At times, I also unconsciously filled the gaps to cover the potential embarrassment that the participants may experience at ‘not having anything to say’. I was mindful of how prolonged silence in most Western contexts can ‘force’ speech; a strategy that I have used for many years as an educator (Scott, 1993). However, I did not want the participants to feel consciously coerced into speech. In retrospect, I was dissatisfied with the tendency that I had to intervene and ‘assist’ participants using a number of prompts, which reveals the complexities of the positioning of an insider researcher (Ellis, 2000).

Teaching and Research: where are the boundaries?

Another significant influence on the research process was my teaching experience and the permeable boundaries that I struggled with between my teaching and my study. A memo that I wrote that pertained to this dilemma stated:

Often students interactions and articulations really push buttons for me in relation to my research, presenting me with important insights but in the process also revealing an ongoing problem that I hadn’t initially anticipated. Daily I am struggling with where my research begins and where it ends
Gibson (12.7.1999).

My experience of teaching cultural safety¹⁰ to nursing and midwifery students during the process of researching this thesis contributed much to the study. Interactions in the classroom had constantly challenged, questioned, and influenced my developing ideas and analysis. However, this situation and the context of my research forced me to ask some important questions about the content and process of this research. In particular, I was unsure about the boundaries of the field; what I considered data; and how to incorporate influences that were not ‘officially’ data.

The methodological issues that I highlight, emerged from the way that my teaching role (full time for five years) interrupted/infected/corrupted my research. The links and interconnections between the data in the interviews and the interactions of the students all merged in my thinking and development of ideas. Therefore, although I had the official data from the transcribed interviews and my theoretical memos, both contexts inhabited one another, each acting as a backdrop for the other. No amount of detailed notes was able to prevent a continual bleeding of one context into the other (McDowell, 1992). This integration of my ‘official’ data analysis and my insights from teaching has resulted in my concerns about boundaries in research.

The quandary of what constituted data in this research brought with it an associated question about where the boundaries of the field were. As I became aware of the strong links developing between my research and teaching, I found that I was aware of these racialised discursive strategies in any context. A relevant comment overheard at the shopping Mall would automatically be stored away or might prompt some insight or question that I would write down on the nearest bank slip or paper serviette (Ely, 1991). This situation heightened my interest and consciousness of the interactions that

¹⁰ Cultural safety is a programme of nursing and midwifery education required by the New Zealand Council of Nurses and Midwives for all diploma and degree qualifications and for Nurse and Midwifery registration. The programme that I taught generally consists of three courses over a three-year degree that used Te Tiriti O Waitangi, the Treaty of Waitangi as a base, and addresses the power of the health professional in relation to the people that they care for. Initial and important processes of this education are strategies to expand the students’ awareness of themselves as cultural/cultured beings. Culture in this sense, includes how systems of differentiation that affects our understanding of ourselves and others and our view of the world. These include differentiation by gender, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion and/or belief/spirituality. This education is a form of antiracist education because it encourages and often challenges students to develop awareness of their prejudices as well as the systemic injustice and discrimination in NZ institutions and society generally.

surrounded me outside of the ‘official field’. I resided in the terrain (field) of Whiteness most of my waking hours and I often felt like I was living my thesis and at the same time I was viewing it with the consciousness of an insider attempting an outsider perspective (Ellis, 2000).

The Silences

When I approached this study, I was initially concerned about the strategies that I would use to facilitate ‘talk’ about racialisation with Pākehā women in Aotearoa especially when the social politics of this time and place usually prohibited such explicit ‘race’ talk. As discussed in the literature review, asserting Whiteness has remained taboo in Aotearoa. Pākehā did not often claim racialisation as a social identity, largely because identification as ‘white’ was associated with racism (Bedggood, 1997; Bell, 1996; Dupius *et al.*, 1999; Mead, 1982; Nairn & McCreanor, 1990, 1991; Pearson and Sissons, 1998; Tilbury, 1998; Wetherell & Potter 1992). In the Aotearoa context, Pākehā more commonly used the term ‘white’ as an empty biological descriptor for people with ‘white’/pale/fair skin or British European ancestry.

I used specific strategies suggested by Frankenberg (1993) to invite women to participate in this project including my efforts to encourage their ‘talk’ about ‘white’ racialisation. In the process, I hoped to limit as much as possible, the foreclosing of such ‘talk’ in the interviews. The strategies initially appeared to me to have limited success for two main reasons. First, although I was aware of the differing processes that constitute the development of social identities in relation to power dynamics, I initially paid less attention to the significance of these differences in my analysis. The distinction between unconsciousness of hegemonic positionings, and consciously negotiated, claimed and asserted discriminated/‘minority’ social identities, had initially eluded me. As Moon (1999) states, “Whiteness must come to be understood as normative, general, and pervasive, rather than positioned and particular” (p.179). My misunderstanding of the significant difference between the two socialisation processes prompted my disappointment and concern about the paucity of explicitly racialised ‘talk’, which I had anticipated among that participants and me.

Second, I had studied abundant feminist and antiracist literature, in which the authors illustrated the ease with which subordinated identities/subjects can articulate the specificities of their identity. This perspective had predisposed me to assume that if I got the questions ‘right’, I would get ‘the talk’ (Awatere, 1984; Hill Collins, 1990; hooks, 1984; Irwin, 1992; Lorde, 1984; Mohanty, 1988; Moraga & Anzaldúa, 1983). I include an example of my thinking at the time in a memo that I wrote after the focus group discussion:

The women in this study had less to say than I had expected and some questions I would phrase differently. But the most obvious gap that I think contributed to the silences and the difficulties that the women seemed to have in doing this talk about cultural identity and particularly Whiteness was my silence. I could have talked more about the literature which would probably given them more markers on which to do their talk.

Gibson, (12/8/97)

Although as researcher, I had worked assiduously to delimit any barriers to anticipated Whiteness ‘talk’ my underlying assumption was that there would be such explicit ‘talk,’ although I had no conception of what form it would take. Given the misunderstandings that I had, I was beginning to wonder what I was missing.¹¹ I had 60 hours of women’s speech interspersed with prolonged silences but little explicit Whiteness ‘talk’. I was well aware of the challenge that Margaret Le Compte *et al.*, (1993) assert that face qualitative researchers. They warn that, “qualitative researchers must balance between two problems: too much data and too little data. If the data are too thin the researcher has insufficient evidence to substantiate results” (p.54).

¹¹ I had been struggling with the assumption of my responsibility to prepare an environment that would facilitate some explicit talk of Whiteness yet at the same time asking myself, ‘How can participants talk about a positioning (Whiteness) that is not consciously experienced?’ The significance of the inappropriateness of utilising a feminist identity politics epistemology for exploring hegemonic locations was crucial for this thesis. Also see Mohanty, (1988) Roman, (1993) Hurtado & Stewart (1997) for further analyses of this dilemma.

'Discovering' and Uncovering the Silences

Silences symbolize hierarchical structures as surely as does speech.
Scott (1993 p.15)

As I was toiling with this challenge of little explicit Whiteness 'talk', Carrie Crenshaw's (1997) ideas provided a breakthrough. Crenshaw maintains that, "scholars must locate **interactions** that implicate **unspoken issues of race**, discursive spaces where the power of Whiteness is invoked but its explicit terminology is not" (p.2). Crenshaw's insights pressed me to look for the "discursive spaces" where the participants and I were 'doing race' using discourses that veiled the explicit repertoires of Whiteness.¹² What also became significant to me following Crenshaw's insight was whether our **silences** were also a critical aspect of our co-construction of 'doing race' in the interviews and the focus group.

My realisation of the importance of the many silences in the interviews and the focus group came from the unease that I continued to feel about the problematic of thin data, or the matter of a lack of 'talk' about racialisation, about Whiteness. This latter development pushed me to re-evaluate my assumptions concerning the traditional constitution of data; in fact, Gayatri Spivak (1976) has identified that "so-called secondary material [such as silence] is not a simple adjunct to the so called primary text. The latter inserts itself within the interstices of the former, filling holes that are already there" (p.xxiv). Lisa Mazzei concurs that silence needs to be elevated beyond an adjunct to primary text and suggests, "Silence inserts itself within the interstices, the gaps in conversation" (p.361). A number of theorists and researchers have written about the importance of the dialectic of speech and silence. Michele Foucault (1980) has significant points to make about silence He states:

Silence itself - the things one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, the discretion that is required between different speakers - is less the absolute limit of discourse, the other side from which it is separated by a strict boundary, than an element that functions alongside the things said, with them and in relation to them within overall strategies. There is no binary division to be made between what one says and what one does not say; we must try to determine the

¹² I discuss the most salient of these in Chapter 6.

different ways of not saying things, how those who can and those who cannot speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorised, or which form of discretion is required in either case. There is not one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses (p.27).

Henri Giroux (1988) also confirms Spivak and Foucault's rationale in his discussion of conceptual structures such as silence, which he names "problematics". He states, "Problematics refer not only to what is included in a world view, but also to what is left out and silenced. Giroux contends that, "That which is not said is as important as that which is said" (p.4).

Robert Scott (1993) supports these theorists' claim about silence in his exploration of the function of silence in communication, and explains that "silence, as a concept, can be an absence only if we expect sound and therefore silence is relative to our expectations" (p.12). Scott (1993) goes on to differentiate between instrumental silence and symbolic silence. The former, he explains has three basic forms in communication, such as attentive silences where one remains silent when another speaks; terminal silences, which mark the beginnings and ends of 'something said'; and a third form that mark junctures within longer utterances such as pauses that are often barely perceptible but act as punctuation. The latter, symbolic silence has significance for my study because as the five theorists (just quoted) contend, silences have symbolic rhetorical roles that are also available for interpretation.

Mazzei (2003) agrees with Scott's assertion that these symbolic silences are meaningful and interpretable. Her research prompted me to investigate outside the confines of the spoken word as primary text. She supports the argument that qualitative researchers can "[consider] empirical materials such as silence that transgress traditional boundaries" (p.357). Mazzei goes on to maintain that researchers engage the silences. So I embarked on a process of analyzing what had been absent in my initial analysis of discussions with research participants - namely, our silences. Mazzei's (2003) observation that "in conversations in which qualitative researchers engage, silences often occur, particularly when researchers pursue issues of race and culture in

education”, also affirmed my decision to listen to and to attempt to interpret ‘the voices of silence’ as well as speech (p.355).

What was noteworthy in my study was that Mazzei’s different forms were sometimes sequential to and often simultaneous with speech. I found that just reading the transcripts was not sufficient and I listened to the recordings again to ascertain the length of the silences and the contexts in which they arose. These silences took a number of forms and there were common patterns among the participants relating to particular questions. Of the five forms of silence that Mazzei (2003) identifies, polite silence and intentional silence appeared more frequently in the observable sequential silences of which both the participants and I were more conscious. The privileged and veiled silences were initially more difficult to ‘hear’.

An important insight of this analysis for me was that as the participants and I attempted to talk about difference we were also talking about ourselves even when speaking about our racialised “other”. Best (2003) suggests: “...that any attempt to articulate difference is part of an identity claims-making process” and she reiterates, that, of course, includes the researcher (p.907). This realization identified some of the tensions that I felt as researcher.

In my efforts to determine how racialisation could/might shape and dictate the limits of discourse, I asked participants a number of questions that I hoped might facilitate this process (Maher & Tetreault, 1998). I have already discussed how difficult this process has been, principally because along with the participants, I was interpellated (called into being) within the discourse and our interactions were the primary mechanisms through which we deployed our Whiteness (Applebaum, 2004). A critical factor that many theorists and educators highlight about the concept of Whiteness is its hegemonic presence and authority over the interrogations that the discourse allows. These theorists strongly advocate the importance of asking the “right” questions (Bonnett, 1993, 2000c; Crenshaw, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Gillespie, 2003; Stoddart, 2002).

It seemed that part of asking the “right” questions meant actually asking “the unthinkable” questions; questions that the discourse determines are unconscionable, not

permissible. Elizabeth Ellsworth (1997) emphasizes that: “Whiteness is a dynamic of cultural production and interrelation. We need to break the rules of relating to each other as white and understanding each other as white” (p.260). Some of the questions that I invited participants to consider appeared to break the rules or seemed outside participants’ available language/discourse. I have argued in the thesis that participants’ responses, in particular, their silences in response to some questions were part/evidence of rule breaking and they revealed discourses of Whiteness. It is important to remark here that for much of the data-collecting process, I was unclear about the usefulness of the silences for analysis as I was anticipating that I might hear specific articulations about participants’ racialised identity claims. Mazzei advocates strategies for listening to these phenomena differently, which I discuss in detail in chapter seven. When I eventually “discovered”, engaged with and problematised the hidden silences, this process revealed an exponential range of possibilities for analysis. Recognising the importance of the silences opened up my research into exploring and analysing fascinating and significant ways in which the discourse might enable the powerful maintenance and reproduction of Whiteness.

Conclusion

The power dimensions of standpoints and perspectives need to be kept in focus in any research and particularly when exploring locations that are possibly hegemonic. I have discussed some crucial theoretical assumptions that underpin the analytical approach to this research as well as some methodological complexities in pursuing such an approach in contemporary Aotearoa. The process of gaining participants for the study and enabling the participants talk about their racialisation and Whiteness revealed some important ethical issues. As I have already discussed, constructive methods when used with subgroups/oppressed peoples may have negative implications when used with dominant groups such as Pākehā women in Aotearoa. Hurtado and Stewart (1997) state that in progressive scholarship where the goal is to dismantle oppression, social location is crucial in determining research methods. This is a cornerstone of feminist epistemologies.

When investigating discursive racialised formulations in particular potentially hegemonic concepts, the skill is to find ways to retain a critical counter hegemonic presence in research. I discussed the affinity of my teaching role with the research and the difficulty I had at times to separate the two exploring the methodological problems around this situation. The previous discussion also highlighted that an inquiry into the hegemonic discourses demanded an ongoing reflective focus that integrated into the analyses my interaction with the participants as all of us were ‘doing race’. The significance of the inhabited silences became a major theme of the overall thesis (Mazzei, 2003).

One of the aims of this analysis was for it to be a counter-hegemonic activity that investigated the discourses of some Pākehā women as well as discussing educational strategies. Any researcher, who attempts to interpret the ideology and discourses of racialisation, faces the risk of essentialising the concept. Consequently, an important premise of this approach is the contention that ideology, structural location and discursive practice construct racialisation, as there is no “true essence” to the concept and there are only historical, localized contingent constructions (Giroux, 1997c). This research sought an understanding of the ways this discursive construction becomes visible and invisible, eluding capture and yet potentially exerting profound influence in the everyday lives of some Pākehā women in Aotearoa.

PART II

Chapter Four

Learning to be Normal/Ordinary/‘White’

[W]hites assert racial superiority by claiming that they have no culture because to be cultureless implies one is either the ‘norm’ (the standard by which others are judged) or ‘rational’ (developmentally advanced).

Perry (2001 p.56)

Introduction

The abundant international research and academic literature emerging in recent decades, legitimately argue that ‘white’ racialisation is now acknowledged/recognised as an element of contemporary socialisation (Anderson, M. 2003; Brody, 1996; Crenshaw, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Hage, 1998; Hyde, 1995; Mahony, 1995; Mills, 2003; Moon, 1999; Perry, 2001; Proweller, 1999; Ware, 1996; Wolff, 2005). These authors agree that **all** people live racialised lives, and in discursive analytic terms, all subjects are constituted through racialised discourses whether or not individuals are aware of their/our racialisation. This racialisation process became evident through analysis of the discourses that permeated research participants’ narratives. In one sense, there were as many variations in how participants expressed and described their racialisation, as there were participants.

However, despite this multiplicity there were discursive threads/themes that were distinctive among their narratives. Some important threads related to the assimilative discursive positions in which participants were located in relation to national identity revealing some exclusions and inclusions that were involved in this process (Taylor & Wetherell, 1995). Other threads related to the experiences that participants articulated about their lack of awareness of employing racialised discourses such as being ‘white’ as well as in their recollections of their awareness of people that participants’ described as ethnically different. Participants also premised much of their talk on a *colour/power evasive* discourse, which Frankenberg (1993) identified and was discussed in the literature review (pp. 23-25).

This chapter examines three significant themes/discourses that ran through participants' accounts, which revealed processes through which they 'became white'. The first section investigates an important ideological premise that underpinned participants' racialised expressions, a premise that symbolised the metaphor of Whiteness as imagined community, as national space/territory (Anderson, 1991; Bell, A. 1996; Bell, C. 1996; Hage, 1998; Taylor and Wetherell, 1995). This expression of Whiteness incorporated the varied positions that participants claimed/rejected about their national/ethnic identification. The second section discusses the implications that participants' investment in assimilative nationalism had for their recognition of the significance of difference in Aotearoa. This section studies the varied discourses around the term Pākehā as a form of identification that other New Zealand researchers have found many Pākehā/'white' New Zealanders reject (Dupius *et al.*, 1999; Hughes *et al.*, 1996; Pearson, 1995; Pearson & Sissons, 1997). The final section addresses how participants' racialisation as a discourse of an absent presence, was 'learned' through processes of naturalisation (Perry, 2001). This discourse also contained a common 'white' perception that constructs of culture, 'race', racism and ethnicity are 'black' or minority concerns.

An important aspect of this study has been to ascertain the means through which participants became 'white', how they learned discourses of Whiteness and/or tacitly learned to occupy and accept their location in the terrain of Whiteness. For most participants their racialisation/Whiteness appeared to be passive or an absent presence for most of their lives (Hardiman, 1982; Hardiman & Cross, 1994). Harriet Bradley (1996) in her analysis of the changing patterns of inequality asserts that, "There is no necessary relationship between social location and identification, only in certain circumstances will passive identities become active and politicized" (p.212). Accordingly, whether and in what circumstances participants' passive racialised identifications became active and politicised were significant for this study because I wished to investigate any links between 'white' hegemonic social locations and the resulting latent 'white' identifications that are part of social relations of domination and subordination. I also want to determine how these potential passive 'white' identifications might become activated for contemporary Pākehā women.

An Assimilative National Identity: fantasies of ('white') nationalism

The discourse of claiming national space was apparent in participants' accounts especially when I asked them questions about their identity and ethnicity. These specific questions brought to the surface intense discussion and sometimes-emphatic declarations of an assimilative ('white') nationalism. Perry (2001) explains that a feature of Whiteness as a cultureless norm is "never having to say you're ethnic" as "other" people inhabit the domain of ethnicity. When I asked Susan, who grew up and lived in the South Island what her ethnicity was, she replied clearly and vigorously, "I'm a New Zealander". This reply was typical of many participants' spontaneous responses to my queries about their preferences for identifying themselves. A number of researchers have documented a particular tendency that Pākehā commonly insist on and that the participants revealed. The women claimed an assimilative national identity/ethnicity (Bedggood, 1997; Bell, 1996; Dupius *et al.*, 1999; Mead, 1982; Nairn & McCreanor, 1990, 1991; O'Connor, 1996; Pearson and Sissons, 1998; Tilbury, 1998; Wetherell & Potter 1992).

Avril Bell (1996) identifies this discursive form as an assimilative nationalism which she explains from a historical perspective. Bell discussed the political struggles that Pākehā waged in Aotearoa around the varied claims of cultural identity. She proposed that as members of a dominant culture, Pākehā New Zealanders, "[we] see our culture as the national culture and because we have not had to struggle to assert our cultural identity we have not developed a strong sense of ethnic consciousness" (p.149). Susan was in her sixties when interviewed and had lived all her life in the South Island. Susan's assertion that her ethnicity was "New Zealander," was an example of this identity claiming and an expression of assimilative nationalism introduced on pages 23-25.

Bell (1996) expands her argument with an assertion that the creation of nationhood has involved systematic attempts to produce a fictive neutral unified ethnicity of New Zealander, which the discourse forges through assimilation and the destruction of difference. Susan, quoted above, who had stated that her ethnicity was "New Zealander", continued with the following words, "we're all the same, we're all New Zealanders". This participant articulated a clear conflation of nationality and ethnicity

and the rejection of acknowledging any ethnic difference in Aotearoa in that context. Within this discourse is a façade of “harmony in race relations” which Bell also stresses contains a prohibition that responds negatively to suggestions that unity does not exist among New Zealanders. A number of participants, who by their tone and demeanour revealed that their sense of harmony and “oneness” was something that they believed strongly, articulated a negative response to acknowledging racialised difference.

Diane, who was in her forties and had grown up in a South Island rural community, articulated her belief this way:

Diane: I ideally would like to be a New Zealander and in New Zealand, I would like it to be all encompassing of whatever ethnic group you are from; you are a New Zealander that’s my ideal.

Diane declared her ideal, which subsumes all into a nationalist assimilative image. Hage (1998) found in his research that ‘white’ Australians also maintained what he termed fantasies of ‘white’ national supremacy. He added that this location was significant whether the ‘white’ Australians he interviewed were ‘white’ liberals or ‘white’ nationalists. Both ideological positions, Hage claims, were commensurate within liberal ideals of tolerance. Hage (1998) contends that “the importance of highlighting the nationalist dimension of such “racism” is that it allows us [researchers/scholars] to demystify the exaggerated way in which the dominant culture tries to distance itself from it [racism] by obscuring the fundamental features that both share with a moralistic divide between ‘evil’ racism and ‘good’ tolerance” (p.28). (Addition for clarity in square brackets).

Marilyn, who was born in the South Island, moved with her family to the North Island during her primary schooling and returned to the South Island in her late teens. Marilyn had little direct contact with ‘different’ people despite her acknowledgement of their presence in the general social environment in which she lived. Marilyn described herself using a different term than other participants and she gave specific explanations why she opted for an all-encompassing national label.

Helen: How do you identify ethnically?

Marilyn: Kiwi

Helen: Right can you expand on why you choose Kiwi?

Marilyn: Um, because I think it takes into account all the different - all the differences. It can do all the differences together in New Zealand in terms of different races, different cultures and instead of really separating yourself. [Like if] I would say New Zealand European or New Zealand Māori or whatever. If you said you were Kiwi, nobody could tell.

Helen: So are you talking about national identity?

Marilyn: Yeah.

Helen: Yes, so how do you identify like ethnically?

Marilyn: Ethnically?

Helen: What is your ethnicity what would you say your ethnicity was or what ethnic group do you belong to

Marilyn: Well, European.

Helen: Right but you call yourself a Kiwi do you?

Marilyn: Yep, um yeah.

Marilyn framed her account in inclusive terms. She clearly had an investment in maintaining a perspective of the sameness, instead of the separation of different New Zealanders. Using the term Kiwi as bringing people together Marilyn appeared to minimise the significance of difference - a possibility of difference that Marilyn was acknowledging simultaneously and implicitly. When I asked Marilyn to differentiate between a national identity and ethnicity, she appeared initially perplexed and I rephrased my question to which Marilyn responded that she was European. As Bell (1996) has cogently argued, Pākehā New Zealanders are rarely called on to identify their ethnicity as they occupy a dominant location, on which the social norms of society are based. Marilyn's account revealed the power of assimilative nationalism. This conception emphasizes the importance of sameness or similarity, equating sameness with unity and the acknowledgement of difference with divisiveness (see pp. 23-27).

The claiming of a national ethnicity (assimilative nationalism) was a prevalent discourse among the participants. Although Jacinta, a 40 year old articulated her view slightly differently. She was discussing her family's understanding of being 'white' and how they communicated this to her. She explained:

Jacinta: Understanding, I don't think we really even understood as children that we were white, it never crossed our minds we just were, we existed and that was it! I don't think that we felt that we [were] different than anyone else. We had a happy relaxed accepting sort of childhood.

Moon (1999) proposed a further theorisation of this discourse of Whiteness that includes a spatial metaphor. She discussed how people get to be ‘white’ and identified two primary ideological discourses through which ‘white’ people maintain and reproduce Whiteness. She maintained that Whiteness is an enculturation process that depends on a denial and embracement of Whiteness, in which denial is manifest in the evasion of Whiteness. She suggested that ‘white’ people learn to experience disconnection with issues of racialisation/racism/‘white’ supremacy and do not see that issues of racism, racial formation or the power relations surrounding ‘race’ relate to their/our lives. An example of this was evident in Jacinta’s statement that, “I don’t think we really even understood as children that we were white, it never crossed our minds”. Moon suggested that within this discourse the world is configured as a ‘white’ space wherein Whiteness is perceived as a normative and universal condition. Again, Jacinta’s words revealed this discourse, “We just were, we existed and that was it! I don’t think that we felt that we [were] different than anyone else”. Moon explained that this view did not necessarily include a consciously held belief in ‘white’ superiority; it was a tunnel vision, which did not see “other’s” experiences as significant. Moon described how this enculturation progresses:

The ‘trick’ of white (sic) enculturation is racially to produce and reproduce white people through the creation of the allusion of a white world, while simultaneously draining that Whiteness of any elements that would mark it as a specific structural and cultural location. Whiteness then, must come to be understood as normative, general, and pervasive, rather than positioned and particular (p.179).

Another theorist Cheryl Hyde (1995) in a similar way to Perry (2001) in the introductory quote to this chapter, had expanded on the seeming ‘naturalness’ and invisibility of Whiteness. She focused on the ideological power of individualism, which strengthens the hegemony of ‘white’ people, because it maintained ‘whites’ as individuals but transforms ‘race’ into a unifying category to which “others” belong. Jacinta, following on from her previous quote, confirmed this perspective in an indirect way when she stated:

Jacinta: I think we [Pākehā] have to try and understand and accept cultures and accept that they’re different but not accentuate the differences to such

an extent that it becomes a barrier. I think in some ways that has happened. I think in a way a person has to – people have to take individual – yeah individual responsibility for themselves.

Although acknowledging cultural/collective difference on the one hand, Jacinta was claiming that all New Zealanders have ‘individually responsibility’. Jacinta’s account employed an individualistic frame of reference and her pronoun use implied a separation between ‘we’ (Pākehā as a group of individuals) and ‘cultures/they’ (different collective cultures/‘races’). Jacinta’s discourse incorporated the acknowledgement of a ‘collective cultural difference’ but did not extend to a recognition of the profound nature of the differences of these cultures and how culturally specific individualism was. This individualistic view, Hyde maintained, also extended the discourse that suggests that only “others” have culture.¹³

Marilyn struggled in one part of her interview to describe the impact that her family’s understandings of being ‘white’ had had on her. After a long silence, she articulated it this way:

Marilyn: Um I still find this one very hard to grasp, thinking in terms of being white. I just think in terms of normal because that’s - that’s what came through!

Hyde argued that this understanding signified at a deep level that being ‘white’ was a normative cultural experience, precisely because it was invisible. Marilyn was highlighting what was normal for her and the family influence on her definition. She clearly acknowledged her difficulty in conceptualising being ‘white’ even though she had spoken specifically about racialised “others”, which reveals the real power of aspects of a Whiteness discourse.¹⁴

A number of participants articulated that they were unaware of the significance/visibility of ‘different’ people until their adulthood. The presumption of

¹³ This standpoint often leads to another lament that I have often heard in the classroom from many pākehā students- that they don’t have a culture.

¹⁴ Personal communication, Dr. Jessica Johnston. 30.10.04.

centrality and entitlement to monitor and put limitations around the national space was a common stance that participants implicitly revealed in their talk. They demonstrated that they had learned to inhabit passively locations well before they were called upon to articulate them. The contemporary developments in sociocultural relations in Aotearoa appeared to activate their discussion of those they learned were ‘different’. Hage (1998) asserts:

Ethnics are people that one can make decisions about, objects to be governed... This is done ritualistically by making the voice of the ‘ethnic other’ passive, by both those who want to eradicate them and those who defend their right to be part of the national space under certain conditions that they feel entitled to set (p.17).

The Whiteness discourses of a cultureless norm combined with an assimilative nationalism, which participants learned to inhabit/occupy, were often nostalgic locations. Participants frequently talked as adults, about the imposition of cultural differences on their seemingly normal and ordinary lives and their awareness from this location of nostalgia (Bell, C. 1996). Frequently participants would blame Māori for a disruption to New Zealand’s “exemplary race relations” by causing dissension and “wanting too much”. For example Susan, described her family’s understanding of being ‘white’ and highlighted how she had changed in her views recently. The following interaction between us revealed the discourses that were available to her to explain her view. She expressed it this way:

Susan: I feel whereas, when I thought I perceived myself equal to everybody. Um I now, um, yeah, I suppose now I am more racist than I was because I feel that, um I don’t know, my impressions of life is that if you want something in life, you have got to go and get it and work hard for it, um it doesn’t get handed to you on a plate, made easy for you basically.

I was not sure what Susan meant and asked for more clarification. Susan continued:

Susan: Um I believe that we are making a life easier for the Māori people to get away with a lot more and I believe that whereas once in my time New Zealanders weren’t racist they are more racist than they have been previously.

Again, I questioned her further and Susan reasoned it this way:

Susan: Because I think New Zealanders are considered all equal - there is a lot of advantages in being Māori nowadays.

Susan was the only participant in my research who openly declared that she was ‘racist’ as she saw it, and this was in response to a system that encouraged difference and “inequality” and, as she perceived, permitting a racialised group to take knowing advantage of this change from a system of equality to one of preferential treatment for Māori. Susan appeared to take a stand, in the only discourse that she had available to her, the *colour/power evasive* discourse that deems a person racist if they acknowledge difference/inequality. This discursive formulation is discussed in detail on pages 23-25 which is relevant in the context of the discourses in Susan’s excerpt because of its constraining elements. The discourses that Susan and many other participants inhabited were often complex and sometimes contradictory. Although Susan described herself as racist, when acknowledging what she had learned about the Treaty as an adult, she acknowledged that Māori claims against the Crown were justified. To add to the complexity of Susan’s position, she later maintained that the problem of resolving Māori land claims would only be of enough interest for her to find out more information if she believed she was personally affected by Māori land claims (Pearson & Sissons, 1997; Dupuis *et al.*, 1999; Wetherell & Potter, 1992).

Some participants were able to comment on and evaluate the all-encompassing assimilative national identity that many participants deployed/inhabited. The five participants who had taken part in the focus group had also participated in some form of Treaty education and critically discussed this assimilative location. Patricia gave an incisive account of her views.

Patricia: I think that it’s important we recognise our differences and celebrate them. However, having said that, I know there are times when I’m uncomfortable with all those labels simply because they [are] all indicative of the coloniser, of the oppressor. But the one I’m most uncomfortable with at the moment is ‘New Zealander’ because I am conscious of just how much hard work it is to keep on earning the right to be a New Zealander. I would prefer to describe myself as living in New Zealand or coming from New Zealand, not claiming to be a New Zealander.

Yet because of all that's going on in our society and I'm not sure yet that I and others like me have, continue to earn the right to be New Zealanders.

The focus group participants' understanding and critique of an assimilative national identity was clear. Mary, who had worked in a church organization addressing the Treaty, summed up these participants' critique with the following comments:

Mary: I think you're right, Patricia, that when we try to make all these coffee-coloured people like the song says, we're really, I think, saying well, as long as you're all like me it doesn't matter what colour we are. We've all got to be like me and I think that's what we mean when we say things like 'well, we're all New Zealanders aren't we?' that, you know, the right way to be a New Zealander is like me.

The focus group participants were in agreement about the power that constitutes this assimilative nationalist discourse although they were often caught within the discourse themselves particularly when they were discussing other labels such as 'white' and Whiteness and the processes through which they became aware or remained unaware of their Whiteness. Frankenberg (1993) found that her participants had discourses available to them emerging from the past that co-existed in the present in complex and uneven ways in her research as well. She explained that the women she interviewed, experienced, navigated, adopted and at times refused, sometimes more consciously than others, the range of discursive repertoires from essentialist understandings of 'race' through to *race cognizant* insights. Similarly, to Frankenberg's interviewees, the range of discourses that the participants in my study had available to them were employed at times more consciously than others, and for many participants the assimilative discourses were often tinged with a sense of nostalgia for times past when they thought New Zealanders were all equal.

Pākehā

Discussions of identity with participants revealed the intensity that many felt about their investment in a unified assimilative nationalist identity. Inevitably, the term Pākehā came up in discussion. This Māori word was used to name the 'first settlers' who came to Aotearoa, who were usually European and mainly from Britain. For most of the

participants, the term Pākehā would not have been in common usage among ‘white’ New Zealand communities in which they grew up (Ballara, 1986). The term has gained salience among the ‘white’ Pākehā population in the last three decades. A number of researchers have examined the cultural and political dynamics of the descriptor Pākehā (Bedggood, 1997; Bell, A. 1996; Bell, C. 1996, 2001; Dupius *et al.*, 1999; Hughes *et al.*, 1996; King, 1991; Lawn, 1994; Mead, 1982; Nairn & McCreanor, 1990, 1991; Pearson, 1995; Pearson & Sissons, 1997; Shannon & Spoonley, 1991; Spoonley, 1984, 1993, 1995, Spoonley *et al.*, 1996; Thomas & Nikora, 1996a, 1996b).

Participants gave varied perspectives about their view of the term. The discourses around the term Pākehā principally relied on participants’ deployment of, or resistance to a nationalist assimilative identity framework of understanding. A range of positions around the term Pākehā was a theme that came through in participants’ accounts. Focus group participants showed some consistency and seven participants that I interviewed individually claimed Pākehā as their ethnicity. Of the 12 participants who identified as Pākehā, 10 indicated that they chose this identity as a conscious political identification that had developed in response to Māori claims relating to Māori sovereignty. Some chose it to identify their distinctiveness from other ‘white’ peoples such as the British and European.

Katherine and Patricia, two focus group participants, gave their perspective on why they chose Pākehā after there had been general agreement among the group about each person’s choice of the term. They articulated their views in the following way with Katherine speaking first:

Katherine: I don’t call myself a New Zealander any more -but will call myself Pākehā New Zealander. ‘We are one race’ - umbrella for alienation - one race alienates Māori for 150 years.

Patricia continued,

Patricia: [I’m a] second generation Pākehā New Zealander. If I can’t call myself Pākehā New Zealander, what can I call myself? don’t belong anywhere.

These two women were articulating their understanding of the significance of Māori as the first people (*tangata whenua*) for them as descendants of the colonising community. Katherine showed a rejection of the assimilative nationalist discourse already discussed and Patricia rejected any claim to being a transplanted European, identifying her rightful place in Aotearoa while simultaneously recognising Māori special status. However, the term *Pākehā* was by no means an uncontested term. Over half the interviewees declined to identify themselves using this term and some participants demonstrated uncertainty about other possible labels. Sharon in her late forties demonstrated this uncertainty when asked how she identified ethnically:

Sharon: Yeah no just as New Zealander, as Kiwi, and that is what I feel that we should all be doing here in New Zealand at the moment not - they- I mean - okay when they do this census I can understanding them doing it then because they sort of like all the numbers of the different - different sorts of...

Helen: What do you put on the census? What do you tick? Well how do you like to be known?

Sharon: I suppose I would most likely put European as against *Pākehā* because *Pākehā* sounds as if that is the Māori way of identifying us where in actual fact I mean if they had Kiwi there I would probably tick that or New Zealander - Even against European.

Sharon's comments echoed the difficulty the majority of participants had with this term and they expressed this in various ways. Like Sharon, these participants resisted claiming an ethnic specificity such as *Pākehā* and oscillated between the other available terms such as European, Kiwi, 'white', and even Caucasian. Most participants showed a preference for the all-encompassing term New Zealander as discussed previously. The underlying contention suggests that that these *Pākehā* had an unrelenting investment in the "fictive neutral unified ethnicity of New Zealander" as described by Bell (1997). This identification is also able to mask the mechanisms of power that are evident in the blurring between personal space and identity with collective identity, locating the person deploying/inhabiting this discourse as a national representative (Taylor & Wetherell, 1995).

Being ‘white’ is Normal/Ordinary: a naturalisation process

Questions I asked participants about their memories of becoming aware that they were ‘white’, or seen as ‘white’, evoked responses that exhibited recurrent patterns. Their responses frequently related to their contact/interaction with those that they learned to identify as different/“other”. The presence of, or their interactions with, those whom they learned were different/“other” activated their consciousness of being ‘white’. However, the majority of participants had little contact or interaction with racialised “others” and despite this they deployed/inhabited discourses of Whiteness that expressed **conceptualisations** of who was ‘racially’ different. These constructions tended to be binary oppositions that defined who was or who was not considered different/not normal/not ordinary/not ‘white’.

The majority of participants had also lived in the same communities during their childhood, although some of those communities were located in small country towns that were not culturally homogeneous. Participants who lived in heterogeneous cultural communities and participants whose families had shifted location a few times had the most to say about being aware of being ‘white’ and of the differentiation of “others”. The latter were able to draw comparisons about their experiences in the different communities in which they lived. Participants who moved from the South Island to the North Island¹⁵ of Aotearoa were able to describe vividly their thoughts and feelings, and their families’ reactions as they adjusted to changes in ethnic demographics. The changes among the Māori, immigrant and Pākehā population influenced participants’ awareness of difference. Participants’ accounts revealed the complex and contradictory devices that were available to them as they shared their perceptions of their experiences, as well as the discourses of Whiteness they deployed/inhabited (Fowlkes, 1992; Frankenberg, 1993; Moon, 1999).

¹⁵ Since British colonization, there has been, and still is, a marked difference in the demographic ratio of Māori to Non Māori populations between the North and South Islands of Aotearoa. Up until colonial ‘settlement’, Māori lived nomadically in the South Island and were more residential and in greater numbers in the North Island. Consequently, in the mid 20th century, when the majority of my participants were children, those who lived in the North Island were more likely to have some form of contact with Māori especially as there was a post-war migration of Māori at that time from rural areas to towns and cities.

The manner in which participants learned that to be ‘white’, had no definition/shape/content and was a cultureless norm, was a complex process and came through powerfully in the interviews (Frankenberg, 1993; Perry, 2001). The subtlety and complexity of this enculturation/constitution was significant. Helena was in her forties and had a postgraduate degree. She had spent most of her formative years in a homogeneous ‘white’ middleclass community. When she was a teenager, her family shifted to a large multicultural North Island town. This change in her cultural environment appeared to activate Helena’s awareness of being ‘white’.

Helen: The first thing I was really asking you was, can you remember when you first became aware that you were white.

Helena:¹⁶ Yes, that’s right and I um and I said the first time was really when we went to Z (town on the East Coast of North Island) and that moving from here to there and going down town on Friday night and very aware that you are a minority... And I think it was probably the first time I was really reflecting about it. So you’re actually aware of it, you know, walking down the street and monitoring how you feel about it. And probably, you are actually wondering how you feel about it, not really knowing how you feel about it.

Helen: Is it something new - something new? Is that what you are saying?

Helena: That was. Yes, yes.

Helena’s recollection identified that her first awareness of her Whiteness was generated by her experience as a **minority** in a multicultural public space. She reports that she was a teenager before her consciousness of being ‘white’ was stimulated by her conscious experience of difference. Pamela Perry (2001) explains that the process of becoming ‘white’, is a process of naturalization in which “the embedding of historically constituted practices in what feels “normal” and natural produces feelings of cultural lack among whites”(p.56). This naturalisation also relates to Ruth Frankenberg’s (1993) assertion that cultural emptiness stems from a dualistic sense of unbounded ‘white’ versus bounded (‘non white’) “others”. In her research, Frankenberg’s (1993) interviewees also revealed that ‘white’ culture had no definition. Frankenberg emphasizes that this understanding belies the toxicity of the construction of ‘white’ as

¹⁶ I had interviewed Helena the previous night and found that the tape was not turned on so she agreed to an interview again the next day.

the cultureless norm, because it serves as a foundation on which to evaluate the humanity and social standing of “others”.

This analysis underpins the significance of the second aspect that was important to identify about Helena’s account. Helena recounted that her reflections focused principally on her efforts to make sense of her thoughts about **feeling** visibly marked/bounded in a public space - a reversal of her usual position of normalcy, ordinariness and of being unmarked, being cultureless. Helena articulated that this new experience left her reflecting on her emotional response in an attempt to clarify her feelings about **her difference**, which constituted a challenge to her sense of centrality and normality. The power that is inherent in Helena’s usual experience of culturelessness and ordinariness was interrupted by her experience of something new, ‘of being different’, which implicitly changed her perception of herself and remained in Helena’s memory.

Jacinta, who had grown up in a small multicultural North Island town, employed a discourse of naturalisation in her summary of becoming aware of the significance of ‘difference’. She had had contact with a number of ‘different’ people in her growing up years and had shifted to the South Island in later life. Jacinta described the process of learning about Whiteness concisely. She used another dominant discourse that was prominent in other participants’ accounts as well - described by Frankenberg and Perry as ‘passive Whiteness’ (Frankenberg, 1993; Perry, 2001). Jacinta had been talking about her family’s understanding of being ‘white’ and was describing how her views had changed over time. Her explanation follows:

Helen: What are your thoughts about being ‘white’ now? Have they changed in any way as you have grown up?

Jacinta: I think that because New Zealanders became more multinational and more Polynesian. I think, in a way it’s probably made people more, or made me more aware of what I am. Before we just really existed, you accepted it.

Jacinta’s description revealed that as an adult, she was more aware of what she is acknowledging - that she considered that she was seen as ‘white’. There was an implication that she has always been, ‘seen as ‘white’’ even in her childhood years with

the expression “made me aware of what I am”. Jacinta explained that being ‘white’ during her early years was just a matter of existence as it was not marked or bounded in any way. Jacinta attributed her awareness of her Whiteness, to the development of the demographical and political salience of an increasingly diverse population in Aotearoa. It is interesting to note that the terms that Jacinta used to describe the population diversification, as more multinational and more Polynesian, possibly related to the immigration of increasing numbers of ‘non white’ peoples to Aotearoa in the last three decades. In this excerpt, Jacinta made no specific reference to the difference of Māori as tangata whenua and their recent public cultural and political renaissance.

Juliette’s family had moved around every few years during her childhood, mainly in the North Island. She was forty when I interviewed her. Although Juliette had lived in varied communities, she was not able to identify when she became aware of her Whiteness but she was able to describe how she perceived that those ‘with culture’ would arrive at their awareness. Her response contained elements of naturalisation comparable to Helena and Jacinta.

Helen: Can you remember when you first became aware that you were ‘white’?

Juliette: No, I um - I don’t know if [it] would be an awareness of when I first became ‘white’ or if it would be an awareness that there are other people who are... Yes, I am thinking, it would become more obvious if I was ‘black’; that there would be a day when I woke up and thought oh I’m different from everybody else. But being ‘white’ and part of the dominant culture, I’m not sure when I became aware of that.

There are features of Juliette’s response that are important to examine as they illustrated the complex reasoning that the discourse enabled. Juliette’s response revealed that she acknowledged some process of developing awareness taking place, although she appeared unsure how to describe it. Fascinatingly, she was able to describe, what she was not, imagining herself as ‘black’ and waking up one day to realise that she was different “from everybody else”. This response revealed the complexities that constitute the rationalisations that underpin discourses of Whiteness. Juliette couched her response in terms of her sense of a cultural emptiness, her inability to describe a conception that to her had no definition or content. However, the discourse enabled her

to imagine how a “bounded black/other” might come to awareness of their difference. This she appeared able to describe in some detail (Frankenberg 1993).

This culturelessness discourse was all encompassing as it enabled Juliette to explain a core difference between her socialisation as a member of the dominant Pākehā culture and her awareness of a marked bounded “other”. At the same time, the discourse also enabled her to represent the process of the awareness of the ‘black other’ in a way that does not interrupt the power of dominance. She can be interpreted as maintaining a ‘dominant gaze’, even as she spoke from her imagined position of marked ‘difference’ with the expression ‘I’m different from everybody else’. Frankenberg (1993) explains this discourse concisely in the following way:

The dominant discourse on culture indicates that which can be named, bounded and separated from material life. This has worked powerfully to put boundaries around, on the one hand, a set of “bounded” cultures and, on the other, a residual, normative space that, as far as most of its inhabitants are concerned, has no name and few distinguishing marks and thus is not a cultural space. This space is called Whiteness and although it is apparently difficult for white people to name, it none the less shapes white women’s experiences, practices and views of self and other (p.228.)

The subtleties of this discourse were intriguing to unpack. The three participants’ accounts just discussed were similar to other participants’ discourses and they illustrated the significance of a nationalist assimilative discourse and the subtleness of learning to become ‘white’ as well as the complexities and the power in Whiteness as a cultureless norm.

As participants learned to become ‘white’, they often simultaneously deployed an allied discourse to the discourse of Whiteness as a cultureless norm. This discourse was evident in participants’ tendency to perceive that constructs of cultural identity, ‘race’, racism and ethnicity were ‘black’ or minority topics. This particular ‘white’ worldview had become commonplace in many Western societies and has been identified and researched by ‘black’, African American academics for many years (Afshar & Maynard 1994, Caraway 1993, hooks 1984, Lorde 1984, Moraga & Anzaldúa 1983). The interviewees often expressed themselves in such indirect ways that their “culture equals

“other” ” discourse initially passed my attention.¹⁷ As with the participants discussed above, when participants attempted to articulate how they became aware of being ‘white’ and what being ‘white’ meant to them, many participants invariably appeared to change the subject and would articulate something usually about their developing awareness of a cultural “other”.

Examples of this discourse were evident in the preliminary focus group discussion that I facilitated in the initial stages of this research. Mary and Celia, both tertiary educated women in their 40s had participated in community work around Treaty education. They would have discussed many aspects of culture, racism and difference during this education. In the focus group, the participants had been discussing how they might describe their cultural identity and in what respects it was significant to them.

Mary said:

Mary: I don’t think I’ve ever had to think about my cultural identity because everything was just done the way that suited me - or the way everything was done suited me because that was the way I was brought up, I guess!

Then Celia, who was in her late fifties, added the following comments:

Well, it’s a thing I haven’t, I didn’t think about for many years, like our generation, we didn’t hear much about your roots or, um, for some reason. And it wasn’t until, the interest in the Māori, and, you know, in the Treaty and all that, that we started looking.

Mary used the invisible ‘cultureless norm’ discourse that other participants deployed to describe her state of unawareness as she grew up. She attributed the ‘suitability’ of her environment to her upbringing rather than a specifically cultural phenomenon. Celia’s response indicated that her interface with ‘difference’, such as learning about Māori and the Treaty of Waitangi was the means through which she had become conscious of culture and cultural identity. Her discursive location enabled her to compare her

¹⁷ I have discussed in the methodology chapter my difficulties as an insider researcher within a dominant group, gaining an understanding and analyzing something which was ‘natural’ to me as well as the participants.

experience with a referent culture that was bounded and separated from her material life (Frankenberg 1993).

The focus group provided an opportunity for me to observe the direction that participants took our discussion and the discourses that they deployed/inhabited. Two participants contributed to our discussion about their sudden awareness of being ‘white’ with detailed stories. Their accounts revealed the limitations of the discourses that Pākehā have available to talk about their racialisation except through their experiences of feeling different or being seen as different. Both of the events described occurred when the participants were well into their adult years, which demonstrate the pervasiveness and profundity of Whiteness as a cultureless norm. Patricia who was in her sixties and had many years of experience in Treaty activism and education, proceeded to recount a lasting memory that she had of being made aware that she was different. She said,

Patricia: I mean I’ve been in a situation where I’ve been one of two in a totally Māori thing. The night Rachel and I blew it and went to TR when the TR event was there, because we hadn’t gone the night before. It was the Māori people’s night and we were the only Pākehā there. And um, yeah, it was interesting because that night, when I think about it. I mean I was quite awed by the energy and all sorts of things that were there, and I didn’t feel patronizingly sorry for these people, that their life was going to be different, because I was in the minority, and comfortable (laughter) - And how gracious people were, considering we were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Patricia’s story highlighted the understandable tendency that Pākehā/’white’/dominant groups have to link culture to “others”. Pākehā/our difference is nameable only in the presence of “others”. This interface enables Pākehā/us to talk about whom Pākehā/we are/are not. David Goldberg (1990) explains this phenomenon in the following words. “Whiteness is not a community only an amorphous lump of white and invisible centre – a vacuum with boundaries only becoming clear in a particular situation” (p.89). The particular situations that Goldberg refers to, such as Patricia’s awareness of being different, noticeable and possibly ‘out of place’ in a Māori dominated context, creates the conditions for this sense of difference for Patricia and consequently the discursive formulations in her account.

Katherine, who worked for a social justice organisation gave an account of becoming aware that she was ‘white’ and different. The focus group participants had been talking of their difficulties articulating their racialisation, their Whiteness and the discussion had shifted to their articulations of their experiences with “other” people. Katherine was telling the rest of the focus group about an experience she had never forgotten. She began:

Katherine: My weirdest experience about colour wasn’t here (in Aotearoa), and that must say something about me probably. It happened in YZ (a Pacific nation) and I was there for two weeks. I arrived in the bush one night away out in the middle of nowhere, in this tiny little settlement. And it was dark, and they welcomed us and I did the usual and I made my speech and gave a gift. I sort of performed the gesture, the ritual. And this old man looked at me and he said, ‘It is very moving for me’ - all this in French, mind you, - ‘to have you a ‘white’ woman so graciously perform the rituals of our culture’. And I felt as though he’d thrown cold water on me because I’d suddenly lost any sense - it wasn’t that I’d stopped thinking of myself - I hadn’t thought of myself as black, but I’d felt so - that this was where I belonged, with all these people. And all of a sudden, he was making a distinction that I’d forgotten to make and I suppose all I was left with was, am I like the French, you know? (Laughter) And then I had to realise that I am, because I’m like the French here. It was really, really shocking for me. So while I know I’m white, and I would normally sort of say yeah, I can accept the label white, I’m not - after that experience - I’m not so sure, and he was being wonderful to me. I mean he was quite overwhelmed that I would enter into their cultural practices, which was so different, of course, from what the settlers were doing. But he reminded me of my colour at a point where I had sort of ceased to see it as relevant. And of course, it was still relevant, so I don’t know where I am on that. I think my head knows that I’m white, and I’d be happy to call myself white, but it’s when other people do it I’m not sure how I see it.

Katherine’s narrative illustrated the power of Whiteness to remain invisible to those inhabiting the discourse and constituted as ‘white’ even when surrounded by ‘difference’. Katherine’s anecdote also revealed the complexities and the fluctuating power dynamics that were embedded in her interaction with the ‘old man’. At the outset, Katherine insightfully acknowledged some significance to her story being located outside Aotearoa. She described her sense of ease and comfort with these people, which enabled her to believe that she had minimised their differences - she felt

she belonged. Nevertheless, the old man, she said, “reminded me of my colour at a point where I had sort of ceased to see it as relevant”.

The old man in this story reminded Katherine of the direct link between her identity, her Whiteness/culturelessness and her social location of dominance. By acknowledging Katherine’s respect of his culture, he brought to mind her power to show respect or not show it. The man also exposed for her a link between her dominance within the system and the dominance of the system of ‘white’ supremacy - a powerful act.

Katherine still appeared unsure how she felt about being called ‘white’ after that experience. This story demonstrated effectively the link between being ‘white’ and being located as dominant within a system of domination despite Pākehā ability, with the discourses available, to be oblivious of their dominant location within a globally dominant system.

Participants also revealed that they had learned that to claim a ‘white’ identity was prohibited in Aotearoa. The concept is not claimed as a social identity in other ‘white’/Western dominated societies as well, primarily because such identifications have traditionally been linked with ‘white’ supremacy as already discussed. Many participants were reluctant to use the term ‘white’ and they struggled to articulate their given reasons for their resistance. A discussion developed in the focus group about the term ‘white’. Participants were attempting to describe the terms of self-identification with which they had learned to feel comfortable. They were discussing the range of labels that Pākehā had available to describe who they/we were and had been talking about the criminal justice system and how ethnic “others” such as Māori and Polynesian were often identified in the media whereas Pākehā often were not. Anne who was in her late fifties and had been involved in voluntary Treaty work made a clear statement.

Anne said: I don’t like the word white!

Celia added: Neither do I

Anne: I never look at a person’s colour, I mean I clearly see it but it doesn’t make me automatically think who they are, I feel it puts us in a category!

Just words like “Reds under the bed - The Yellow Peril” you see, they’re all colours that are put, categorizing people into a certain -

Patricia: But ‘white’ has always been the ultimate (general agreement)

Anne: Pure!

Although another two participants acknowledged being 'white' as a 'given', Patricia replied:

Depends on context -but yes, because of potential social difference - not meaning to be negative, but it's really there - It has got racist connotations and that's the reality - my reality - [when I] think about it and be honest.

Then Mary added her view that indicated a particular conundrum:

I'm 'white' whether I like it or not - called it by someone else I don't know how I would react - I prefer to identify people by anything other than the colour of skin.

This interaction among the participants illustrated the mix of interpretations of 'white' and non-'white' that they utilised, one as purely biological descriptors and the other as symbols/constructs that have social significance. The participants seemed to struggle to make sense of their reluctance to claim the label 'white' and their lack of comfort with the term. This dilemma indicated limitations that a discourse of Whiteness as an invisible norm, has for participants. The limitations were manifest in their word choices around such terms such as 'white', 'black', and 'colour'. Mary implied and other participants agreed in indirect ways that 'white'/Pākehā were caught between two opposing racialised frameworks that underpin a *colour/power evasive* discourse (Dominelli, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Hitchcock, 1999; Hunter & Nettles, 1999; Sleeter, 1993a, 1993b, 1995).

The constraining options that this discourses offers were, that if a person 'sees' or acknowledges 'race'/colour/'white'/black or overtly claims to be 'white', they consider themselves prejudiced. The opposing framework maintains that if a person does 'not see' or denies difference/'race'/culture/'white'/black, they/ are seen as or consider themselves not prejudiced. This discourse, as well as confining those constituted through these formulations to oscillating between two limiting ideas, also reduces racism to individual acts of intentional prejudice or discrimination and limits the potential for those deploying/inhabiting the discourse to conceptualise the institutional and structural determinants that result in racist outcomes regardless of individuals' intentions or actions (Dominelli 1997).

A significant implication of this insight is its potential for broadening analysis in social justice and antiracist education. Sharon, in her forties, had grown up in the South Island and had participated in some form of Treaty education. When I interviewed Sharon, she talked about her thoughts about being ‘white’.

Sharon: I’ve never, never had to think about being white, never had to consider whether I like being ‘white’ or not and I don’t know how I’d react if somebody called me a ‘white’ New Zealander. I prefer to identify people by their, by anything other than the colour of their skin... But I think that’s part of the - the oppression part of the colonisation stuff. Because immediately somebody is described as being brown or black it saves me saying ‘they’re inferior to me’ but that’s really what I’m saying, I think. I mean, I’m not, but I think that’s been what - I think it’s much easier to say they are brown or black, than to say they are an inferior ‘race’ to those of us who are white.

Sharon recounted that she has not been required to think about being ‘white’ and she was unsure how she would react to being called ‘white’. She was clear that she preferred to identify people by anything other than the colour of their skin. The binary oppositions of the *colour/power evasive* discourse confined Sharon to two alternatives, which she appeared to be hesitant about as she used a number of qualifiers in her explanation. Sharon’s deployment of the discourse revealed its conflation of domination with difference. Sharon is not able to separate seeing difference within a hierarchy. She expressed this aspect of the discourse concisely with the statement, “Immediately somebody is described as being brown or black it saves me saying they’re inferior to me”.

The confines of these available options restricted participants’ ability to discuss the complexities that they appeared to be struggling to convey. The pervasiveness and resilience of Whiteness as a cultureless norm, combined with culture equals “other” and a resistance to acknowledging the significance of been seen as ‘white’, appeared to confine participants within circuitous rationalisations that afforded them no alternative view (see pp. 23-27). The binary oppositions contained within the *colour/power evasive* discourse and the mechanisms of the naturalisation process frequently underpinned participants’ contributions in my research (Allen, 1993; Feagin *et al.*,

2001; Frankenberg, 1993; Hitchcock, 1999; Hytten & Adkins, 2001; Mills, 2003; Perry, 2001; Scheurich, 1993a, 1993b; Wellman, 1993).

Bridget was a participant who gave quite different accounts of how she became aware of being 'white'. Her family had shifted often when she was young and she was in her late forties at the time of her interview. Bridget related how she engaged with and challenged the discrimination and prejudice in their family and community from quite a young age. What appeared significant about Bridget's experience was her ability to pass as Māori. She attributed this to her Romany/gypsy ancestry and a number of times during the interview she also expressed her wish that she was Māori. Bridget's accounts revealed her perception that 'different' people were absent in her community in her early years. She did refer to her recollection of what she termed a "funny situation" in her fourth year at school when she described how she resisted comments from other students asking her why she is sitting next to a Māori boy, whom she liked. Bridget related how as a young child she was trying to make sense of this query and really did not make the link until much later saying:

Bridget: ...and um no one would sit beside this boy and I thought he was nice... It wasn't until someone said, why are you sitting next to him? And I said, well, what do you mean? Because I always seemed to take on the ones, that no one likes. Why does no one like them I thought? Well, I was quite happy to sit next to him. And of course it didn't dawn on me until probably a lot later that he was actually a Māori boy and I thought well why is everyone -, because he was nice. ... It was silly because I befriended him not realizing that his skin was a different colour and of course, I was quite dark too. So I didn't really, um I sort of always used to have a liking for the under dogs. I suppose it was because I used to shift. So you look around and see who could be your friend and it was usually someone who was on their own. So, (laughter) so I'd think you're on your own and the other person's on their own and [I] often developed quite a good friendship.

Bridget's account illustrates that she understood the significance of difference, such as being Māori. Her standpoint in relation to the other school students and her rejection of their views even as a young child was an early indication of Bridget's engagement and resistance to prejudice in the dominant Pākehā community. According to Bridget's recollection, although there were few 'different' people in the South Island community of her early childhood, this one incident indicates that the children were trying to

sanction Bridget to comply with their understandings and to ignore/marginalise someone whose physical difference could not be ignored. Bridget articulated that her feeling of empathy for the Māori boy related to her familiarity with being an outsider, which, she recounted, was associated with her frequent change in school. Bridget's tacit recognition that she had dark skin and could pass as Māori was becoming apparent at this stage in her consciousness.

What was interesting in Bridget's account was her developing awareness at a young age of being an outsider. Bridget's accounts of her perceptions were dissimilar to most other participants. She seemed able to make the links from her own experiences of marginalisation in other context to the situation that she described. In her adult recollection, she makes an association among a number of concepts such as being Māori, being an underdog, her dark skin and her frequent shifting from school to school.

Bridget had available to her an understanding of the complexities of experience and appeared to have a greater range of available discourses than other participants. She implied that as a child she was sympathetic to the odd one out, the underdog, as she had experienced being new to schools because her father changed his job every two years. Bridget's memory of this event and in particular her reference to her dark skin signalled the development of a consistent theme in Bridget's interview, especially during the period of her family's location in the North Island. It was not clear that Bridget made these links at the time of the events; however her frequent references to her ability to pass as Māori became evident throughout the interview. These references revealed Bridget's ability to "play with the rules" of a *colour/power evasive* discourse and her wish to be seen as Māori.

Bridget related that a shift to a Central North Island city heightened her awareness of "difference" and a change in the demographic ratio of her new neighbourhood had a significant impact on her family. She describes the event in the following way:

Bridget: We went from I to R, it was a big shock to the system! Everything, no fences, people were bare foot! It was like going to a foreign country and

my mother was rather devastated and I remember she was very depressed. ... So um, R was a different kettle of fish. When we shifted I thought, good grief, almost like I was on another planet! I'd never been to the North Island before but the thing that amazed me most about shifting from I to R was the lack of fences and everyone wore bare feet. Even in the winter, which was very sensible - you didn't get wet shoes (laughter), it was warm enough, and the Māori people, I suppose! But I thought they were all friendly.

Bridget's description of the impact of her new surroundings extended to her experiences at school. This excerpt showed more clearly Bridget's preference for entertaining the idea of being Māori and being able to pass as Māori, which she mentioned at least four times during her interview. She continued:

It was funny because I shifted to R, to Intermediate and I couldn't understand why all these boys would be waiting around my bike to walk me home. It was a little bit scary but they were very nice and they all talked to me. One of them I got to know, um he said, they think you're a Māori princess from the Deep South. And I said but I'm not! He said well don't tell them that then. And I thought oh and it was a bit scary they were thinking I was something that I really wasn't and I felt rather a fraud. I had long dark hair down to my waist, I was tall and a lot thinner, and I think I told Dad, "They think I'm a Māori princess from the Deep South." He thought it was the biggest joke out. ... Oh I thought I rather liked being a Māori princess (Laughter).

Bridget clearly enjoyed her ability to pass as Māori. Her accounts revealed that despite the predominance of a *colour/power evasive* discourse in her communities, because she could pass as Māori/'different', she became aware of discrimination when she was young. The participants and their accounts of their experiences of growing up showed a range of possible ways that they deployed/inhabited racialised discourses of Whiteness. They articulated the complex and subtle ways they learned to be 'white' and how and why they learned to identify 'different' people (Perry, 2001).

The two main discourses of Whiteness as a cultureless norm and an assimilative nationalism were significant themes in this research. The processes through which participants learned to inhabit these discourse were subtle yet powerful. The crucial insight for this chapter though, surrounds the difficulties that all participants had in articulating their racialisation such as what it means to be 'white' and the significance

of Whiteness. This discourse was persistent throughout the data gathering process regardless of the interviewees' participation in antiracist or Treaty education.

Conclusion

The participants' accounts of their perceptions of how and when they became aware of their racialisation, including their developing awareness of ethnic difference, show the diverse ways that this process develops. Participants expressed a preference for an assimilative national identification that appeared to expand their personal identity, creating links with the power of the nation state. The participants' perceptions that they had lived non-racial lives, was evident in their difficulty in articulating how they became 'white' and what it means to be 'white'. Participants' discourses incorporated the varied positions that they claimed/rejected about their national/ethnic identification, the varied discourses around the term Pākehā and the discourse of being ordinary, or normal, manifest through processes of naturalisation. These discourses also contained a common 'white' perception that constructs such as culture, 'race', racism and ethnicity are 'black' or minority concerns.

The most available discourses that participants had to talk about their racialisation and what it means was the limiting language of *essentialist* understandings of 'race'/'white'/colour/culture. This deeply sedimented belief in the significance of biological explanations of difference was able to confine the articulations of contemporary Pākehā in a dualistic bind of using language that appeared unable to fully express the profound nature and complexity of difference. It became evident as my research progressed that the participants' varying responses and articulations were part of racialised discourses whether in resistance to, or an acceptance of, their perceptions of their Whiteness. Just as importantly, whether they used explicit terminology or not, participants consistently revealed that they deployed/inhabited discourses of Whiteness and that, their racialisation was commonly not a conscious identification.

Chapter Five

Learning the Boundaries of Whiteness

The majority of women that I interviewed for this study did not consider themselves particularly interested in the racial order, or especially implicated in racism. All of them, however, said a great deal that was relevant to both.

Frankenberg (1993 p.236)

Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on the participants' accounts in order to examine the possible roles that their family members played in participants' socialisation as 'white' women, and in their constitution as racialised subjects in the Aotearoa context. In a similar fashion to Ruth Frankenberg's (1993) interviewees quoted above, the women I interviewed demonstrated that they held comparable sentiments about the 'racial order' and also had much to say that was relevant.

An important dynamic that informed this chapter analysis and which was significant in participants' discourses, was the intersection of 'white' racialisation and femininity, the juncture between "**disembodied Whiteness** and **embodied femininity**" (Moon, 1999 p.179). Moon (1999) emphasizes the critical impact that conscious identification has for 'white' women on the apparent relevance of gender and the seeming irrelevance of 'white' racialisation - a widespread oversight that has beleaguered 'white' feminist analyses for some time. I highlight the two terms to emphasize the unconscious dynamic of the former - **disembodied Whiteness**, in comparison to the more conscious socialisation of the female subject into the latter - **embodied femininity**. The complexity of socialisation that Moon described is extensive and for the purposes of analysis the following discussion focuses on the racialisation discourses that the participants were interpellated (called into being) into as they engaged with their expected roles as 'good white' women' (Applebaum, 2004; Moon, 1999).

The elements of a Whiteness discourse that the 'white'/Pākehā interviewees in my study utilised were similar to those that Ruth Frankenberg (1993) identified in her interviews with thirty 'white' women in the US. These elements included, intercultural

relationships corresponding to hierarchies of skin colour /ethnicity/culture/ 'race', racialised femininities; conceptions of racialised masculinities; and children of so called 'mixed' marriages (Frankenberg 1993). A feature of participants' accounts in relation to their use of terms such as culture, 'race' 'white' was the contradictions and connotations of terms and ideas expressed. Despite this feature, most participants' racialised discursive formulations engaged in some way with the notion of an essentialised biological understanding of these terms.

Essentialist understandings of Blackness and Whiteness

So in a way you see, with that generation it was alright to be friends with them or anything, but don't marry them (Tamara 19.9.97).

Throughout the interviews, I had posed a number of questions to participants about their own and their families' views and interactions with people whom they identified as culturally different. I intentionally used terminology such as culture, or cultural group in these questions rather than the term 'race', which is commonly understood as an ascribed biological determination (Frankenberg, 1993; Pearson and Sissons, 1997). I intended to provide the opportunity for the participants to respond using language based on a socially created rather than an ascribed understanding of these terms in our discussions. I was interested to ascertain the participants' implicit understandings of culture (see p.103 for Frankenberg's definition) and the manner in which they related this concept to the terms 'race' or racial group.

Participants' expressed interpretations of their family interactions and views concerning the boundaries around Whiteness and 'blackness' in their accounts. These discourses appeared to rely on and contained *essentialist* understandings of difference/'race' that, as the basis of imperialism, came into play well before the twentieth century. These conceptions also included notions of culture that were absolute and tied to 'race' and biological belonging (Doane & Bonilla-Silva, 2003; Dominelli, 1997; Feagin *et al.*, 2001; Hitchcock, 1999; Hunter & Nettles, 1999; Rains, 1998; Sleeter, 1993a, 1993b, 1995; Thompson, A. 1997). The notion of culture as tied to 'race' based on biology appeared to be a common understanding similar to Frankenberg (1993), Moon (1999)

and Raine's (1998) participants' confluences of 'race' and culture in their findings. Carrie Crenshaw (1997) found in her research a similar ideology framing her participants' views. In addition, she demonstrated that more *essentialist* discourses were evident when her 'white' American participants discussed 'race'-explicit topics such as interracial relationships. While there are no formal sanctions against intercultural/interracial relationships within contemporary Aotearoa, the participants used similar discourses that militated against intercultural/ interracial romances and relationships.

The discourses contained a variety of elements premised on an understanding of 'race' as an essential, fixed biological state. This understanding also tied an absolute and inflexible biological conception to culture. In addition, these elements were frequently based on notions of "degrees of colour" that ranged through a graduated continuum, which were understood to have symbolic value in relation to the amount of "white heritage/blood" (Frankenberg, 1993).

An example of this discursive form was evident in Tamara's account. Tamara had grown up in a small working class town in the North Island. The wider community, in which she had lived, was culturally diverse and Tamara described that her family parties/gatherings were intercultural affairs. Tamara believed that there was harmonious intercultural mixing in her family although she did at times refer to her father's prejudicial jesting remarks as they "went too far". Tamara had siblings married to Māori and when I asked her how her parents felt about this, she gave the following response:

Tamara: My brother is married to [K]. Um, I think K's got a bit of Māori in her. Um, I am not sure if, you know Mum and Dad - No, her mother - I think her Mum has - [Māori] I think my sister-in-law has - My other sister Sue, my youngest sister, she was married to B T, he was part Māori
 Helen: Right, right.
 Tamara: Um and who else is there - that's it.
 Helen: Yes, has that affected the family relations in any way, I mean how did your parents respond to that sort of thing?
 Tamara: No, because they are only partial Māori.

Tamara clarified her parents' acceptance of their family members' marriage to Māori

partners because her parents perceived these partners were only “partial(ly)” Māori. An *essentialist* underlying rationale about ‘race’ and biology reinforces this understanding. A person’s ‘race’ in this sense appears to be segmented, fractioned by blood, by biological heritage, and always inherited. A number of participants frequently relied on this understanding in their efforts to categorise people who were not fully normal/‘white’/invisible. Participants relied on this rationale especially when they were explaining the ‘strength of “another’s” blood line with ‘white blood’ which most considered desirable, especially when this was manifest in a person’s lighter skin pigmentation. This understanding connects to a notion of wholeness or purity in which ‘white’ people can understand the racially ‘mixed’ person as advantaged because they have some ‘white’ blood and may possibly have a lighter skin colour (Ballara, 1986; Frankenberg, 1993). A similar rationale that relates more to ancestral links or whakapapa than skin pigmentation underpins Māori identification. Māori identification is based on a person’s biological connection to a Māori ancestor or specific Hapu or Iwi.

This ideology just described incorporated an additional conception that one could measure with some certainty a person’s acceptability or ability to pass as ‘white’. Frankenberg (1993) uses a helpful metaphor to analyze this belief and its efficacy. She explains:

Even if it made sense to subordinate the social dimensions of humans to their physiological states, genetic matter and its combining are highly complex. The notion of a racially “mixed” individual brings forth a simplistic and entirely erroneous image of two pots of paint (or blood!) stirred together, so that a “half Chinese” person is exactly twice as Chinese as someone who is “a quarter Chinese” and so on. (p.95)

An example of this preoccupation with measuring the amount of ‘colour’ was evident in Juliette’s remarks when she was talking about a family friend. My question about her family’s interactions with people from different cultures had triggered Juliette’s memory about a woman who was a good friend of her parents whom she supposed might be Māori. The woman did not identify as Māori as far as Juliette knew, although her family name was the same as a prominent Māori family in the North Island.

Juliette: I just wonder if she was part Māori but it would have only been a small part like an eighth or sixteenth or something. She just had Māori features and both the [her] kids were ‘white’.

Participants often articulated decisions about a person’s cultural identification by appearing to reason that a person’s identity was biologically ascribed. Participants’ accounts revealed that they believed that they could calculate the amount of “other blood” by the wholeness/purity of their parentage. This practice often became a complex calculation using mathematical fractions as Juliette’s excerpt illustrated.

Sarah was in her forties when I interviewed her and she had travelled extensively overseas. She gave a detailed response to my question whether any of her family had entered relationship with partners from a different culture. I asked her:

Helen: Have any members of your extended family or family married or been in close relationships with someone from another culture?

Sarah: Yes. My brother has married a woman who has got five different bloods in her. She - her father is a full Arab, so she’s half Arab and the other half is made up of black African, Dutch Sudanese and Irish and she’s a lovely, lovely person, lovely.

Helen: Yes, Mm. Has that affected the family relations in any way.

Sarah: No because it was second marriages for them both and there have been no children...

Sarah’s description of her brother’s wife demonstrates an example of this discourse that was available to participants. The discourse enabled a conflation of biological ‘race’ and culture which relied on a rationale similar to Frankenberg’s metaphor of listing the number and measuring the amounts different ‘bloods’ that ‘racially’ constitute a person’s identity. The limitations of this discourse revealed the difficulties that participants had in accommodating complexity and their perception of the legitimacy of agency that people have in relation to cultural membership.

Marilyn gave few examples of her own or her family’s experiences of contact with ‘different’ people; however, she still garnered ideas about difference from her family, mainly her father and her grandparents. Marilyn had little contact with ‘different’ people in her childhood and described her exposure to *essentialist* racist understandings about a person’s skin colour in particular the degree of ‘blackness’.

Helen: What are your family's understandings about being 'white'? How was it communicated was it ever discussed or was it just sort of known what sort of messages did you get?

Marilyn: Yes, the messages were my father's. They are dark people we are 'white' people. Oh, not we are 'white' people, they are just dark people. ...And then as far as extended family or when you go further back, it's definitely been communicated. It hasn't been communicated that we are 'white'. It has been communicated that we are not black.

Helen: Right mm and black is what?

Marilyn: The people in terms of my Nana, darkies, blacks are the people who do the s- work!

What was significant in this excerpt was the blatancy/starkness of the *essentialist* understandings that Marilyn learned despite her minimal contact with people other than Pākehā. The maintenance of an invisibility of the 'opposite of black' seemed important for Marilyn to convey. Marilyn answered my question about being 'white' with a description of what 'white' was not - "we are not black". A discourse that prohibited the naming of 'white' racialisation was powerful and was a persistent theme throughout the interviews (Frankenberg, 1993; Moon, 1999; Perry, 2001). There was also an implication of a conflation of class with 'race' in Marilyn's account of her grandmother's view of that 'blacks' do the s- work, although as previously discussed in depth analysis of these confluations were not the focus of this study.

Racialised Femininities

Feminist theorists have argued that the home has an important cultural function in the gendered socialisation and the formation of identities (hooks, 1989; Moon, 1999). This space of learning and socialisation is where children begin the lifelong journey of learning about who they are. For 'white' girls/women the home is a contradictory cultural space where they learn about the dominant relations of 'race', gender and class and in the process inhabit/reject them (Moon 1999). In addition, the home as a site of intimate family relations is where sexism usually directly shapes and determines relations of power in family members' private lives. According to hooks (1989), it is a physical and cultural space where family members witness and learn coercive domination and simultaneously experience relations of care and connection (p.21). Bell

hooks in a later work, (1994) draws a sobering distinction between a home that provides a refuge for people of colour from “the terror of the ‘white’ gaze” and a home where many ‘white’ women learn to adopt and reproduce the gaze. Of course, the home is also a cultural space where both children and adults can challenge and/or acquiesce to relations of domination, such as sexism and/or racism - participants gave accounts of both resistance and compliance.

The participants’ allusions to racialised femininities were evident in their accounts of the implicit messages that they received about being ‘white’ in their childhood. The *essentialist* belief system underpinning some participants’ family views included a prohibition against intercultural romances or marriage. Many participants reported that their parents conveyed this taboo to them usually implicitly, although their parents’ approach often changed to more explicit expression as the participants became teenagers and progressed into adulthood. I asked Rosemary, who grew up in the South Island and had lived there all her life, what her family’s comprehension of being ‘white’ was and the focus of her reply was typical of most participants.

Helen: Um what were your family’s understandings of being ‘white’, like, you know, was it ever discussed or if it wasn’t discussed how was it communicated?

Rosemary: Um well, I think my father was really pretty down to earth. In fact all his friends were pretty ordinary in [a] very normal [way]. A lot of his friends were - Oh, I think, um, I think we always sort of - may have got the message that you don’t marry another ‘race’.

Rosemary’s response gave no indication that she was able to describe the actual content of being ‘white’. Her first words were to describe her father and his friends as ordinary and down to earth. This rhetorical device can function as a cushion and a form of credentialing that supports what Rosemary maybe preparing to say. She represented her father and his friends as normal as well as occupying a reasonable middle ground. Many participants used this rhetorical device, which often included representing their view /their family’s view as that of the majority, as well as “pretty ordinary” (Tilbury 1998).

It was significant that Rosemary did not complete some of her utterances an example

was, “A lot of his friends were-” This device, entails leaving shared and known prejudicial terms unsaid although recognisable. Moon (1999) identifies this mechanism as a code, a form of ‘*whitespeak*’, which I will discuss in detail in the following chapter (p. 142). When Rosemary eventually described her family’s understanding of being ‘white’, she couched her words in terms of the consistent messages that she received about intercultural marriage. The inference was that intercultural marriage was not advisable and this discourse worked to maintain boundaries around Whiteness. Her father somehow conveyed to his children an implicit expectation that ‘white’ women do not enter relationships with “other” men. Rosemary appeared hesitant in her response giving the impression that she was attempting to avoid a discriminatory interpretation of the language that she had available to describe her views. This dilemma was evident in many participants’ accounts as they attempted to negotiate their commitment to honestly conveying their understandings utilising a discourse and language that they appeared to sense was possibly failing them.

Diane, who grew up in rural community, talked about the idyllic nature of her childhood and her sense of feeling that she could do whatever she wanted. I asked her to talk about her childhood and she responded with the following account.

Diane: My parents - my father is a farmer - We had a pretty idyllic life really, on the farm. And when I think about it, I mean it was very naive and very untouched with the world.

Helen: Oh, right.

Diane: Um and we had the school - for the primary was a very mixed primary school because we had the railway workers um then we had a lot of Māori children. And things like Thursdays, they all came along and everybody came so the school was only twelve.

Helen: Oh, right.

Diane: So any financial hassles or any problems were kept away from us, so we didn’t know that there were any problems in the world, which was very interesting. And we were never over-indulged, like we weren’t given everything we had had to work for things. And we all had good schooling um and I find this quite interesting really because as girls and women he encouraged us all to have careers and he said to us you can do anything you want which was quite unusual for a man of that time.

Helen: Oh, yes oh yes that’s right.

Diane: And my mother was um a very independent woman in her own right anyway. So, I mean that and she always had something to say.

Helen: So that was the role model you had.

Diane: Absolutely, so it's quite interesting really how um how that um came about. And like the three girls, we are all career women and, yes, and have never stopped at things.

Diane's description conveyed her sense of having an untroubled childhood. She acknowledged the *naivety* and protection through expressions such as, "we didn't know there were any problems in the world ... untouched with the world", that her environment afforded her. She recounted how she and her sisters were encouraged to believe that they could, were entitled to, achieve whatever they chose, and were all career women as adults (Raines, 1998). Diane's sense protection from the world, the encouragement she and her sisters received, and her sense of entitlement, were all expressed in a discourse that illustrated an impression of privilege that was an aspect of her constitution as Pākehā child in a "mixed" community. She specifically identified Māori children and railway workers as part of the mix of schoolchildren. Although in this initial excerpt Diane implies her racialised femininity through references to the mix of children and her protection and sense of entitlement, later in her interview she was more specific about her perceptions. I asked Diane to talk about her childhood contact with people from other cultures.

Helen: Yeah, it is yeah um during your growing up years did you have much to do with people of other cultures.

Diane: As ah, as ah, at Primary school yes, um we had as I said before, we had a number of people in the um, who worked for the railways who were Māori.

Helen: Yes, yes, yes.

Diane: Um, and at that point I saw no difference. But, I just, I guess that possibly is a bit of a lie actually there was a - I felt no difference, but I saw they lived, that they seemed to be a bit poorer than us. Their clothes were a bit raggedy, their cars were a bit more beat up and stuff like that but I felt no difference in terms of us together. When I went to secondary school [a private girls secondary school] we had very few other ethnic people at the school I think there was a Chinese girl um very few.

Diane acknowledged the difference of Māori in this account although she appeared unable to recognize or express her own racialisation. Her description also illustrated her difficulty in acknowledging the significance of difference. Diane claimed in the first excerpt that she had no knowledge of the problems of the world, however in her second excerpt, she used a discourse that described in some detail the difference of Māori in her

community, in terms of their “poverty, their raggedy clothes, their beat-up cars” etc. The discourse enabled her to state that she felt secure and safe from “the problems of the world”. In her second account, Diane initially claimed that she did not see any difference. She then corrected this by saying that although she *saw* the poverty/difference she did not *feel* the difference. Diane’s account demonstrated the protection that her location within this discourse afforded her. She could see but indicated that she was/did not feel emotionally affected in any way by difference/poverty of others because she perceived that poverty had nothing to do with her life (Frankenberg, 1993). Diane’s account also implied an association of class with ‘race’ in the particular way that she conflated poverty with Māori, a significant correlation although one that was not addressed in depth in this thesis.

A common pattern that participants’ identified was the change in parents’ communication strategies as participants became teenagers and started ‘seeing boys’ or ‘dating’. Tamara talked about the first time that she had heard anything specific said to her about her families’ views of being ‘white’ that implied a message about her racialisation as a ‘white’ woman. Tamara described her vivid memory of her mother warning her as a young woman about romantic attachments to “other” men. She discussed an incident when a friend’s boyfriend called at her home to pick up Tamara and her friend.

Tamara: I think T. must have come in asked for me. I can remember Mum saying to me the next day something about, oh there was this Māori chap and I had never heard Mum say anything like this ever before in my life. And she said there was this Māori chap and I said, oh yes, that would have been T. “Oh Tamara, if your father saw him, he would go mad” She made a comment along those lines.

Helen: Mm, Mm.

Tamara: And I said, “What do you mean?” I was actually shocked. I had never heard Mum say a thing like that before. So in a way you see with that generation, it was alright to be friends with them or anything but don’t marry them.

Tamara’s account disclosed the contradictory messages that some participants received about being ‘white’, particularly the change from generalised implicit communication of tolerance to explicitly articulated sentiments against intercultural relationships. Some parent’s shift in the content and style of their communication with their daughters

usually occurred as they reached their teenage years. As Tamara succinctly stated, “So in a way, you see, with that generation, it was alright to be friends with them or anything but don’t marry them”. Tamara offers an explanation that the prejudiced views of her parents and those Pākahā New Zealanders of her parents’ generation was commonplace. Participants often expressed their disapproval of the prejudice that accompanied *essentialist* understandings of ‘race’. However, these discourses were frequently all that participants had available to them when talking about ‘race-explicit’ topics. Participants often resorted to these understandings even as these discourses constrained them (Crenshaw, 1997).

Racialised Masculinities

The participants’ accounts contained many references to ‘non white’ men in contradictory ways. One context evoked thoughts and feelings that seemingly contradicted what participants had articulated in another context. These apparently opposing sentiments were expressed primarily when participants were discussing their own romances, their family’s views of intercultural relationships and/or situations where they were aware that they were a racialised minority. These accounts disclosed constructions of racialised masculinities that were predominantly context specific. Sometimes participants’ constructions were negative, simplistic and stereotypical, and other constructions emphasized the attractiveness of ‘non white’ men.

I asked participants how their family would respond if they had a relationship with someone for another culture. Lilian, who lived in the same monocultural environment in the South Island in her growing up years, responded with this story:

Lilian: Yes and I will tell you what. One thing happened when I went to London and I had only been in London. I had this job and I used to see people as part of my secretarial duties. Then I would go and relieve in the canteen taking the money and there was this very handsome man there, he was six foot six and he was an African Prince and he had all the girls clamouring around and he asked me out and I couldn’t go.

Helen: Right, yeah

Lilian: And this was indoctrinated from when I had been at home. But he was beautiful and I couldn’t go because he was - (Laughter) I was scared because it was a different culture and we hadn’t been brought up - and he

wasn't Māori [s], he was African.

Helen: Right mm. mm, was it different?

Lilian: Yes and I couldn't go. I thought, what would my father say!

Lilian was describing her dilemma when an African man whom she described in a 'fairy tale-like fashion' asked her out: he was tall, dark and handsome - and a prince (McIntyre, 1997). Although she was thousands of miles from home and a romantic image of this African man had obviously enchanted her, Lilian was unable to break a taboo that she indicated she had learned as she grew up. She also expressed that she was scared because this man came from "a different culture". This implied indoctrination against an interracial date was so strong that Lilian was imagining her father's reaction if she had gone out on a date with an African. Lilian's account revealed an attraction/fear dichotomy that involved both a racialised and cultural differentiation (Frankenberg, 1993). She also identified a distinction between a familiar "other" (i.e. Māori) culture and an unfamiliar "other" (African) culture of which she had no knowledge.

A number of participants like Lilian talked about romantic attachments to 'non white' men, despite their parent's views against this. Rosemary, who talked about her father's views against interracial marriage, described how she made sense of her 'transgression'.

Helen: Yeah mm, mm, mm, um have you ever been attracted to or had a relationship with someone from another culture you mentioned in when you were England?

Rosemary: In England, I did yes with a West Indian. (Laughter) They are gorgeous looking sort of people aren't they?

Helen: Mm, mm.

Rosemary: They're gorgeous aren't they but ah - (speaking tailed off).

Helen: Yes, have any members of your family married or been in a close relationship with someone from another culture?

Rosemary: Um oh I think I went out with that black person in London and um and Susie [Rosemary's sister] went out with a fellow for quite a wee while. Yeah, I think so, yeah.

Helen: Did that - How did that affect family relations?

Rosemary: Well, I think we both might have been away.

Helen: Right, so you were away from family so-

Rosemary: Yeah I think so, yep.

Helen: How do you think it would have affected your family?

Rosemary: Oh, they would be -, I am quite sure that they just didn't - I think that my mother still doesn't think you should marry another culture.

This excerpt of Rosemary's demonstrates that despite both her parents' views against choosing a partner from another culture, she was clearly attracted to the West Indian/ 'black' man whom she met in London. Rosemary reveals how she and her sister were able to manage/overlook their parents' views because they were away overseas. However, when asked to imagine her parent's response if they knew, Rosemary indicated that her mother in particular, at the time of the interview, still held views against intercultural marriage. Lilian and Rosemary, as well as other participants, had learned that their family constructions of the racialised masculinity of 'non white' men were out of bounds for 'white' women as potential partners. A number of participants ignored that prohibition to pursue brief encounters with 'non white' men and some like Lilian, were not able to break that taboo despite their romantic wish/desire to do so.

One of the interview strategies that I used to facilitate talk about being 'white' was to encourage participants to recollect situations where they were in a culturally numerical minority. My assumption was that because the dominance of 'white' racialisation is invisible to those constituted within the discourse, only in situations/events/experiences in which their difference had the potential to take away that comfort of familiar and supportive ground, would some consciousness of difference be noticeable. In response to this prompting, a number of participants talked about their experiences of being scared and frightened, seemingly based on their constructions of threatening racialised masculinities. This stereotypical conception included participants' fear that these racialised 'black' men were likely to cause the participants harm whether there was any evidence of malevolent intent or not. Some participants did relate insights that they developed from these experiences.

Lilian, who had talked about her attraction to an African prince, answered my question about being in a racialised minority with the following story:

Helen: Um have you ever been in a situation where you have become aware that you were 'white' and you were different or you were in a minority?

Lilian: I can't remember, Helen, where it was. But I do know that in um, um, in parts of London too, [it was um] there were certain parts of London that you wouldn't walk down in areas like K. Like, we went to look at a flat

and you get off the tube. Um, I had to walk past all these houses where the young West Indian men and Negroes all sitting out in the summer. And if you - and I couldn't take that flat because I wouldn't have been with all, you know, ten men sitting outside house, after house, after house um I was scared. Mm.

Helen: Yes, right, so you didn't feel safe?

Lilian: Whereas perhaps with 'white' guys - oh, you know, I wouldn't have liked that either but it was just a different culture they would all be outside on their front lawn looking at people going past.

Lilian's narrative described her response to being a minority and 'under surveillance', which was similar to those recounted by other participants (Fine, 1995; Frankenberg, 1993). Lilian did not claim that these men had shown any threatening behaviour towards her; however, her response to this experience was to find a flat elsewhere. The unfamiliarity of being 'under surveillance' and the prospective of having to face groups of West Indian men looking at her as part of her everyday experience was a situation that Lilian could and did avoid (Fine, 1995). In her last remark, Lilian began to make a comparison with 'white' men then paused and appeared to change her rationale. A number of participants articulated representations of racialised 'non white' masculinities, especially **groups** of 'black' men as threatening, despite their perceptions of individual 'black' men that they had a romantic attachment to as beautiful, gorgeous, lovely and handsome.

Michelle, who had lived in varied communities in her childhood, also talked about her experiences of being a numerical minority. In addition, she compared her responses in three different contexts. I analyse her account in sections as her explanation in long. In her first example, Michelle described a family visit to a pub in a small North Island town. She said, "...Then we popped into the pub and we were the only 'whites' there and we were not - it was a really quite hostile feeling". Michelle continued, making a comparison between her experience as a minority within Aotearoa and her experiences of being a cultural minority overseas:

Michelle: Yeah, I noticed in places like Hong Kong too, or when you travel, like say Turkey. I was certainly the only one, the only 'white' female around for a long way.

Helen: How did those situations compare like in a situation, in like say a pub near R., did you feel - What was the difference compared to Turkey, was there a difference?

Michelle: I felt much more comfortable in places like Turkey, places in J. [where] I have been the only 'white' person there.

Helen: Right, Mm.

Michelle: [In] F. When I was a student, I lived in a village for a month and I was the only 'white' person. A lot of them had never seen actually - Yeah, I have never felt, I have never felt fear, but I have in New Zealand.

Michelle described the different feelings that she had in response to being a minority. In those environments where she was an international visitor, Michelle explained that she did not feel the fear that she experienced in New Zealand. Michelle Fine (1995) suggests that 'white' people have little knowledge of the 'experience of surveillance' that those who are not members of the dominant group experience on a daily basis. Fine adds that when 'white' people enter an environment in which they are the minority, they may feel subjected to looks that they are unaccustomed to experiencing in their daily lives. They can feel "under surveillance" with the "kinds of looks" that they receive. I asked Michelle another question:

Helen: Yeah, right, right. And was that related to how people interacted with you or was it just a feeling within yourself?

Michelle: Yes, it was certainly - you pick up vibes. In cases like R. where there may well be good reason for it but you certainly could feel hostility and you didn't belong there.

Michelle articulated clearly that she felt that she did not belong. She did not point to anything specific apart from her sense that there was hostility and she could "pick up the vibes". The significance of Michelle's account was her assessment that her fear was greater in Aotearoa, in her own country where she would normally not be under surveillance, than she felt in places where as a stranger she clearly accepted that she did not belong. The racialised power dynamics which are inherent in the occupation of space, and the tensions that are evident in a struggle over the 'normality/control' of that space, may have contributed to this discourse. There was also a sense of victimisation in this discourse that participants tended to retreat into when they felt 'under surveillance'. Alice McIntyre (1997) expressed her frustration with her 'white' focus group participants as they retreated into 'white' talk as a defence when describing a situation where they were "under surveillance" by "others".

Participants' narratives demonstrated that their parents' and their own constructions of racialised femininities and racialised masculinities were not fixed and consistent but were dynamic and changing, often in relation to the context of the situation and the level of power/control that participants perceived they had in their surroundings (Bell, 1996; Frankenberg, 1993; Hage, 1998).

Intercultural Relationships

In the previous discussion, some participants' narratives concerning their parents' views against intercultural relationships are evident in the excerpts given. Most participants offered that their understandings, that their views as adults were more tolerant than their parents' views. When I prompted some participants for some detail about their beliefs, particularly in relation to themselves and their own children forming intercultural relationships, their certainty often subsided as they struggled with racialised 'non white' images and their assessment of the 'degree of colour' that was conscionable/tolerable in a potential partner. Ruth Frankenberg (1993) describes this perspective well. She states "... [I]mplicitly, then, biology is seen as underscoring culture and an argument is being made that race is an essentially biological difference" (p.95). Rosemary, who as a young woman had dated a "gorgeous" West Indian (her description) when overseas and who said that her views were different to her parents, talked about her daughter's present boyfriend whom she had indicated elsewhere in her interview, was a New Zealander:

Helen: How would you feel if any of your kids married or developed a close relationship with someone from another culture how would you feel about that?

Rosemary: Um, well, S is friendly with someone who is from another culture. I am so bad, I do not know. He is um, he is not Samoan, he is um not Fijian, he has - His father is from one of the Islands, the Pacific Islands, yeah.

Helen: Well what does that feel like or what are your thoughts about that?

Rosemary: Well, just, I mean slightly, but only - I mean to say, I mean, you know, people's happiness is the main thing. People getting along, and happiness, the way people are, is much more important than - But look, if he was perhaps black, I don't know, if maybe - I was -, Oh that sound[s] terrible! (Laughter) I mean if he was really, really dark -

This excerpt illustrates the struggle that Rosemary is having, communicating her concerns about her daughter's friendship with a man who is not Pākehā. Her difficulty is an example of a dilemma that Taylor and Wetherell (1995) describe where participants attempt to reconcile their discriminatory views with not wishing to appear prejudiced. Rosemary's response covers a range of feelings and contradictory views. She admonishes herself twice in her response. Frances Raines (1997) suggests that this form of self-censure is a linguistic device, which works to reduce the impact of prejudicial *essentialist* views. Rosemary stresses that peoples' happiness in relationships as paramount. Nevertheless, Rosemary is also attempting to reconcile her concern about her daughter's relationship with a man with Pacific heritage. The confines of this discourse place Rosemary in a quandary for it does not enable her to reconcile her contradictory views. Rosemary uses a discourse that constructs groups and people in biological terms as though biological makeup rather than socialisation or experience determines group participation.

As Rosemary continued her explanation, she reveals her internal contradictory rationale. She puts limits around happiness by juxtaposing "but if he were black". Rosemary then appears to correct herself by suggesting a 'worst case scenario' -such as "if he was really, really dark". With the prejudicial logic of this projection, Rosemary just stopped speaking, and her explanation just petered out. A number of participants, like Rosemary, appeared to censure themselves as they attempted to present a reasonable tolerant view; however they only had the language of *essentialist* racism to draw on to explain their perspective. Frequently participants' explanations tailed off as they appeared to evaluate their rationale as illogical and possibly prejudiced (Raines, 1998). I discuss evidence of this type of silencing in chapter seven.

Another participant Sarah gave a more consistent account of her own view of intercultural romances and relationships. Sarah's narrative follows:

Helen: Um yes how would your parents have felt if you had developed a close relationship with a person of another culture? How would they have responded do you think?

Sarah: They probably deep down they may not have been that happy, I am not sure. But they probably would have [been happy] yeah, maybe, as long

as it wasn't Chinese. I don't know but I am not sure. It didn't really happen, I think probably way back or even the generation before me, they were more concerned with the religious persuasion of the partner as opposed to what culture they were... And so, I mean, sort of, the religious thing was probably more important back then than perhaps, than inter-racial marriages.

What is notable about Sarah's discussion was her interpretation of her parents' outlook in this regard. Sarah's description exposed discourses that a number of other participants attributed to their parents and grandparents. Sarah's response presented an implicit admonition against intercultural marriage and along with six other participants she emphasized two other criteria that were on the list of prohibitions of marriage with Catholics or Chinese. Sarah reported receiving clear prejudicial messages about Chinese. A number of other participants also recounted being aware of similar proscriptions as children.

There is a well-recorded legislative history of racism against the Chinese in Aotearoa, particularly in Governmental policies. Chinese were the only ethnic group subjected to the levying of a poll tax (1881). The gold rush of the late 1800s was a draw card for Chinese immigration; consequently, the majority of immigrants were men. Legislation introduced in the late 1800s and remaining in place up until the second half of the twentieth century, fed into and maintained the common sense understanding that the 'Yellow Peril' would threaten "the racial purity of the re-creation of a Britain in the South Pacific" (Ip in Du Plessis and Alice, 1998). Therefore, it was not surprising that some participants emphasized the significance of prejudice about Chinese, particularly for 'white' women, as very few Chinese women were permitted to immigrate. At present, there has been increasing immigration of Asian peoples to Aotearoa, which is bringing these buried sentiments to the surface in many New Zealanders' responses to the changing population demographics that contemporary immigration into Aotearoa is presenting.

Deborah was in her fifties at the time of her interview and had been married to an African man. When she and I were discussing intercultural relationships, we talked about responses that she had had from people about her marriage to a 'black' man.

Deborah pointed out that her family had discussed intercultural relationships a number of times as two of her brothers had married women from other cultures.

Helen: What effects did that have on you as a woman in an intercultural marriage given that commonsense and popular understanding, what experiences?

Deborah: Well I don't think mine was a common experience. I married a man much younger than myself. Fifteen years younger than me - he was stunningly attractive and I am not. So just visibly, it was quite a difference. So it did cause a lot of staring for a start when we went out in public.

Helen: Mm.

Deborah: That was one aspect. The second aspect was the racist yahoos around who caused me pain by commenting on his skin colour. They never commented on mine but they commented on his. So there were those elements that were peripheral to the relationship.

Helen: So those comments that hurt you did they come from people of a particular identity?

Deborah: 'white' males.

Helen: Yes.

Deborah specifically mentioned two aspects that influenced her in the relationship, although she initially indicated, only peripherally. These external effects related to her view of her young husband's attractiveness compared to her looks and his skin colour, which she recounted was the subject of 'white' males' prejudiced comments. Although Deborah was the only participant in my study who had a 'black' husband (her terminology), her experience in witnessing the surveillance that her husband was under by both 'white' men and 'white' women was similar to Frankenberg's (1993) participants' experiences. A consistent aspect of the discursive practice was the focus of attention and surveillance that was always focused on the person 'with colour' (Fine, 1995).

Deborah's account demonstrated that her intercultural relationship represented an interruption to social normativity, such that strangers stared and made prejudiced comments (Fine, 1995). Deborah continued her narrative without any prompting to describe how 'white' women reacted to her marriage to an African man:

Deborah: There was also a particular kind of 'white' female who I suppose, couldn't believe that I was really the partner of this stunningly attractive man, who would come up and try and pick him up before my very eyes.

But I have heard of other 'white' women married to black men, who've had exactly the same experience; who were actually of the same age as the man, quite attractive! So, now I know that that's quite a common thing that happens - It's a form of soliciting really. Women going up and offering themselves to a black man who they think is out looking for women.

Helen: Yes, Mm.

Deborah: There is also the perception that all black men are out after all 'white' women.

Deborah's description of her experience and her view of some 'white' women's behaviour towards her and her husband, illustrated that her marriage to an African man placed her in direct contact with other Pākehā women's racism. Deborah's account of her experience contrasted with the other participants who, although located within a system of 'white' domination, did not experience/see racism because their informal social environments and their discursive environments militated against their conscious awareness of these racialised power relations. Frankenberg (1993) found that her participants who were in interracial relationships articulated similar experiences of prejudice. She comments, "As parents and partners of people of color, the women I talked with witnessed and experienced the effects of racism much more directly than most other white people" (p.135).

Andrea was in her forties at the time of her interview and she was intending to continue her academic studies overseas. She had talked about her involvement with Māori in her university work and she emphasized how much she learnt from that experience. When I asked Andrea whether she had much contact with "other" cultures in her childhood she commented on her family's prejudiced perspectives toward other groups.

Andrea: I think my grandmother who I didn't actually talk to about it, but sort of heard second hand stories from my mother. She was very anti-Catholic and racist. A Scottish woman um who couldn't stand coloured people just totally, totally - and I think my father is that way inclined as well. He was terrible - (laughter) It's really difficult and I actually thought a couple of weeks ago if he wasn't my father I would never talk to him again. (Laughter) Never, ever.

Andrea's account revealed how families communicated prejudice through second-hand stories. Someone else, such as Andrea's mother, let Andrea know what her grandmother's prejudices were, even though Andrea had not heard her grandmother

voice such prejudices herself. For some participants, they received this information often as a caution to inform them who was a suitable friend/boyfriend. Although Andrea expressed her difficulties with her father's prejudice, she interspersed her words with some laughter.

Participants appeared to laugh when they were frustrated and incredulous about the intractability of their family member's prejudice. Andrea's comment that she "would never speak to him (her father) again, never, ever!" implied frustration. Andrea's laughter did not convey humour, although with some participants this response often had the effect of minimising the prejudice and distancing themselves from it. Stephanie Taylor and Margaret Wetherell, (1995) found in their research that participants often managed the dilemma of "reconciling negative attitudes with not wishing to appear prejudiced... by softening the impact of prejudiced statements and presenting them as jokes" (p.79).

Andrea's predicament highlights the tensions that arose for participants as they attempted to negotiate the confines and contradictions between their sense of being fair and reasonable and the limitations of the assimilative or *essentialist* discourses that they had available. I was conscious of and empathised with their struggle to talk about these complex and personal issues. At times, participants illustrated their recognition of the failure of the *essentialist* or *colour/power evasive* discourses to express their ideas adequately (discussed on pages 23-25). Some, like Rosemary, left their attempts unfinished, as they knew that their words were failing them (Frankenberg, 1993).

Participants' accounts illustrated that the subtle messages that they received about Whiteness and what it means to be 'white' generally changed as they reached their teenage years. They recounted that their parents usually overtly expressed their sentiments especially when the participants were contemplating an intercultural romance. In this circumstance, participants articulated that they were explicit objects of the discourse, excluding intercultural romances and partnerships (Frankenberg, 1993). A consistent message that participants received in their home environment was that the good/wise 'white' woman acted in racial solidarity and did not choose a partner outside the boundaries of 'white' culture/ 'race'.

The Children of ‘Mixed’ Marriages

“It’s very sad for the children.” (Deborah 10/10/97)

The interviewees in this study presented a range of perspectives about children of so-called ‘mixed’ marriages. Generally, participants couched their accounts in terms of concern for the welfare of the children of these alliances. There was an impression conveyed that the boundaries between ‘white’ and “other” cultures are fixed and should be maintained as such. The image of ‘interracial’ children not fitting into either cultural group was frequent. Participants viewed the boundaries of culture as rigid and inflexible and they perceived children of ‘mixed’ marriages would slip between these boundaries and have nowhere to belong (Frankenberg 1993).

Deborah had been married to an African and I asked her what she believed that most Pākehā thought about intercultural marriage.

Helen: Mm. Um I want follow up on that um you were saying about being married to an African. Um, how would you say, how would you describe the commonsense understanding or popular conception about intercultural marriage here in New Zealand?

Deborah: Oh, it’s very sad for the children.

Helen: So why is that?

Deborah: Well because the popular conception is that adults can cope with the relationship but the children are going to be half-caste ... that’s the popular conception or it was up until perhaps very recently. I don’t know if it’s changed.

Helen: So you think there’s quite a discourse against interracial marriage here in New Zealand you think it’s -

Deborah: There was, I think that’s faded in recent times.

Deborah was clear that there had been a popular belief in Aotearoa that intercultural marriages were sad for the children. Deborah’s explanation illustrated her perception that this discourse against intercultural relationships was based on a fixed *essentialist* conception that maintains an appropriate separation between racial/cultural groups (Frankenberg, 1993). She perceived that people differentiated between the implications of such a relationship for adults and children. Deborah articulated that the children were vulnerable because Pākehā would identify them as “half-caste”, which implies that the children would not be accepted by either of their parents’ communities (Frankenberg, 1993).

Diane explicitly articulated her concern about where children would fit after a lengthy preface about her struggle with what she described as racist discourses that she indicted that she had ‘inherited’.

Helen: Um how would you feel if any of your kids married or developed a close relationship with someone from another culture?

Diane: Yeah, I think some of those family things would come up. Not I think - I know it.

Helen: Yes (laughter).

Diane: I know they - and I know that I would really have to go into myself and look and move forward. And I would be prepared to do that. But yeah, it would come up - my um familial inheritance you know, which [had] has been handed on to me, would be there.

Helen: Yes, yes.

Diane: um and I am aware that they are there because sometimes I get caught short by them. And I think I don't want to feel like that because that's not me. But it's that real ingrained stuff from way back.

Helen: And it's that constant thing of sort being on guard for it, isn't [it] too

Diane: Yeah.

Helen: You know that constant - yeah, yeah I find that.

Diane: And it's - , yeah.

Helen: You have to be aware and it takes a lot of energy to do all that too, doesn't it!

Diane: It does, it does. But yeah, I have always and I guess part of my thing would be that the struggle that they [Diane's parents] would have.

Helen: Yes, yes.

Diane: Because I don't, I mean that would be part of it. And it's hard enough as it is, in a relationship without the added pressures of an interracial relationship. Um and what that means for children, who do they belong to? You know, I mean it's all that torn kind of stuff. So, um, it wouldn't be just for myself, it would be for them and yeah, yeah.

Diane's response included her assumptions about the implications for her parents, herself and the children that may come as part of such a marriage. She deployed/inhabited an *essentialist* discourse similar to that which Frankenberg (1993) found among her participants. Diane focused on her concern for her parents and the struggle that she knew they would have. The rationale that Diane relied on in articulating her concern for the children of an intercultural marriage replicates a conception of culture/race as fixed and separate.

Diane poses a rhetorical question about the children, "...who do they belong to?"

Embedded in this logic appears to be a sense that the children can only, and have no option but to belong to/take on one or other parent's culture. There is an impression of a sense of loss in Diane's story as she comments, "I mean it's all that torn kind of stuff. So, um, it wouldn't be just for me, it would be for them, yeah." (17.9.97) Frankenberg (1993) argues that these understandings "... depend on notions of belonging or identity as fundamentally based on biology, of racial differences as absolute on the presumption that cultural communities exist entirely separately from one another and on exactly symmetrical distaste of all cultural communities for one another" (p.126).

A significant aspect of this account from Diane was how she prefaced her concerns about intercultural relationships with poignant expressions of her struggle with her "familial inheritance, the ingrained stuff", which she acknowledges she is "aware that they are there, because sometimes" she gets "caught short by them." Diane goes on to emphasize, "I don't want to feel like that because that's not me." This final statement reveals the tensions that Diane experienced and her struggle with the limiting and unrelenting discourses which were available to her.

Rosemary also used a similar discourse when she was responding to my question about her parent's reactions to intercultural marriage. Rosemary was clear that the children and one of the partner's joins the other's culture (Frankenberg, 1993). Rosemary said that her parents would be a bit concerned, and she continued with her reason why she thinks they would be concerned.

Rosemary: 'Coos they always sort of felt that it is quite hard on children. However, because the two cultures are say different, usually one goes, one goes the other way, don't they!
 Helen: Are you thinking its - one-person joins the other -
 Rosemary: The other culture, yes. I mean a lot of male Europeans would join the wife's, because the cultures are very different, aren't they!

Rosemary's explanation maintains a fixed, rigid boundary between two groups in which one has to cross from one to the other in the sense of leaving one culture to join another. This *essentialist* discourse takes no cognisance of the socially constructed and dynamic nature of culture and cultural belonging (see pp. 23-27). A number of participants gradually regressed into this rigid binary opposition in their explanations about culture

and cultural belonging especially when attempting to make sense of their stand against intercultural relationships.

The previous three excerpts illustrate that these participants all expressed understandings about culture linked to racial ascriptions that have rigid boundaries (Frankenberg, 1993; Wellman, 1996). Concerns about belonging that both Diane and Rosemary expressed revealed the limitations that their conceptions 'allowed' in describing the complexities, fluidity and dynamic nature of human relationships, although Diane was able to articulate her dilemma. Deborah, on the other hand, was reporting her view of common Pākehā understandings which she did not necessarily hold.

I asked all participants what it was like for them to talk about their racialisation and whether they had thought much about the matters that we were discussing. Most participants indicated that they had not thought much about them. When I asked Juliette whether she had thought much about the questions, her reply indicated that she had thought about the particular question in some depth. Her friend's situation prompted Juliette to focus on intercultural marriage and the implications of having a bicultural grandchild. Juliette's friend, around the time of her interview, had become a grandmother to a 'black' grandchild. (Juliette's description)

Helen: Have you thought much about the questions that I have been asking.

Juliette: I'm just aware of all those kind of um cultural differences, many cultural differences in race and ethnicity; it's just another one of them.

Helen: Yes, yes. That's right.

Juliette: I sometimes wondered about, to do with the colour, like of my kids, like if my daughter was to get into a relationship with a Māori or a Negro or another ethnicity with a dark skin, what would it be like to have a black grandchild? I have a friend with a black grandchild.

Helen: Mm. Mm.

Juliette: And I was really thinking about that when he was born. I thought, I wonder - and in fact some other friends do as well - and I just wonder how that would be and I wouldn't know until I - I honestly wouldn't know. I don't think it would make a difference and it might! I don't think it would make a difference how I related with the child, but it might make a difference in how I felt when I was out and about with it.

Helen: Mm. Mm.

Juliette: I don't know I think there might be something that would be a bit

different. I mean kids have to learn what they need to learn and if that's part of their learning then go for it. But I do think it adds another - It's just such a different model of the world trying to bring them together.

Juliette's reflective response demonstrated that she had discussed this situation with other friends and was trying to imagine her daughter having a 'black' child. Juliette's reflections included her speculating how such a situation would influence Juliette herself. Although Juliette surmised that, it would not make a difference to how she related to the child, she appears to be struggling with the discourse of *essentialist* understandings that maintains that a person's 'colour' does make a difference. The only way that Juliette seemed able to describe her thoughts and feelings was to imagine going "out and about" with the child. She appeared to be wrestling with the physicality of a 'black' child and how that would affect how she might feel and how others might see them. Juliette acknowledged that the situation would be different; however, she was having difficulty specifically articulating what that difference might be.

The discourse of Whiteness that Juliette deployed/inhabited in this instance, illustrated that she was working through how she might respond to the "experience of surveillance" that Fine (1995) identifies and which she and her grandchild might face as a 'white' woman "out and about" with a 'black' grandchild. Juliette appeared to be wrestling with the tension she would feel for her 'black' grandchild and possibly herself as objects of that surveillance.

In a sense, Juliette was illustrating her knowledge of the effect of an *essentialist* discourse, which few participants discussed apart from Deborah who had an African husband. Frankenberg (1993) asserts that 'white' women who have interracial relationships provide a different perspective, one that incorporates their direct experiences and the impact of a discourse against interracial marriage. Although Juliette was explaining her responses through describing an imaginary situation, her struggle implied that she was aware of the impact that an 'experience of surveillance' might have. Juliette's articulation of her understanding of *essentialist* discourses bears out Frankenberg's findings, as she was able to express how she thought that they might affect her as an object of surveillance. Juliette's final comments showed that she was accepting of the possibility that her kids might choose an intercultural marriage. She

also acknowledges her understanding that a convergence of two different models of the world adds another dimension.

Dorothy was the youngest participant to take part in my research, had a tertiary qualification, and described herself as upper middle class. Dorothy had talked frequently about her parents' commitment to working against apartheid in South Africa. She had recounted her experiences of her family stay in China when she was quite young. Dorothy's response to the question about intercultural relationships conveyed her parents' unique perspective, which was favourable to intercultural marriage and had asked Dorothy to differentiate between European and non-European. For many participants, I found that this distinction usually evoked some articulation of a departure from or moderation of their initially tolerant conceptions.

Helen: Yeah, yeah um how would your parents feel do you think, if you had developed a close relationship with someone from another culture or if you married them?

Dorothy: Right I don't think they would mind at all.

Helen: Would it make a difference which culture, like would skin colour have a sort of a difference in that as opposed to say you married someone German or Māori would there, do you think there would be a difference between their responses to those?

Dorothy: Yeah I think so I mean I think so. If I did develop a close relationship with - , especially with someone who was Māori or Pacific Islander? They would probably be very interested because they don't have much to do with the culture and I think they would be interested too. But they don't really feel they have any way in.

Helen: Yeah, right, right, yeah.

Dorothy: I don't think they would mind at all in fact I think they would be more than happy. But also I think they don't [interfere] so they wouldn't push me in any way, in either way.

Dorothy representation of her parents' views was that not only would they not mind such a possibility for an intercultural relationship especially with a non-European man; they would welcome such relationship. Dorothy considers that her parents believe that because they may have had little contact with and therefore limited knowledge of the culture, an intercultural marriage in the family would be a vehicle for extending their knowledge of that particular community. No other participant appeared to have this discourse available in their interpretations of their parents' understandings. Dorothy's

positioning to this query was a refreshingly positive variation to the more common discursive prohibition against intercultural relationships which most participants articulated. Although some participants deployed a *race cognizant* discourse, which is linked to the 60s and 70s liberation movements and to the broader global struggles for decolonisation at times in our discussions, Dorothy was the only participant to talk about her parents' critical social analysis and their involvement in anti-apartheid activism (Frankenberg, 1993).

Conclusion

The participants gave a number of accounts of how they learned what their families expected of them as respectable and 'proper' 'white' girls/women. For participants, their home was more commonly a cultural space where, in the context of racialised family relations, becoming a good girl was often bound to matters of racial loyalty and solidarity (Moon, 1999).

The majority of participants used the terms 'race' and culture interchangeably, seemingly conflating their interpretations of culture and 'race'. A discourse that is based on constructions of 'race' difference as "real" and "essential" that are based on a biological construction of racial and cultural groups as entirely and appropriately separate (Frankenberg, 1993). It became apparent as each interview progressed, that participants' tended to slip into discourses that enabled the expression of 'race'-specific terms, especially when discussing intercultural relationships. At times participants appeared to struggle to find the words to communicate their thoughts and feelings.

Overall, this reading and analysis enabled the grouping of participants' accounts into three racialised communication practices that were significant in their socialisation. The first, were the general **implicit messages** about racialised "others" that participants absorbed from their extended family, as well as their parents' general expectations of the participants themselves in this regard such as Rosemary's comment "we always sort of got the message you shouldn't marry another race" (24.9.97). Often participants could not articulate anything specific.

The second group of responses pertain to the participants' families' more overtly spoken views of intercultural relationships generally, and the **specifically verbalised views** that participants received from their parents about, and mostly against, the participants' own potential for entering intercultural relationships. The third communicative style entailed the participants' **own expressed views** about 'different' people, about intercultural relationships generally as well as their thoughts and feelings about their children forming intercultural relationships. Their experiences of being in situations where participants were/or felt in a minority evoked expressions of discomfort about their unfamiliarity with being under surveillance (Fine, 1995).

The discourses of racialised Whiteness came through in participants' discussions about the prohibition among the Pākehā community against intercultural romances and relationships. These discourses were often expressed quite explicitly when the participants were in their teens and older, sometimes to the astonishment of the participants. Participants often remembered these events in detail.

These discourses held constructions of racialised femininity, in particular 'white' racialised femininities, and conceptions of racialised masculinities, which focused on non-'white' racialised masculinities. A number of the interview questions evoked responses from the participants that revealed their use of persistent remnants of racialised biological understandings of human difference. These understandings concern three general beliefs. The first belief located difference in terms of a biologically determined essence such as a person's skin colour. This skin colour could indicate in degrees a primary determinant of a person's identity. The second racialised conception was that of 'white' women as objects of this discourse, which holds them responsible to draw and maintain boundaries around Whiteness. The crucial method of maintaining these boundaries was a prohibition against romantic attachments or permanent relationships with "other" men.

The third belief underlying participants' accounts involved the perception that rigid boundaries separate cultural groups and that in intercultural marriages, one partner is perceived to have no option but to cross the boundary and to leave their own culture behind and sometimes the children are perceived not to fit within either group. Overall,

in initial discussions with participants about what it means to be ‘white’, participants generally showed a reluctance to use ‘race’ explicit language, presumably to avoid a perception that they were prejudiced. As our dialogue developed into more detail about participants’ ideas and feelings, they appeared to have no language to express or articulate their thoughts, impressions and/or feelings, other than through these essentialised ‘race’ specific terms (Crenshaw, 1997).

This reading and analysis of participants’ discourses of racialisation, in particular their discourses of ‘white’ racialised femininity, shows some limitations in these Pākehā women’s capacity to move beyond discourses originating in nineteenth century imperialism. As stated earlier, participants demonstrated an initial resistance to but an eventual capitulation to *essentialist* understandings of difference and racialised terminology to describe ‘difference’. Their only available discourses were clearly limiting their ability to rationalize/explain adequately their point of view.

Frankenberg’s (1993) assertion of the significance of the primary origins of *essentialist* understandings about ‘race’ with which other racialised discourses are required to engage, has much explanatory force. The crucial aspect of this rationale is the confines of an understanding that is unable to “separate difference from domination” (Frankenberg, 1993). Current cultural beliefs in the legitimacy of and preference for a notion of egalitarianism in Aotearoa are often interpreted as prohibiting an acknowledgement of difference/domination.

Many participants expressed concern about the impact of intercultural marriage on the children. Differences in skin colour, including how the parties involved are able to manage the visual difference, underpinned much of this discourse. These responses appeared to arise from some tacit acknowledgement of the racial prejudice of many Pākehā, however the perception that rigid boundaries separate cultural groups was the most significant apprehension. This conception premised a belief that a partner, and sometimes the children of intercultural relationships had no option other than to cross a boundary from one group to another. Included in this perception is an expectation that they leave their own culture behind. An additional element was present in the discourse that conceives that the children might become “lost” and may not “fit” within either parent’s cultural group, which reflects the participants’ concern about cultural

belonging.

PART III

Chapter Six

The Ideals of White Womanhood: Discourses of Bourgeois Decorum

The bourgeois notion of womanhood plays a central role in the production and reproduction of Whiteness, a Whiteness that is closely tied to the dominant culture.

Moon, (1999 p.179)

Introduction

Charles Mills, (2003) highlights a key understanding that any researcher needs to incorporate into their analysis when exploring racialised discourses, in particular discourses of Whiteness. He asserts that an establishment of “a simple sociological and political truth, widely known in the western sociological tradition”, which recognises that social power relations “can survive the formal dismantling of their overt supports” (p.36). In other words, Mills claims that ‘white’ supremacy, of which racialised discourses are a contributing force, has only moved from “de jure” to “de facto” forms.

This contemporary dynamic presents a key to understanding how relations of domination do not continue of their own accord. Subtle and unwitting communication practices and discursive strategies continually maintain and reproduce these inequitable social relations. Dreama Moon’s (1999) research presents evidence of racialised formulations, of a deployment of Whiteness in the discursive choices and communicative practices among her ‘white’ middle class women participants in United States. Her study revealed that the ‘white’ **middle class** family home, as cultural space, was an important site of socialisation that reproduced and maintained the production of ‘good’ ‘white’ girls/women.

In my study, an aspect of analysis was to investigate whether and how racialised discourses were manifest in participants’ family relationships and interactions. Subsequently, as the analysis process progressed, consistent patterns began to surface relating to the actual communication practices and discursive strategies of the participants during the interviews. Through this particular analysis a strong theme of

bourgeois decorum emerged, a repertoire of strategies that appeared to censor rigorous opposition and a resistance to party lines expressed as a form of women's middle class respectability (hooks, 1994). This theme permeated participants' accounts of their perceptions of their role as 'white' women and became evident when they were discussing their family relations. The following discussion focuses on participants' discourses during the interviews that contained implicit ideals of racialisation **and class**, that of 'white middle class-ness', which appeared to mediate the socialisation of these Pākehā women in Aotearoa.

There was some variation in the class claims of the participants. Seven of the 28 participants specifically articulated that they grew up in working class families while the remainder described themselves as middleclass or upper middleclass. The seven participants accounts of their socialisation as women within a working class environment suggested that their families valued ideals of gentility in the form of civility in a similar way to those who lived in middle class homes. This form of gentility, Kathie Davy (1995) maintains, is "the bedrock of imperialism" (p.198). Thus, any 'white' woman, regardless of class position, can aspire to become a 'good ('white') girl' through the acquisition of a racialised notion of bourgeois respectability based on racial loyalty (Moon, 1999).

In this chapter, I focus on some communication practices and discursive choices/strategies that all participants engaged in during the interviews as well as their reported interactions among their families/significant others. This chapter has two themes; the first reveals the implicit although effective means through which the notion of feminine bourgeois decorum mediated the maintenance and reproduction of Whiteness in participants' accounts. The second theme examines how 'white' bourgeois femininity was available to the seven Pākehā women who asserted a working class background. An analysis of these participants' accounts revealed how the racialisation of 'white' bourgeois femininity was an important function of their working class upbringing. I do not address the significance of class in any detail beyond these two themes.

Bourgeois Decorum and ‘White’ Women

Hooks (1994) describes bourgeois decorum as a repertoire of strategies that censor rigorous opposition and resistance to party lines. This strategy of silencing dissident voices enables dominant ideologies to remain unchallenged and harmony maintained (Moon, 1999). The notion of bourgeois decorum mediated participants’ accounts and permeated participants’ reports of their families’ views and interactions. These discursive choices concerned the manner in which participants’ deployed bourgeois decorum through the operations of ‘*whitespeak*’, which Moon (1999) explains provides ‘white’ subjects with a discursive detachment from issues of ‘race’ by focusing on what is “**not-said**” (p.188). These forms consisted of three linguistic strategies that participants used to distance themselves from what they appeared to perceive as the “problem of ‘white’ supremacy/racism”. The forms included the use of euphemisms about racism or prejudice, the subjectification of racism, and the use of passive voice, which often attributed disembodied subjects as responsible for the reproduction of ‘white’ supremacy/racism.

Euphemisms in ‘Whitespeak’

Many participants drew on euphemisms as a discursive strategy. These linguistic devices contribute to the relations of domination as a form of bourgeois decorum because they allow sophisticated/acceptable discussions of potentially objectionable/taboo topics. The participants in my study deployed the use of euphemisms frequently in our interactions. Tamara, a participant who grew up in a small working class railway settlement in the North Island used a euphemistic form when she was talking about her father’s prejudice. I was attempting to clarify how she viewed his understanding, especially his tendency to express his perspective freely.

Helen: Right, so you were saying about your father - You thought it was, sort of naivety or...

Tamara: Perversity (Laughter)... Yeah although sometimes - well to me, I suppose later, I used to feel that he was, by speaking like that, it was really sort of in a derogatory sort of way, I don’t know.

Tamara's description and the manner in which she expressed it, demonstrated that she had reflected on her father's habit of openly expressing his prejudice. Initially Tamara described his behaviour as perverse and followed this comment with laughter. Then, using devices such as "*sometimes; ...I suppose; ...sort of; ...I don't know*", Tamara, claimed his speech was derogatory. This description and the manner in which Tamara expressed her response suggest an inherent tension. She articulated the prejudicial nature of her father's behaviour and his racialised discourse. However, tag expressions of uncertainty/hesitancy also simultaneously softened her critique of him. The overall effect of Tamara's articulations appeared to deem her father's discriminatory behaviour more palatable.

Another participant Lilian had grown up in the same monocultural environment most of her life, apart from travel overseas. She and I had been talking about the difficulty in finding words to talk about being 'white' and she was saying, in a similar way to other participants, that she had not thought much about it.

Lilian: I don't really think about it a lot of the time I think it is probably what you get from the different people. You take who you are and if you are comfortable being who you are, it doesn't bother you. Well that's what I think anyway.

Helen: Yeah, Mm. So you haven't thought about it before?

Lilian: Well, just - If I had a choice I would probably be 'white' every time because of the hassles that go with some of the others, which is unfair.

Lilian clearly acknowledged advantages in being seen as 'white', declaring that she would choose being 'white' every time because of the "hassles" to which "others" were subjected. What was significant about Lilian's comment was that elsewhere in her interview, Lilian had acknowledged the serious impact of colonization on Māori and she said she had participated in an "excellent" Treaty of Waitangi workshop (Lilian's description) through her work place. These workshops explicitly outline factual information about colonisation in Aotearoa and the legal contraventions of the Treaty since 1840, including historical and contemporary impacts on Māori¹⁸. The apparent contradiction that the discourse enables, between Lilian's minimization in this excerpt

¹⁸ I have been involved in this form of social justice/antiracist education for some years.

and her knowledge and recognition of the impact of colonisation, reveals a usefulness of the euphemisms as common and pivotal features of a Whiteness discourse.

The contradiction in Lilian's different accounts, involved two important ideological premises. The first separates individual acts of prejudice and discrimination from systemic inequalities, and the second premise suspends the discourse user's ability to link the similar historical origins of both individual prejudice and systemic inequalities. These two significant features of the discourse enabled Lilian, and other participants, to acknowledge the violence and seriousness of colonization when they discussed it in a generalized historical sense. However, when participants discussed their own or their family's views, the discourse enabled the use of euphemisms to tone down accounts of individual prejudice and to leave unacknowledged any links with contemporary systemic inequalities (Moon, 1999).

A pattern of contradiction was common in participants' accounts and the disparity often related to participants' perception of whether the discussion was explicitly about racism and how implicated they felt by the discussion. When participants overtly focused on topics around issues of racialised ideas, they frequently shifted linguistically into a kind of 'white code' that permitted them to talk about 'race'-related matters in ways that "rendered the status quo as 'natural'..." and that removed them from complicity with 'white' supremacy (Sleeter, 1995, 1996; Frankenberg 1993; McIntyre, 1997; Moon, 1999). In a comparable way to Lilian's comments, participants utilised euphemisms when describing an individual person's prejudicial interactions/comments. This device was evident when talking about family members and when some participants, particularly those who have had no Treaty education, were discussing the Treaty of Waitangi or the contemporary issues for Māori.

Briar was born in an eastern city in the South Island and moved to another city in the North Island as a child. She remained in that city all her growing up years. Briar used a euphemistic form to describe her mother. Briar and I had been talking about understandings of being 'white' in her family and she told a story about her mother to illustrate her point.

Briar: Oh, my mother was the most fearful racial snob. We didn't realize until later how bad she was. Dad wanted to talk- he brought home a couple of gentlemen from Ceylon Sri Lanka and we didn't realize until after we had dinner how difficult Mother was finding it (laughter). We found them so interesting...None of the rest of us are like that at all, but we had to cope with that in her.

Briar used the term “racial snob” to describe her mother’s perspective, from which Briar distanced herself and the rest of her family. Briar’s use of the descriptor “racial” as opposed to the term “racist” softened the actual prejudiced views that Briar was alluding that her mother held. Participants often used ‘toned down’ terms to describe an individual’s discriminatory views or actions. In place of descriptors such as prejudiced or discriminatory, participants used expressions such as “some of the things they said were not very nice; ... my friends have strong views about Māori; ... she’s a bit - you know”. Other terms commonly used included “settlement; ...when settlers’ arrived”, part of a discourse that appears to minimize and draw attention away from the violence of the impact of colonization and alienation of Māori from their land.

Moon (1999) asserts that euphemisms “...act[ing] as a sort of erasure that obscures the historical agency behind public and private action” (p.189). John Scott (1989) claims that when one encounters euphemisms in language, it can be an indication that one has happened upon a ‘*delicate subject*’. This strategy hides and represents as innocent and harmless the relations of domination, which obscure the “use of coercion” (Scott 1989, p.157). Moon (1999) completes the picture of how this discourse operates by stating that “euphemisms cloak racist expression with a veneer of “bourgeois civility/ gentility” while enabling ‘white’ people freely to express racism - in coded ways - as a signal of ‘white’ solidarity” (p.189).

The participants had available to them discourses that enabled many contradictory statements and rationalisations in their interviews. The discourses facilitated their critique of the prejudiced views of their parents and their parents’ generation, at the same time as they drew on *essentialist*, racialised discourses themselves. These discourses operated powerfully to obscure the systemic relations of domination within ‘white’ supremacy, links that reveal the interconnection between peoples’ individual

lives and the location of Pākehā /dominant group members within these hegemonic relations; relations that are commonly hidden from view/consciousness.

Subjectifying Racism

Making the concept racism the disembodied subject/actor of an idea or action was available for participants to use. The following three excerpts are brief examples of the way in which the subjectification of racism works. Elaine, in her eighties, the oldest participant in my study, was talking about how she learned about the Treaty in her adult life. Her history education in school had been focused on the British Empire, the Wars of the Roses and similar topics. She was acknowledging her understanding of the significance of racism in Aotearoa.

Elaine: Racism is a huge problem in our society today, especially for Asians. And I have become more aware of the issues for Māori as I - the years have gone by. I know that racism is a problem for Māori especially as I have learned about the Treaty. The trouble they have getting some recognition and recompense for their land.

Deborah, a secondary school teacher, and I had been talking about antiracist education. I had asked Deborah about her experience of racism in that context. Deborah indicated that she witnessed the practice in the classroom and to a lesser degree among her colleagues.

Deborah: Because within any given body of teachers any school you've got all the problems of racism or sexism that you've got in society at large. I don't know how you deal with it. The only way I can deal with it is to challenge it wherever you see it and it becomes very tiresome.

Andrea, who was studying part-time for a postgraduate degree and working, talked about the racism in her workplace.

Andrea: You come across racism all the time at work and it's really difficult and I pick my moments um to draw attention to it. The way that organization - racism is everywhere.

All three participants acknowledged racism in Aotearoa society and Elaine

acknowledged the troubling situation for Māori and Asians. Deborah and Andrea indicated that they could recognize racism and indicated that they did address it although they gave no specific suggestions concerning who they thought was responsible for the racism. Although Deborah and Andrea were acknowledging their responsibility and agency in relation to racism, they implied that they had trouble addressing it and found it tiresome drawing attention to racism with other Pākehā. The implication in Deborah and Andrea's accounts is that they were discussing individual acts of prejudice. Francis Raines (1998) writes about her experience as a woman of colour in the academy and asserts of this focus on the negative outcomes "[t]hat... the focal point is centred on how racism functions to the disadvantage of people of color. Yet rarely is there acknowledgement of how half of the lesson is missing. Racism is not only about negative outcomes, it is also about the hidden benefits to be gained from maintaining a system of racial inequalities" (pp. 81-82). The results of a focus on racism as individual intentions and negative effects on people of colour are manifest in the ease and spontaneity with which a subjectifying racism discursive form can be utilised.

The discursive form of subjectifying racism, as a form of disengagement, usually allows 'white' people to deny their own complicity in relations of racial domination as well as any awareness or understanding of the historical legacy of 'white' supremacy. Forcing racism to act as the subject is a way to remove the responsibility and agency in the discussion from any one human. This distancing strategy is available for 'white' people who have some knowledge of the impact of 'white' supremacy and, in Deborah's case, are uncertain of the appropriate strategies to address it. Sometimes 'white' people can feel overpowered by the enormity of these relations of domination, and can take refuge in this strategy (Frankenberg, 1993; Moon, 1999).

Passive Voice

The participants quoted above, also used the passive voice in combination with the two other discursive forms. Another context in which participants utilized the passive voice was evident when they discussed their views of the legitimacy of the present claims of Māori. Susan and I had been talking about how she learned about Aotearoa history and

I asked her if she had learned more about the Treaty as an adult.

Helen: Um have you learnt anything more about the Treaty since you were at school? Like have you learnt anything as an adult about the Treaty?

Susan: Yes I have um.

Helen: Can you expand on that a bit?

Susan: It's just in the matter of lands and rights and I know that there was an awful lot of land taken from Māoris that really was rightfully theirs. Um that's about it.

Susan acknowledges that Māori were dispossessed of their land; however, she does not indicate who she thinks is responsible. This use of passive voice enabled Susan to talk about the issue without any complicity and she is able to distance herself from historical events and their implication for her as a Pākehā today. When I asked Lilian what she thought of the contemporary Māori Treaty claims she also acknowledged the “terrible things done to Māori ” although she did not identify specifically what the terrible things were in this discussion.

Helen: What do you think about the present claims of Māori?

Lilian: Well, I think in some ways they um have had, you know, they deserve to get some what's the word - compensation. They deserve to get something but it just seems to a lot of people that it's gone a little bit over the top. When is it going to finish! How many years are they [the Government] going to be paying out? I agree they had some terrible things done to them.

This device is another distancing strategy of the discourses of ‘*whitespeak*’ and works to make the subject of an action magically disappear (Moon, 1999). Most participants articulated that they recognised some affects that colonisation had on Māori. The use of passive voice enables acknowledges the justification of the Treaty claims of Māori, while simultaneously repressing any link or connection to this history. Juliette also used the passive voice to describe her parents’ prejudice when I asked whether her ideas about being ‘white’ had changed over time.

Helen: So what are your thoughts about being ‘white’ now have they changed in any way since you know as a younger person.

Juliette: Yeah, I think they have - I think - like I don't subscribe to the views that my parents - the racism as such that my parents have subscribed to, whether consciously or unconsciously. Um and I think [long pause] - I'm

beginning - I think probably what I'm more aware of now is that I don't, what I don't know - that I'm understanding that there is a different way.

Juliette acknowledged that her views had changed and couched her expressions of racism in passive voice equating the practice of prejudice/racism with a form of contribution/subscription. Juliette's language distanced both her parents and herself from the pervasiveness and systemic nature of racism. The discourse implies that an individual can withdraw from the practice. Juliette deployed a *race cognizant* discourse (see p.23) in this excerpt as well, illustrating that she was now more aware of what she did not know and that there was a different way to be that was not prejudiced (Frankenberg, 1993).

Despite the contradictions apparent in the juxtaposition of the varying discursive forms, the use of passive voice enabled participants such as Juliette, to talk about prejudice, although from a 'safe' distance. Moon (1999) explains that 'white' women can use this linguistic strategy, in the face of contemporary inequalities "while also distancing themselves from any real involvement with, or personal and social responsibility for the reproduction of these material conditions or how they have benefited from them" (p.191-192).

Disembodied Subjects

This final strategy of '*whitespeak*' that bourgeois decorum underpins and obscures what is 'not said', is the use of disembodied subjects when discussing racism. The participants used this strategy frequently and the device was evident in many participants' excerpts already discussed. An example of this strategy was apparent when I asked Dorothy if she had felt uncomfortable about being 'white'.

Helen: Um have you ever felt uncomfortable about being 'white' or part of 'white' culture?

Dorothy: No, oh no.

Helen: Right, has -?

Dorothy: You - sometimes you perhaps, if there have -, things [have]gone on in the world and perhaps you are a little bit ashamed of perhaps that they didn't get a fair go sometime, you know, There's the odd time you think other races haven't had a fair go. I must admit that I do.

Dorothy's reply is constituted through varied discursive forms. Her explanation not only attributed 'white' supremacy/racism to some disembodied agent/s who was/were not giving other 'races' "a fair go", her discursive strategy also contained a number of devices that distanced and minimized her relationship to, as well as the certainty of 'white' supremacy/racism. First, Dorothy's response was constructed in passive voice, which reinforces the conception of disembodied /unidentifiable others responsible for the perpetuation of racism, and who cause the rest of 'good'/'white' people shame. Second, Dorothy interspersed her explanation with qualifiers "if; ... perhaps; ...; a little bit; ... sometime... the odd time," that had the effect of minimising the certainty, frequency and degree of 'white' supremacy/racism.

While admitting racism and oppression exist, this discursive strategy enables a removal from that oppression, yet also it acknowledges shame. The framework/tensions of the binary opposites of 'good white' versus 'bad white' embedded in the presumed individualistic nature of 'white' supremacy/racism constrained the participant's comprehension and therefore acknowledgement of the systemic nature of 'white' supremacy/racism (McIntyre, 1997). Although initially refuting that she is uncomfortable with 'white' culture, her interruption of the next question and her subsequent explanation revealed that Dorothy was genuinely troubled by 'white' supremacy/racism. The discourse of Whiteness and the importance that 'white' bourgeois decorum places on distancing the 'white' subject from articulating distasteful topics such as 'white' supremacy/racism limited Dorothy's ability to explain the tensions to which she alluded. Participants frequently utilised a number of discursive strategies concurrently. Subjectifying racism was often the prerequisite of the passive voice and making 'race' or racism the anonymous agent of its own practice was a strategy of '*whitespeak*' that participants deployed in their interviews

The narrative below demonstrates another inclination that participants deployed in maintaining bourgeois decorum, which was equating "truth-telling with betrayal" (Moon, 1999). In other words, the person who challenges the party line can be seen as a turncoat, the spectre of which is a persuasive way to guarantee compliance and above all, silence. Lilian and I had been talking about her attraction to 'non white' men. She

was explaining how her parents would respond if she had developed such a relationship. Lilian replied by expressing her frustration with her parents' prejudicial views and the pointless challenge that caused family dissention.

Lilian: They wouldn't just have made me [give him up] But you know, there would be some Māoris up there that have done really well and my parents - mind you, they didn't have the chance and they both worked hard. But how they can judge people purely on - I find it's the whole race bit, it used to annoy me but it was pointless arguing because it would mean family eruptions and...

A little later in the interview, Lilian explained how she managed her frustration with her father's prejudice and her reluctance to tell the truth as she saw it about their point of view.

Helen: Yeah, yeah um how did you see your family as having an impact on your understandings of being 'white' like you were talking about um your father seemed to be overtly prejudiced, how did that impact on you?

Lilian: I suppose up until I met my husband I just sort of went with the flow. I did what I wanted to, but um you couldn't argue with Dad because he..., it was verbal abuse! You didn't get into anything like that. But when I met my husband and he had gone to school with Africans and he had had a farm or a wider range of experience and he was not racist at all because he even looked a little bit- like a little bit of something in him.

Lilian made it clear that she would not challenge her father's behaviour. To avoid a power confrontation and verbal abuse, she would "go with the flow" which on the surface was an enactment of 'white' solidarity. Lilian also implied that she quietly did what she wanted. This excerpt revealed the incomplete nature of hegemony. Lilian's outward show of solidarity/compliance with her father's wishes in actuality was accommodation **and** simultaneous resistance.

A number of participants utilised similar strategies of accommodation and resistance to similar enactments of 'white' supremacy mainly by their parents. The tacit acknowledgement of their parents' views enabled these participants to express their attraction to and brief relationships with non-'white' men, without their parents' knowing. This approach highlighted the complexities that participants traversed in their engagement with their parents' views and prohibitions. Their strategies revealed the

simultaneous resistance and accommodation that participants deployed in these situations of conflicting views. This strategy is a way that ‘whites’ also obtain approval from other ‘whites’ (Sleeter, 1995).

Bell hooks (1994) describes the concept of bourgeois decorum as a repertoire of strategies that censor rigorous opposition and resistance to party lines. Moon (1999) includes hooks’ (1994) ideas, and develops her explanation by adding that it is through the silencing of challenging voices that the “tyranny of bourgeois decorum” enables “safe spaces” where bourgeois ideologies remain dominant and unchallenged.¹⁹ Through this strategy, unity is retained and “the party line is preserved”. In order to achieve and maintain ‘good (white) girl’ status, ‘white’ women must be willing to be, if not *actively* engaged with, at least complicit with the reproduction of ‘white’ supremacy (Moon, 1999 p.184).

Racialised Whiteness as Bourgeois Femininity

An important aspect of the gendered ‘white’ racialisation process is its infusion with class ideology. Moon (1999) asserts that, “...it is at the intersection of race and bourgeois ideology that ‘white’ women embody what Davy (1995) called ‘institutionalised Whiteness’...” (p.181). Historically, some ‘white’ women, for example poor and lower class women, and women of colour have been excluded from the cult of ‘true’ womanhood. However, in contemporary gendered processes, the racialised symbolism of what counts as appropriate for true ‘white’ womanhood, the notion of “institutionalised Whiteness” has taken precedence (Moon, 1999). “White women’s credibility in white communities is deeply entwined with, and dependent on, their respectability or production as ‘good (white) girls’...”(p.182). The construct of respectability in this conception “invokes Whiteness by way of its appeal to bourgeois characteristics,” a Whiteness that **all** ‘good white’ women, irrespective of class location are encouraged to attain (Higginbotham, 1993 p.14). The bourgeois symbolism of what constitutes a respectable ‘white’ woman in contemporary ‘white’ society is more

¹⁹ I carry out a detailed analysis of the concept of silence and silencing as functions in the discourse of Whiteness in chapter seven.

closely aligned to forming and maintaining boundaries around the supremacy of Whiteness and most importantly, a recognition of the crucial role that ‘white’ women play in maintaining and reproducing these racialised boundaries.

Seven participants in my research articulated that they grew up among, and their parents identified as, working class people. Of these participants, only two, Rebecca and Deborah continued in their adulthood to identify as working class women. These seven participants articulated experiences little different from other participants about what was expected of them as ‘good white’ girls. In accounts similar to other participants, these women illustrated that they learned to be ‘white’ through the acquisition of a racialised notion of bourgeois respectability based on racial loyalty (Moon, 1999).

As important as their identification as working class was to Deborah and Rebecca, these two women’s political investment in identifying as working class did not inhibit them from being exposed to and inhabiting discourses of Whiteness that aspired to ideals of bourgeois femininity. Both Rebecca and Deborah also talked about the messages that they received about being ‘white’ and they were clear about the prejudicial views of their families. Responding to the question about her family’s understandings of being ‘white’, and the messages that she received about this, Deborah said:

Deborah: There really were members of my family [who] were quite racist. I was quite aware that I had a racist maternal grandmother. I don’t know about others. She’s the only one I ever heard say, “You’re free, ‘white’ and twenty-one”. That was an old saying that people used to have - well you’re free, ‘white’ and twenty-one - you do as you like. Well that obviously had connotations with it.

Deborah was the only participant who related that as a young woman, she received a clear message from her maternal grandmother explicitly describing in celebratory terms, aspects being ‘white’. The expression, “you’re free, ‘white’ and twenty-one - you do as you like”, is a part of a discourse that Deborah explained originated in previous generations and which Deborah implied had supremacist connotations. Deborah also interpreted that her grandmother’s expression affirmed a sense-of-entitlement that her location as a young ‘white’ woman made possible. Raines (1998) state that this discourse reflects an assumption of invisible guarantees to which one is entitled based

on her Whiteness.

Most participants' accounts revealed the limited language that participants seemed to have available to them to describe being 'white'. They frequently achieved this by talking about their families' views of 'others'. Although Deborah had grown up in an overtly working class community where she perceived that her group, to use her words, "weren't taking our full part in the world in lots of ways", she was also exposed to racialised/prejudicial ideas and beliefs that had no discernable difference from those participants who grew up in middle class families.

Rebecca's memories of her family's understanding, specifically identifies her maternal extended family as being prejudiced, although the content of her response was similar to most participants. Rebecca seemed only able to describe her family's views about being 'white' in terms of their prejudicial views of 'others'. Her response was:

Rebecca: I think that my mother's family yeah was more - well I experienced them as racist um [When I said what] I thought- and some of the ways I spoke, my uncle would growl at me and say you sound like a bong ... And um yeah so there was a bit of a mix - there was a real mixture there, on the one hand there was family that we just loved and adored like Uncle Peter, dad's half brother, they were all Māori. And you know, so there was all of that and there was Dad teaching us [Māori] language and all this sort of thing. And then on the other [hand] I think sometimes there was especially more from Mum. I think that there was - you know she was always accepting of that but there was probably just remarks would be made - you know. The other day she got really pissed off and she was going on about these Māoris da de da - real racist and I just got really mad at her. [I] felt really angry at her. And in a way for the first time I started thinking [feeling] different from her, you know. [Thinking] well what are you doing - and feeling quite angry with her about things.

Rebecca's excerpt demonstrates the complexities and contradictions in the messages that children can receive in their years of socialisation. Rebecca's father had extended family members who were Māori, with her father teaching Rebecca and her siblings Māori. Rebecca perceived her mother's family as racist, although she acknowledges that her mother was generally accepting of her father's extended family and their culture. Rebecca recounted in her interview, through her stories, her early recognition of, and challenges to, the prejudice around her and her commitment to working for

social justice. Her account of her recent interaction with her mother implied that she was ‘seeing’ more clearly, for the first time a feature of her mother’s perspective that she questioned and she was feeling distanced/different from her mother because of her mother’s prejudicial remarks.

It is important to emphasize in relation to the discussion of Rebecca’s and Deborah’s political identification as working class, a feature that some researchers have made about the intersection of ‘race’ and bourgeois ideology and how ‘white’ women inhabit this space. Kathie Davy (1995) explains the complexities of this positioning by arguing that the ‘middle class-ness’ invoked in bourgeois femininity is not defined by economic position. She maintains that instead it signifies a “kind of hard-earned ‘gentility’ in the form of civility that encompasses a plethora of values, morals, and mores that determine ... the tenets of respectability in general” (p.198).

Despite encouragement within ‘white’ communities for all ‘white’ women to acquire ‘good white’ women status, some researchers have found a complication to this seeming universal ‘white’ dynamic (Moon, 1999). These researchers have found that middle class ‘whites’ often attribute racism to the working classes and to the few extreme individuals and groups on far right of the political spectrum (Ehrenreich, 1989; Hage, 1998; Moon, 1999; Wellman 1993). Explanations that attributed racism to people who were not very educated or who were working class was not evident in participants’ interviews. Although Moon (1999) refers to the work of Ehrenreich (1989) and Wellman (1993) when she asserts that this rationale of “the bourgeois strategy of deferring racism onto the lower classes is well documented” (p.187).

Some participants had a tendency to explain away deployments of s supremacy usually in their parents’ actions or words, by attributing actual verbalizations of prejudice or discrimination as something that the older Pākehā generation did at that time. This device was more often deployed by participants in my research than, the tendency that other researchers have found that their participants to attributed racism to the lower classes (Frankenberg, 1993; Moon, 1999).

Tamara had grown up in a working class rural town, although she described herself as

middle class at the time of her interview. Tamara gave an interesting account of her father's perspective; he had worked on the railways and had Māori work mates.

Tamara: Yes I think with you know, my parents' generation, I think that was possibly, maybe, do you think, the last generation that really did have that feeling about the 'white' and the black or you know races as much as they... Like Mum and Dad, I don't think showed it, because when they used to have people around for drinks and meals. God, we had hāngis at our place and, you know, we got on well with all people in the community. But you see once again I think that is country Māoris as compared to city Māoris.

Helen: Mm. Mm.

Tamara: Totally different um and my father I can remember. You know, even now he can be an embarrassment because he will tell these jokes and sort of speak pidgin English or Māori and he will tell it, [it] doesn't matter whether there is Māoris around, he will say, hey boy. (Laughter)

Tamara resolutely worked her way through a number of explanations to make sense of the significance of her father's prejudice. She initiated her explanation hesitantly, using linguistic qualifiers such as "I think; ...possibly; ...maybe; ...do you think" reasoning that the *essentialist* racism of her parent's generation, their feeling about " 'black' and 'white' races" was now outdated.

Tamara's discourse softens the acknowledgement of this prejudice by proffering the suggestion that her parents did not show their prejudice among their community. She based this on her parents' practice of entertaining in their home using hāngi and her belief that they got on well with everyone in the community. Tamara then made the distinction between the country Māori being "totally different" than city Māori. Contradicting her relegation of her father's prejudice to the past at the same time as she acknowledged her embarrassment, Tamara continued her account giving specific examples of her father's prejudiced comments in the present. Overall Tamara deployed/inhabited discursive strategies that resisted at the same time as they enabled the compliance with a practice of loyalty to the racial order of a Whiteness discourse. Similar tensions were evident in others participants' articulations regardless of their identified class background.

Following this discussion, I asked Tamara how her views had changed over time. I was interested to understand how her judgement of her father's racial prejudice had manifest in her later life. Tamara's critique of her father's overtly prejudiced remarks in the last excerpt implied that she had a more critical approach to Pākehā deployment of *essentialist* prejudiced views. I also wanted to ascertain whether her presently claimed middle class status had influenced her racialised ideas. Tamara's response was unexpected.

Helen: Um have your feelings about being 'white' changed as you have got older are they different now than like when you were growing up, like you seem to have just said about you being aware of how your father was. I mean that would have I am presuming that that would have changed from when you were younger mm.

Tamara: Oh yes, mainly because of all the Māori activists and all that all the radical - And I often think it is - a lot of them that have actually created all of the tension that is about now, that make people too scared to even sort of, even half pie mention anything along those lines, anything Māori, black! You hardly dare say the word black or dark these days.

Helen: mm

Tamara: Don't you

Helen: Mm Mm.

Tamara: You are too scared to sort of - as if you are going to insult them or do something.

Tamara had articulated that she thought her parents' generation overt prejudice was outdated. Her rationale for her present discursive framework appeared to arise out of a social prohibition that she identified worked against her being able to use similar *essentialist* terms, such as "black and dark", for which she had reproached her father. Change for Tamara was realised through her increased awareness of the prohibitions around socially acceptable racialised "talk" about difference and culture. Tamara attempted to explain her resentment of the disruption and critique of the previously socially sanctioned *essentialist* 'white' discourse.

Tamara's account illustrates the limitations that a *colour/power evasive* discourse has, when it appears to veneer over *essentialist* understandings and prejudice. The confines and inadequacies of this discourse mask *essentialist* understandings and do not enable these understandings to be aired, addressed, examined and possibly changed. Although Tamara asserts that the increasing tension is "mainly because of all the Māori activists

and all that”, it is clear that notions of difference and their modes of expression such as “black and dark” are inadequate terms for Pākehā to explain the complexities of contemporary cultural relations. Additionally, these modes of expression and their *essentialist* associations limit the discursive space available for Pākehā to initiate and have any conversation with Māori, about present cultural and political intercultural relations.

Four participants, Michelle, Helena, Bridget and Briar, revealed some complex family racialised dynamics that were clearly mediated by their class as ‘white’ women. This was noticeable when one parent, usually the participant’s mother, was perceived to have married out of (below) their class. In these four participants’ accounts, their mothers were perceived to have come from middle class families and money and had married men who were working class or without money. What surfaced in these accounts was the influence of these women as mothers, on the participants’ understandings and expectations of their role as women and in particular ‘white’ women, their socialisation into a bourgeois racialised femininity.

It was not clear whether these participants were aware of class differences between their parents as children or whether this realisation had crystallised for them as adults; however, they clearly articulated their consciousness of ‘class difference’ between their parents. The next excerpt is from Michelle’s interview. She described her mother’s class position and continued to talk about how her mother advised her against intercultural marriage.

Michelle: - Yes I was [given messages about different people] and yes, it wasn’t verbalised but um your parents’ values and so on certainly get across- don’t they? My mother, we used to tell her she was a snob and she was really (laughter). [She] came from money, a fairly ah advantaged home. Um oh my father’s family had lost money so they were a bit more down to earth probably ah yeah. They were not racist but it was certainly made clear because I used to go out with a lot of Samoans when I was about ... I found them gorgeous. Every ball I had a Samoan in my arms because - they are lovely people. Um I think my mother did worry about that (laughter) But I still remember her talk about the difficulties of marrying into another culture. [She said] that peoples values and backgrounds are terribly important to them and where you get clashes it is tough enough in a normal marriage. But if you have other belief systems and other loyalties it can be

extremely difficult so um yeah that was fairly clear.

Helen: Yes, right.

Michelle: That that's how she felt. I don't know whether she would have ever tried to interfere in any of the romances but I think she possibly would have actually, come to think of it - strong lady.

Michelle's description of her mothers' rationale revealed a common discursive strategy such as the use of euphemisms already discussed, and which participants used whatever their class location. This strategy involved masking racist ideas such as when Michelle described her mother a "snob" in a jocular fashion permitting a 'tasteful' discussion of the 'distasteful' subject of 'white' superiority, a form of euphemism previously discussed. Michelle went on to relate how her mother gave her a talk about marrying into a different culture, prefacing this story with a statement that her parents were not racist. Michelle represented her mother as taking up the position of the reasonable middle ground by using the rationale of the difficulties of cultural differences even though this talk according to Michelle was precipitated by her preference for Samoan boyfriends (Tilbury, 1998).

Michelle's association of the two events indicated that Michelle participated in the discourse that her mother used as both were participating in a coded conversation revealing discourses that had a veneer of reasonableness and civility while enabling the expression of prejudiced views. This form of '*whitespeak*', also discussed in other sections of this chapter, inhibits as it simultaneously hides a full engagement with 'white' supremacy, by offering a "discursive and psychic distance from matters of race" (Moon, 1999 p.188).

Conclusion

An exploration of participants' accounts and the discourses of Whiteness that they deployed/inhabited revealed that subtle and covert communication practices and discursive strategies contribute to the maintenance and reproduction of hegemonic social norms. In this chapter a particular focus was placed on how implicit **ideals** of racialisation **and class**, that of 'white' 'middle class-ness', mediated the socialisation of these 'white' women in my study.

These participants demonstrated that they had available to them racialised discourses of Whiteness that were manifest in their use of linguistic devices such as their subjectification of racism, their use of passive voice and their representation of racism as a disembodied subject in their narratives. Their accounts of their socialisation as women within both middle class and working class environments suggested that their families valued ideals of a racialised notion of bourgeois decorum and respectability expressed through their Whiteness discourses.

The strategies that participants had available produced a number of effects. First, the linguistic devices enabled participants to discuss 'safely' unpleasant topics such as 'white' supremacy, prejudice and racism by configuring racism as the outcome of individual acts. Second, this enabled participants to perceive that they were able to distance themselves from complicity with racism. Third, the use of these strategies enabled participants to minimise the impact of racism and to separate individual acts of prejudice from any systemic or historical antecedents. However, most importantly the communication practices and discursive strategies that the participants deployed/inhabited constrained participants within outdated and restricting discourses that limit their ability to adequately explain or describe the complexities of their experiences and representations of difference (Moon, 1999). The struggles in which participants engaged as they attempted to make sense of the complexities of what they were attempting to convey were clear. The constraints of *essentialist* understandings and terminology that contaminated a mostly *colour/power evasive* discourse appeared to compel participants to contradict themselves in their accounts.

Chapter Seven

Disturbing Silences

The very structure of privilege will generate silences. When the privileges are systematic, that is, more than momentary, the attendant silences will be systematic... Ironically, the most powerful rhetoric for maintaining an existing scheme of privilege will be silent.

Scott (1993 p.10)

Introduction

This chapter examines processes beyond the patterns of participants' articulated discourses. These initially unseen patterns became evident, as the implications of my location as researcher and subject became comprehensible - an insight, which was related to my constitution within similar racialised discourses to the participants. The chapter focuses on my engagement with the power of racialisation and its many manifestations, in particular the silences that surfaced as important discursive formulations within the interviews. I have discussed some detail about my developing awareness of the significance of the silences in the methodology chapter (pages 70-74). Consequently, an exploration and analysis of the rhetorical silences of Whiteness, was a critical development in the research.

The Dynamic Forms of Silence: the Muffled Subtext

The significance of participants' prolonged silences prompted some concentrated examination in the latter stages of the data collection and analysis process.²⁰ Both Robert Scott (1993) and Lisa Mazzei (2003) presented different types of silence in their research. Scott differentiated between sequential silences and simultaneous silences, while Mazzei (2003) identified polite silence, intentional silence, privileged silence, and veiled silence. Mazzei (2003) included unintelligible silences in her framework and these were numerous in the initial stages of my analysis. However, as I began to 'hear' the silences behind the words in the simultaneous silences, many of these silences

²⁰ A small number of the interviews were recorded on voice-activated tape recorders which indicated the importance that I was initially placing on the 'spoken word' for data.

became intelligible. I do not wish to convey here that all silences in the interviews and focus group were captured and explained as I know that many remain undetected and to quote Mazzei, “What I know is that within these silences exist the traces that continue to reveal” (p.366).

The combination of Scott and Mazzei’s categories provided a useful guide that helped to make intelligible the varying silences that I encountered. I now discuss these four forms of silence in turn, as they were frequent discursive strategies that participants deployed in our interactions. I learned to ‘listen differently’ to passages of interview text that I had read many times before and I began to recognize the depth in my own and the participants’ silences; in particular, what was not spoken, what was not discussed and what was not answered. This process revealed the hidden, the covert, the inarticulate, the gaps within and outside the observable (Mazzei, 2003).

Sequential Silences: Polite Silences and Intentional Silences

There were many occasions in the interviews where both the participants and I were silent. Some were just the natural spaces of reflection time that occur in the ebb and flow of comfortable conversation and I was aware of the importance in maintaining a relaxed pace in our discussions. There were also silences that “spoke of something more” and they were the observable sequential silences in the interactions between the participants and me. These sequential silences - where speech was expected and none was forthcoming - were the silences that were initially more noticeable to me, and were the silences that had primarily prompted some of my initial concerns about “not enough racialised talk”. Although there was a predisposition for our silences to alter, on some occasions the palpable silences remained. Sometimes participants seemed reluctant to speak and I withheld comments and questions as researcher.

Those questions that invited participants to specifically discuss aspects of their racialisation resulted in the most obvious/observable silences. De Vault (1995) recommends that these “...hesitations where participants mark time while thinking how to say things in a particular context ...” are important to explore (p.628). The silences were often punctuated with “ah” and “um” and sometimes, I filled that gap with some

further explanatory words, and often participants filled the discursive space with talk that circled around ‘race’ though without making it an explicit topic (De Vault, 1995).

Polite Silences: The first of these sequential silences that I noticed were the polite silences that punctuated some of our talk in the interviews. Mazzei (2003) refers to the common expression “If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all”, as an important script that underpins polite silences. She stated that this turn of phrase was useful for her to recognise the deployment of polite speech among her research participants. The gaps in speech between the participants and I were often examples of polite silence.

There was a distinct pattern of silence in participants’ responses to the question whether they were proud of being part of Pākehā /‘white’ culture. Charlotte had lived in the South Island all her life apart from brief travel overseas as a child. She took 11 seconds to answer:

Helen: Have you ever felt proud of being ‘white’?

Charlotte (silence, 11 seconds) No, um

Helen: Can you explain that a bit more?

Charlotte: Proud of being ‘white’ - No I don’t. I can’t explain that. It’s just the way I am. I’m not any better than anyone else. Um, it’s all - for me, it’s all a thing of education, well not - it’s not manners, it’s - it doesn’t worry me what race anyone was. I just take them as an equal if they behave in a certain way, you see - which doesn’t sound very good but ah - (8 seconds)

Helen: Like I suppose like I’m thinking of, sort of being of proud of being ‘white’ or of being part of that ‘white’ culture have you felt proud of?

Charlotte: No, no, I don’t-

Charlotte struggled to find words that could explain her view. She described how she was no better than anyone else was. She then switched from trying to describe herself and went on to give examples of the rationale that she drew on to judge whether others were equal (to her). Charlotte was not able to find the words that she was happy with so her explanation tailed off. She attempted to represent herself as reasonable and tolerant, although she appeared to judge that her explanations ‘didn’t sound good’ or implied a superiority that was not acceptable or polite (Tilbury, 1998). All participants except two, were initially silent for some time, (some up to 20 seconds) and some, with further

prompting from me, followed with comments that expressed their difficulty with this question. The majority of participants seemed to be working out ways to respond, which were acceptable, minimising the possibility that they may be misinterpreted - such as boasting, discriminatory or superior in a racialised sense (Taylor & Wetherell, 1995).

I had initially asked Sharon about her feelings of 'white' culture and her response was similar in some ways to Charlotte's rationale to my questions.

Helen: Have you ever felt uncomfortable about being 'white' or part of 'white' culture?

Sharon: No, not uncomfortable, no.

Helen: What have you felt?

Sharon: Um no, I haven't really felt (8 seconds silence)

Helen: Have you ever felt proud of being 'white' part of 'white' culture - If you have in what way?

Sharon: No, I can't say I have felt proud either. I mean um (5 seconds) I mean, you are only well proud when you have done something that makes you feel proud, I mean (Long silence, 10 seconds)

Helen: Yeah.

Sharon: I can't say that we do anything that's makes us really proud um (6 seconds silence)

Helen: Mm, yes, like some people, you know. For example people say Māori are really proud of their culture and it's very much part of their lives and all that sort of thing. A lot of the Māori people I've met are really proud of their culture!

Sharon: Yeah, yeah

Helen: You know proud of their culture, thinking like that I mean!

Sharon: I think we just take it for granted really um- (7 seconds silence)

Helen: Mm, mm.

Sharon: Great answers, ah great - (laughter)

Helen: No that's fine, that's fine. I am just interested in your perceptions. There is no right or wrong answer or anything like that um.

Sharon: I didn't really think about it all that much and really-

Helen: No, that's right yes.

Sharon: Because you just are what you are and I don't give it all that- I have never ever really given it all that much thought -

Sharon, like many participants, left her words hanging in the air. She seemed unable to identify any emotional response about her location as 'white', about being uncomfortable or proud of being part of 'white' culture. Sharon proposed the possibility that an individual could feel proud if they have done something to warrant it; however,

as a collective, she implied that Pākehā could not claim pride as a group. Sharon concludes her comments with a statement that expressed an understanding, other participants articulated. The discourse that she inhabited appeared to be premised on the perception that she existed in a social vacuum, which included the invisibility and perceived neutrality of her location in a hegemonic social position. At the same time, though there was tacit recognition of the power of this position, which this discourse protects by polite silence. Participants' polite silences presented a reasonable, moderate and tolerant view that does not to call attention to 'race', in particular their own (Tilbury, 1998).

Jacinta also had difficulty with this question and responded in a different way. She clearly stated what she considered 'being proud of being 'white'' might mean. Jacinta waited for some time before she spoke:

Helen: Um, do you or have you ever felt proud of being 'white' and in what way?

Jacinta: (5 seconds silence) Actually no, (4 seconds silence.) I'm proud of being me and being 'white', I suppose, is part of that, but being proud of being 'white'! No, I haven't ever felt specifically [been] proud of being 'white'. And I think that it implies a, um, sort of a feeling of superiority in a way if you have - No.

Jacinta was clear that any acknowledgement of "being proud of being white" was expressing superiority. She appeared to wrestle with the contradictory notion of being proud of herself, a self was 'white', however she was not proud of being 'white'. Her identity appears to elide Whiteness. This excerpt highlights the intricacy of a 'white' self-identity and how Jacinta, in some sense contradicts herself – she is proud of herself, a self that she emphasizes excludes in this context her Whiteness. The contradictory positioning in which this discourse placed those who deployed it, revealed the power of this polite silence to mask what was accepted yet remained unacknowledged. Requests that explicitly invited the participants to discuss their racialisation were frequently followed by this polite silence. Participants appeared to struggle to find words that would not implicate their complicity with what they appeared to perceive as 'racist' talk in a power-evasive discourse (Frankenberg, 1993).

In the above excerpts, participants showed a lack of certainty about how their words might be interpreted. The possibility that explicit ‘race talk’ about themselves, could be employed in a polite fashion seemed unfamiliar/unavailable to them and they often looked to me for guidance. Although I had repeated my assertion, that there was no right answer, some participants continued with queries that indicated that they thought that I had preconceived ideas about what they would/should say. Rosemary, when she was struggling with articulating her ethnic identity asked me directly, “Is that the right answer? I[ve] probably not given the right answer!”. Sharon’s comment about her answers, with the self critical comment “great answers!” gave me the impression that at times participants perceived that I was looking for a correct answer, that there was a “right answer” to some questions.

I frequently complied with participants’ polite silences by filling some of the silences often unconsciously. However, at times I also intended to provide some different conceptual frameworks to facilitate participants’ talk. My intention was to facilitate and maintain a productive interview environment. Participants often appeared to silence/censor themselves in our discussions, with many ‘offending’ words/terms left unsaid, although they appeared to hold an expectation that I understood their meaning (which I usually did) and their explanation would often just peter out (Mazzei, 2003).

Intentional Silences: Apart from my own intentional silences that I deployed during the interviews, some aspects of which I will discuss in the final section of this chapter, the forms of intentional silence that were most obvious were evident in the stories that participants recounted about their own intentional silences. The participants often used this discursive strategy of storytelling as a credentialing device in order, it seemed, to represent themselves as tolerant, antiracist and to possibly persuade themselves and me that they had a right to make a judgement (Tilbury, 1998). Interviewees reported that they made use of these silences when they were knowingly interacting with someone that they identified as overtly racist. Diane, a health worker and counsellor was relating how she managed a ‘discussion’ about Māori that developed with some friends at a dinner party. She was emphasising how her approach to such situations has changed from her past behaviour.

Diane: I had - um, we had a discussion um anti Māori- about the bludgers and the whole lot.

Helen: Yes, yes.

Diane: And um this was only about a week ago. They came for dinner.

Helen: Oh, right.

Diane: And it was really interesting because a few years ago I would have got really heated about it and absolutely passionate. But I realized that it was a waste of passion on him because he's so bigoted. And so down the line - no matter what I said. I felt part of my argument [was good] because I was able to base it on a on a lot of facts that have happened over time.

Legislation, all those kind of things and he didn't have facts [at] all. He was trying to trip me up. And so he had no argument.

Helen: Well I mean as Pākehā we often don't have factual information.

Diane: No, and we don't have an argument. Of course, I watched that happening in the argument and I knew that. I said, "Look we can't do this. This is getting us nowhere let's agree to differ. And we went on and had a game of cards and had a good time.

Diane initially spoke up and presented her position. However, as she could see that her friend was not listening, she initiated an end to the discussion. Diane made a conscious choice to be silent, as she perceived that her point of view was not heard. Other participants talked about being intentionally silent in the presence of others, in particular friends or relatives that they identified as prejudiced especially when participants believed that they were being provoked to speak. Marilyn, a young woman, was with a group who had been discussing a Māori pōwhiri that they had attended as part of their course at a tertiary institution. Some members of the group who knew her antiracist stance were making particularly prejudiced comments. I asked Marilyn:

Helen: Were you able to say that that you disagreed with them?

Marilyn: I didn't in a group situation, when I was just talking to people afterwards!

Marilyn was intentionally silent in the group situation, although she did speak to some people about her views afterwards. Diane and Marilyn both used silence intentionally as did other participants' in their accounts of their interactions with relatives and friends, usually when they were in situations where they were feeling vulnerable.

Another example that Bridget recounted arose when we were talking about understanding injustice. She had been talking about the claims of Māori, and the need for Pākehā to be more aware of the injustices. I was encouraging her to explain her view.

Bridget: Um well, I think some are going against it and that's not really - that's terrible. I think everybody should think about it.

Helen: Mm. What you're saying, they're becoming aware but people are going off in different directions in how they understand what it's all about?

Bridget: It depends where they're at and whether they've had anything underhand done to them. I think if you've had anything underhand done to you, you start thinking, oh God, yeah, I was done, that was really - and I think they start looking at other issues and think oh God I can see how that would happen. You believe in something and the other person knowing quite well what you believe in and you're done.

Helen: Oh, Mm. So do you think, for example, those women that you gather who are coming out of marriages, have you talked to them about the situation regarding Māori etc from some of their experiences of being done which in a sense is similar, that they would understand?

Bridget: I think some of them would - some of them. But I know some of them have very strong views or something and I would rather keep them as friends.

Helen: Yes, yes.

Bridget: Because bringing up subjects - some of my friends, I wouldn't bring up certain subjects.

Helen: Mm. Mm. So, there's a real social taboo about talking about certain things in Pākehā culture?

Bridget: I suppose so yes.

Helen: About things Māori?

Bridget: Probably.

Bridget articulated that people, who experience something underhand done to them, can make the links to other forms of injustice. My expansion of her argument to her group of friends' ability to empathise with Māori presented a difficulty for Bridget. She indicated that she would not bring up 'certain subjects' with some of her friends because she wanted to keep them as friends. This excerpt reveals the power of the strategies of Whiteness to maintain compliance with the party line. Bridget's deployment of intentional silence as a Whiteness discourse was her strategy for maintaining friendships; however this strategy also enabled dominant ideologies to go unchallenged (Moon, 1999). Participants usually explained that they were intentionally silent when they felt that they might not be able to articulate adequately what they

knew/understood to be a justifiable challenge to the prejudiced views of friends or relatives (Mazzei, 2003).

Simultaneous Silences: Privileged and Veiled

The voice that covers the silence will tend to sound beneficent.

Scott (1993 p.10)

As I progressed through the analysis of the data, Scott's (1993) suggestion that silence is not only sequential but can also be simultaneous with speech, prompted me to broaden my analysis of the silences. He suggests that "in these cases, there is a sort of doubleness: a flow of speech behind which, so to speak, a silence continues. The attentive listener must deal with that doubleness. Silence is not only active but has symbolic value" (p.14). I interpreted many instances as simultaneous silences throughout the interviews and the focus group. Both participants and I used them in varying forms. The operation of simultaneous silence, although much harder to 'hear', provided the opportunity for me to uncover the privileged and veiled silences that were often covered with a *colour/power evasive*, or in the reasoning of the participants, a beneficent discourse (Frankenberg 1993).

This *colour/power evasive* discourse underpinned a particular problem that the participants and I faced. There was a lack of discursive space for us to meet as 'white' women **and** to talk about Whiteness, which at times brought the interviews close to an interactional impasse (Best, 2003). The belief that 'race'/difference should not matter underpins the dominant *colour/power evasive* discourse. A corollary to this belief is that since 'race'/difference should not matter, everyone should act/speak as though it does not. An important rationale associated with this discourse is that anyone who does act/speak as though 'race'/difference matters, is prejudiced and divisive.²¹ This discourse works powerfully to inhibit the possibility that Pākehā women can/will engage in such talk and constitutes Whiteness as uninterrogateable space (Jackson II, 1999).

²¹ This constraint of the colour/power evasive discourse is explored in chapter three.

Privileged Silence: Privileged silences were the most pervasive discursive strategies of Whiteness that the participants' and I deployed/inhabited throughout the interviews. These silences spoke of our inability to see and articulate our racialised locations and the significance of our racialised locations in a hegemonic form. As I will discuss in detail in the discussion of antiracist education, those participants who had completed Treaty workshops could clearly identify and articulate their understanding of, and commitment to challenging the historical and present day social injustices in relation to Māori.²² However, Treaty-educated participants, in a manner similar to the remaining participants, were unable to speak about their racialisation and the reasons their location was manifest within social inequalities. There seemed to be no words in the discourses that participants had available for them to describe, their Whiteness, despite some participants' recognising their location in a social system that advantages them.

An example of how *colour/power evasive* discourse was deployed/inhabited using privileged silence was evident in my interview with Susan who grew up in Otago. Immediately after the passage I quote below, Susan talked about how she had a lot of contact with, and worked for Chinese people who were Market gardeners in the area. She talked quite easily about this and that her grandmother was very racist against Chinese and Catholics.²³ Yet, despite her ability to discuss these radicalised interactions, when I asked about her awareness of her Whiteness, she was unable to articulate her racialisation. The following passage is an example of her *colour evasive* or perhaps more literally 'white blind' discourse:

Helen: Can you remember when you first became aware that you were 'white'?

Susan: No not really, um I have never really at that, at that stage I was never really classed as a 'white' person and it didn't really occur to me.

Helen: Yes, so you had no instances in relation to this - sometimes people talk about it at school something happened to trigger their awareness

Susan: No.

²² This distinction between the Treaty-educated participants and those participants who hadn't completed a Treaty workshop was evident in the participants' discourses of speech and is discussed in chapter eight.

²³ There were a number of accounts of participants' family's racism against Chinese and Catholics and these are discussed in chapter four.

Helen: Something you know, incidents or people that you had contact with and that you were aware that they were 'white' and sort of different?

Susan: No, not really.

Helen: Right have you ever been in a situation where you have become aware that you were 'white' and that you were different or that you were in a minority?

Susan: Um no, not necessarily as a minority.

Helen: Well I mean in numbers like being in a situation where you were perhaps the only 'white' person?

Susan: No.

Helen: Or one of the few 'white' people or anything like that?

Susan: No.

Susan was not able to articulate her first awareness of being 'white', adding that it did not occur to her at that stage in her life. The profundity and effectiveness of *colour/'white' blind, power evasive* discourse constrained any explicit "race talk". Lisa Mazzei (2003) asserts that this discourse reproduces aspects of 'white' privilege by remaining "elusive, unintelligible, and silent". She adds that if subjects/we do not agree that they/we ... "experience privilege or are unable to identify this privilege, then we are also unable to speak about this privilege" (p.365). By deploying/inhabiting this discursive strategy, Susan was unable to engage with my questions and appeared unable to speak about the lens/discursive strategy through which she may see/explain the world.

Participants sometimes gave conflicting accounts depending on the context of the question. In Susan's case, her 'silence' about discussing her Whiteness was clear, yet when she talked about her contact with others as she grew up, she was obviously had some contact with Chinese.

Helen: Um during your growing up years, did you have much contact with people from other cultures?

Susan: Only the Chinese who had market gardens around where we lived.

Helen: Right, right. Can you expand on that any more?

Susan: Um they used to have large market gardens in S D and there were families. Lots of families of them all joined together and their children went to school with us. Um one of my good - who - I got a job - was Chinese and um was a good friend.

These seemingly contradictory expressions of her understanding of her positioning, revealed Susan's inability to talk about being 'white' in one context. However, in a context of disassociation/distance such as specifically talking about "other" such as Chinese and Māori, the discourse enable the use of explicit 'race' talk quite freely. As can be reasoned from Susan's accounts, participants deployed silences differently in various contexts, which seemed related to the perception that participants had about the topic of the questions (Crenshaw, 1997).

Veiled Silence: A goal in the early questions in the interviews was to find out what participants considered were important aspects of their identity. I asked them what they thought was important for others to know about them, such as who they were as people and how they would like others to see them. Interestingly, Mazzei (2003) asked a similar question of her 'white' American participants, and the responses of her participants and mine were similar. The participants used a number of descriptors that were gender specific, with most of them referring to their role as mothers. No participants referred to their racialisation or cultural identity²⁴ or to their Whiteness. This veiled silence about being 'white' masked its power to remain indistinctive and invisible to Pākehā people. Mark Tappan (2005) in his research on identity development argues that identity formation is necessarily different for persons from different social locations, because they stand in different relationship to structures and systems of power, privilege and authority. Using Malcolm X as an example, Tappan (2005) argues that experiences of subordination and oppression, and a lack of power and privilege influenced this process in profound ways. Tappan's thesis could account for participants' consciousness of their gender identity as women and mothers while their racialisation was hidden.

An understanding that most participants were able to articulate about being 'white' was by expressing their own views or their family's views about Māori or those whom they considered were their cultural/racial "other". This discourse maintained the salience of veiled silence about being 'white'. Ronald Jackson II (1999) explains this further by

²⁴ In my role as an educator, I have observed that the conscious aspects of identity that the female students frequently articulated was their gendered and age-related experiences.

arguing that, “The discourse of Whiteness presumes the element of ‘race’, of blackness and of Otherness. Moreover to discuss racial self definitions is to evoke conversations of otherness, and presupposes that the agency in defining Others’ identities has been arrested by Whites” (P.41). This discursive strategy, a veiled silence about racialisation, came through strongly in the interviews. Most participants responded to these questions initially with long silences and they often recounted that their ‘coming into Whiteness’ occurred in contexts of overt prejudicial talk. Other participants expressed their understanding of becoming ‘white’ in more straightforward declarations that acknowledged ‘others’ differences.

Deborah, a secondary school teacher who grew up in the South Island, responded to the question concerning her first memories of being ‘white’, with a long silence (12 seconds) and then replied:

Deborah: I’m not sure that when I was [a] little kid I knew I was ‘white’ as such. I knew that there were people that weren’t ‘white’. So I suppose I began as a little kid from that kind of negative aspect of other people in a way because we had Māori neighbours across the road. So I knew that they were brown and I knew they were Māori and I knew that the father, probably the first person I ever knew who spoke another language - he spoke Māori. There were Italians in our town also who looked a bit like Māori if you’re talking about looks.

Deborah related that she learned about being ‘white’ by learning to mark “others” as having a specific identity, while simultaneously learning that she did not. She specifically links this difference to markers such as their skin colour and their different language. Deborah’s explanation reveals how she learned to maintain a veiled silence around Whiteness by marking ‘others’. As Moon (1999) states, “...Whiteness must come to be understood as normative, general, and pervasive, rather than positioned and particular” (p.179).

Jacinta, another secondary school teacher, who lived in the North Island most of her life, articulated her response in a similar way.

Jacinta: No. No. (long pause - 8 seconds) I think where I grew up - things are very different now in P. than when I grew up. Most people there were

European, there were a few Māoris. But it wasn't - we knew they were Māoris, we knew we weren't Māoris. But it was never an issue- we still went to play there and they came to our place to play.

Another participant, Bridget, who lived in the South Island for some time as a child, alluded to an experience of others' overt prejudice in her answer:

Bridget: (long silence, 9 seconds) Well (another pause, 5 seconds) I would probably have to say that it was sort of then and also the little incident sitting by the boy in the I school, as I say, someone pointed out well he's a Māori boy. I thought well what's wrong with that! They said we don't - Oh well I thought why, because he was a nice guy. But I thought it just might have been something to do with the female male thing. I mean I had brothers either side of me so I mixed just as much with boys, you know. I got on well with Dad (it was only when) - At the same time it was dawning on me that people did treat men and women a lot differently and women were supposed to - And at the same time it probably dawned [on me about] different races and that too I suppose.

Bridget's awareness was triggered by what she perceived were the prejudiced views of other schoolchildren reproaching her about sitting next to a Māori boy at school. Bridget does reveal that she was confused about the other children's motivation for censuring her and indicated that she thought they were showing their disapproval because of gender differences. Wildman & Davis (1996) acknowledge the complexities of socialization, highlighting specifically how identity resides in the intersection of many categories. They also maintain that, "The experience of both privilege and subordination in different aspects of our lives causes the experiences to be blurred and the presence of privilege is further hidden from our vocabulary and consciousness" (p.318). Bridget's veiled silence appeared to be an outcome of this dynamic, which also reveals the resilience of Whiteness and its ability to maintain its invisibility.

Rebecca, a young woman who also had grown up in the South Island, recounted a similar experience. It seemed like more than a minute (actually 20 seconds)²⁵ before Rebecca spoke and she expressed her first awareness this way.

²⁵ I became aware that when I actually timed the observable gaps and silences, they were much shorter in actual time than how I imagined/experienced them. This demonstrates the lack of discursive space for my sense of comfortable silences beyond a few seconds in this context.

Rebecca: Um-ah, when I moved from um went into G Primary. We moved to G from B and ... I went to the G Primary School and that's when I became aware of the racism. And the difference that I - and there was lot's of confusion in all of that with me because I really identified really strongly with my Māori cousins. And I got really angry and actually went to Māori Club at that time and got on really well with Māori students. There's only, like one other family and stuff so that there was, you know -. And so, I was quite confused I remember as a child about my Whiteness. And in a way I had this sense that it was not completely who I am, you know. Anyway, it's lasted but yeah, I did have a sense of - my feeling was that to be 'white' was not a good thing. (H. Mm) That 'white' people - the children there were really racist and horrible and said mean things and I tend to like defend cousins or other - So that would have been - oh how old would I have been, about six or six and a half when I went to that school.

Rebecca's account revealed her childhood assumption that to be 'white' was not a good thing, a view that was absent in any other participants' recounted early childhood memories. In her younger years, Rebecca had initially lived in an integrated Pākehā Māori community and had close contact with her Māori cousins. Later in her discussion, she talked about her assumptions/feelings that she had Māori ancestry through her father. Although ambivalently identifying as 'white', Rebecca experienced her early years identifying with her Māori cousins and friends, and was acutely aware at a young age of prejudice among children. Rebecca and Bridget were the only participants who identified their awareness of prejudice among children with whom they had contact.

These excerpts revealed a strong tendency for the silences to change throughout the interviews from sequential silences to simultaneous silences, confirming Scott's (1993) assertion. The changes in participants' silences from sequential to simultaneous forms became evident when the discourses of Whiteness constrained participants' ability to describe or express their ideas. Overall, participants made genuine attempts to answer these questions and to discuss their Whiteness. Their silences seemed to result from the women searching for words that were not available, which the discourses that they deployed would not permit. Participants often showed some level of frustration as they obviously cast around in their minds for ways to describe what they wanted to communicate. Sometimes, when the length of sequential silences became problematic for participants, they would inevitably change the topic/subject. These silences would

then be transposed into discussions about their perceived racialised “other” (Frankenberg, 1993; Mazzei, 2003; Scott, 1993).

Charlotte, a woman in her forties and married to a man whose father was Māori, was attempting for the second time to articulate what it feels like to talk about being ‘white’ and whether being ‘white’ means more than just her skin colour. Charlotte was silent then eventually expressed her difficulty quite clearly:

Charlotte: (long pause, 10 seconds) Um, You have come back to that question. I have never thought about it before but certainly, yes, it doesn’t worry me. Well I can’t see that these [matter] - Oh I can’t think of the word. No, you’ll have to prompt me somehow.

Helen: Well do you have any reason, do you have any understanding, and do you have any ideas, as to why you think it [is] so difficult?

Charlotte: Well it’s just the norm; I wouldn’t think that it’s an issue to even talk about it. I couldn’t think of it as being anything special.

Helen: Mm. Mm. When, you know, we talk about being ‘white’, you know, that sort of thing, do you think it means more than just the colour of your skin?

Charlotte: (no hesitation) Yes.

Helen: Can you expand on that a bit more? You can take as long as you like to think about it.

Charlotte: Mm. (Laughter) I might need another cigarette.

Helen: Well have another cigarette (laughter).

Charlotte: More than just the colour of your skin, oh gosh...

Helen: Sorry, it’s tough isn’t it?

Charlotte: Yes, it is- I can’t think of the words. I just don’t know, but that is the first thing that came into [my] mind so there has got to be some reason for that!

Charlotte could explain the normality, the ordinariness of being ‘white’, and she clearly knew that it meant more than her skin colour, however she could not articulate what that was. Charlotte’s response was similar to other participants and is a clear example of the invisibility of Whiteness to those who understand themselves as ‘white’. Charlotte’s assertion that being ‘white’ is not even an issue to talk about and was not anything special belies the power of this discourse. It protects those within from being conscious of the benefits of being ‘white’. The silence around being ‘white’ is maintained because of its seeming normality and ordinariness. Tappan (2005) explains that the closer an aspect of a person’s identity is aligned to structures and systems of power,

privilege and authority, the less conscious subjects will be of that aspect of that identity and its affiliation to power.

An assumption that most participants communicated was that they lived in a ('white') world (see p. 84). These participants did not think about the significance of 'difference' until they had contact with someone that they recognised was from another culture. For the majority of the participants this awareness developed at primary school and for some not even until adulthood. There appeared to be an option available to them that they could attend to difference or not. Andrea, an academic in her forties explained this view:

Andrea: Well I mean you can think that you haven't thought about it because it's just taken for granted. That it's in everything, the socialization of our culture. You're the majority and that this is the world and everything else is different um so why even think about it!

Andrea's account revealed a rationale seldom articulated. Many authors claim that this rationale is a foundation of 'white' privilege (Frankenberg, 1993). 'White' privilege in this sense is described as freedom from thinking about and remaining unaware of 'white' location as a hegemonic discursive formulation (McIntosh 1988). This location includes Pākehā discursive formulation in Aotearoa. Mazzei (2003) identifies that 'white' people's ability to choose to attend to difference or not, is a privilege that remains elusive, unintelligible to us, and silent. When I asked Dorothy, the youngest participant, if she could explain the difficulty in describing what it means to be 'white', she responded thoughtfully:

Dorothy: - I think that a lot of Pākehā people have the privilege of not actually ever being forced to think about their culture.

A significant aspect of participants' silences was their inability to talk about how racism as a power system creates privilege for some people as well as disadvantages for others (Wildman & Davis 1996). In fact, all participants consistently represented themselves as heterogeneous complex individual selves with little acknowledgement of the likelihood that their realities were enhanced in any way by social structures. Social structures impinged 'somewhere else' and were often expressed as relating to Māori

culture. Māori were commonly referred to as homogeneous and constrained by their culture (Rathzel, 1997).

Another form of veiled silence that was evident in the interviews was a tendency that participants had to use the terms racism or racist sparingly. In an excerpt from Deborah's interview, which I have already discussed, when she was talking about an expression her grandmother used about being free, 'white' and twenty-one, Deborah related that this term had connotations to it. I understood Deborah's meaning, although she did not articulate the type of connotation she intended. In some interviews (those with Michelle, Sarah, and Charlotte), the participants did not use the terms racism or racist at all in our two-hour discussions. This may relate to the forms that participants used to articulate the content of their ideas and explanations included the notion of courteous language, a combination of polite silence and veiled silence, a 'white' discursive practice that is overly concerned with the 'said' (Moon, 1999).

Moon (1999) describes this as "...the way in which bourgeois ideology functions to shore up the operations of 'white' supremacy through the privileging of **form over content** by putting into use a sort of '**hyperpoliteness**'" (p.192). These perspectives and discursive devices maintained and reproduced an individualistic lens that inhibited participants' ability to recognise the power of social structures on their lives. These varying silences were discursive strategies that maintained and reproduced Whiteness as a hidden/invisible hegemonic discursive practice, silences that Robert Scott (1993) so aptly describes above; powerfully maintain an existing scheme of privilege.

The Dialectics of Speech and Silence

The participants made use of silence as strategic discursive practices throughout the interviews and focus group. Many of these silences were at the juncture of contradicting discourses of speech. The most consistent theme as already discussed was participants' predisposition when talking about 'race', to talk about "others" not themselves. At times, the participants seemed to be struggling for words. Ruth Frankenberg (1993) claims that "White women have to repress, avoid and conceal a great deal in order to maintain a stance of 'not noticing colour'..." (p33). The

following excerpts show how participants maintained powerful prohibitions against noticing colour/difference through their strategies of speech and silence including privileged and veiled silences.

Charlotte, who grew up in an eastern city in the South Island, was adamant that she had not noticed anyone ‘non white’ in her youth. She continued with the following memory:

Charlotte: No, in all honesty I can’t say I would have had any impression from my parents because I just can’t think of any situation where we’d had ever met any other culture. The only people that were sort of any different ... So we knew that the kids in that area were different, were rough, but I can’t ever recalling whether they were Māori or ‘white’. I don’t know... there was the children’s home then, the Children’s Home. And we used to take the odd thing for them you know clothes or something that Mother had made or something just to be nice for them. Perhaps we knew that they were less fortunate, but never a race thing.

Charlotte acknowledged the “rough” and “less fortunate” children in her neighbourhood. Although she acknowledged her “good fortune” it was veiled in her silence, in her inability to articulate explicitly her advantages compared to these children she described. Charlotte’s inability to register difference in racialised terms appeared to influence her recognition of the children’s disadvantage, and was accompanied by an assertion that this difference was “never a race thing”. An interpretation of the tenor of this remark could imply that Charlotte was declaring her family’s non-prejudiced views rather than commenting on the orphans’ Whiteness. Frankenberg (1993) makes an important point about the limitations of a *colour/power evasive* discourse, which a reading of Charlotte’s rationale could make. Frankenberg asserts that the discourse inhibits the separation of difference from domination. This excerpt also included Charlotte’s ability within this particular discursive location to articulate a class inference within her account, as she had acknowledged her “good fortune” in relation to the orphanage children.

It has become evident in the process of analysing these interviews that the racialised interactional strategies of Whiteness that the participants and I inhabited were at times contradictory. Despite my understandings of the theoretical requirements of a *race*

cognizant analysis, I was at times unprepared and lacking some of the necessary resources to negotiate and manage Whiteness as it actually arranged our social interactions in the interviews (Best, 2003; Frankenberg, 1993). Many of the simultaneous silences passed me by as I grappled with the lack of explicit Whiteness talk. The elusiveness of the forms of symbolic silence that the participants and I inhabited intermingled so seamlessly with our talk that they were difficult to identify and understand. Although most participants used a *colour/power evasive* discourse that was not overtly prejudiced, it became apparent that despite their genuine attempts to engage with my questions, the discourse that they deployed/inhabited placed significant constraints on their ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings.

At times participants appeared to monitor how they were representing themselves as they strived to talk about being ‘white’ and when they were expressing their views of their perceived cultural ‘others’, in particular Māori. Participants’ use of the polite, intentional, privileged and veiled silences, worked invisibly and powerfully to maintain a *colour/power evasive* discourse, which participants appeared to conceive as polite, tolerant and rational. Marjorie De Vault (1995) succinctly explains what is problematic about this deployment. She asserts that the context of these overlapping cultural discourses such as *colour/power evasiveness* can be viewed as formulations that are usefully critical of earlier *essentialist* understandings. However, De Vault adds that ‘white’ subjects usually achieve this “by obscuring the dynamics of group differences related to culture and power” (p.628).

Conclusion

Race-ethnicity is often relevant, even when it does not feature, even when it does not appear explicitly, on the surface of everyday talk. Talk can be full of oblique references and resonances that could make race and ethnicity relevant. Listeners who have the requisite interpretive competencies can hear and understand meanings located in social contexts where race and ethnicity (like gender) virtually always matter.

De Vault (1995 p.613)

Silences are difficult to describe for they have no clear boundaries, no hard analytical edges of definition. However, they are real nonetheless, and envelop us even though we

are sometimes unaware (Best, 2003). The importance and power of the discourses of silence to maintain and reproduce the racialisation that the participants and I deployed/inhabited almost eluded me. There were significant recourses to silence during the interviews and focus group that revealed a lack of discursive space for us to meet as Pākehā women **and** to talk about Whiteness. However, more significant were the simultaneous silences, the metaphorical and ideological silences that signified that to be 'white' is the natural condition, the assumed norm. These silences effectively diverted the participants and initially my attention away from its existence and consequently its importance.

This discussion uncovered the considerable work needed to maintain a *colour/power evasive* discourse while simultaneously responding to 'race'-explicit questions. In these interactions we all deployed/inhabited both sequential and simultaneous silences. An exploration and analysis of silences provide an unfamiliar and revealing potential for further exploration for an educator who is searching for pedagogical strategies to expose the limitations of the dominant *colour/power evasive* discourse of Whiteness. Despite the participants' difficulty in explicitly articulating their racialisation, this discussion has shown that it was within these varying forms of silence that the power of Whiteness could be invoked and maintained (Scott 1993).

PART IV

Chapter Eight

Anti-Racist Education and the Concept of Whiteness

Among the most powerful mechanisms maintaining the superiority of dominant voices is the failure to acknowledge and understand how assumptions of Whiteness shape and even dictate the limits of discourse, in the classroom as elsewhere

Maher & Tetreault (1998 p.321)

Introduction

One motivating force that impelled me to initiate this research was the generalized feeling of stagnation/stasis that I had experienced and that other colleagues had expressed, about some forms of antiracist education in Aotearoa. My concerns related to the adequacy of the processes and content in the forms of Pākehā antiracist education that I had been involved in from 1993. I pondered whether some processes that addressed the dynamics of dominance and subordination were sufficiently wide-ranging as well as being open to development/transformation/critique. Many forms of antiracist adult education engage non-Māori participants in processes that examine Pākehā culture and in particular, they address the historical and contemporary significance of the Treaty of Waitangi as a foundational document of our/their nation.²⁶ This work is a vital and important part of political community and institutional initiatives, the focus of which is ostensibly to attain a socially just future for all New Zealanders. I have in the past, and I continue to endorse this work unreservedly and I acknowledge the commitment of my colleagues.

My question centres on the absence of specific explorations or analyses of contemporary 'white' racialisation in any antiracist education in which I have been involved, as either a participant or facilitator.²⁷ Interestingly, as already discussed, in

²⁶ The most common of these forms of adult antiracist education are Treaty of Waitangi workshops, and Cultural Safety Education, which is a compulsory component of all nursing and midwifery education in Aotearoa.

²⁷ Since my involvement in teaching Cultural Safety to nursing and midwifery students in 1999, I have endeavoured to facilitate some exploration of Whiteness with students in their first course, Te Mara It

the contexts of colonial histories outside Aotearoa, including our nearest geographical neighbour Australia, antiracist educational strategies have evolved to include a critical pedagogy of Whiteness (McKay, 1998; Moreton-Robinson, 1999, 2000; Shore, 1998; Stephenson, 1997, 2005). Given the extent of contemporary international networking and exchange of ideas among academics, in particular educators in most western democracies such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and Aotearoa, as first raised in the introduction, questions arise why public debate/discussion of this new pedagogy, even a critique of it, has not gained momentum in Aotearoa.

Antiracist Education in Aotearoa

As explained in earlier chapters, although there had been a considerable number of Aotearoa studies/research that insightfully analyse racism and Pākehā and Māori ‘race relations’, there had been none of which I was aware, that specifically addressed the racialisation of contemporary Pākehā, in particular, discourses of Whiteness. This research was premised on my intent to engage the international literature and to talk to some Pākehā women. My aim was to investigate links and divergences with the analyses of the international research, and to examine whether Pākehā women’s contemporary constitution as subjects included racialised dimensions. I also wished to examine the potential that an epistemic pedagogy that examines discursive racialisation, such as a pedagogy of Whiteness, could offer to address the complexities of Pākehā constitution as subjects in Aotearoa.

In this thesis, I addressed these questions by talking to 28 Pākehā women located in a range of positions in relation to their antiracist education about Te Tiriti O Waitangi, their familiarity with Te Tiriti, and about unjust social relations in Aotearoa. The majority of participants had no formal antiracist education; twelve women had participated in a Treaty of Waitangi workshop, three of whom were antiracist educators. I wanted to discern whether any distinctions in the racialised discourses were evident

aims to develop Pākehā students’ conceptions of their own socialization and to extend their ability to analyse the power that they will have in relation to their clients, as future health professionals.

between those who had had Treaty education, and those participants who had no Treaty education.

Distinctions of Treaty Education: the implications

A primary dissimilarity evident in my research between the twelve Treaty educated participants and the remaining interviewees, was the differences in their views about ‘non white’ people such as Māori (Bonnett, 1996, 2000b). The former expressed their acknowledgement of the justification of the present claims of Māori and the significance of the Treaty as a founding document of Aotearoa, whereas the latter often exposed a lack of factual knowledge about Aotearoa history, the Treaty and present Māori claims. All participants though, accompanied the articulations of their views with expressions of their genuine concern about the future, particularly in relation to meeting Treaty claims.

Diane had attended a Treaty workshop. She was in her fifties and working as a health professional. Her response was an illustration of this concern. Diane agreed that there were wrongs to right, although she gave no factual detail. At other times in her interview, Diane talked about giving information that she had learned in a Treaty workshop to her friends. Diane articulated her concerns and gave her own solution:

Diane: I- I struggle with that um the land claims are totally justified um I have no - no problems with those at all um I guess I - I - part of me wonders can we ever redress the problem, the issue. Because I don't think we can and is - is giving land back going to heal the soul and I don't think it will. The way we can do that is I think by working alongside and knowing - like you were saying before - that the NZ European, Pākehā whatever you like to call them, knowing who they, the Māori knowing who they are and working alongside.

Diane demonstrated that she had thought about the extent of the Māori land claims and possibilities for the future. She also articulated a concern about the possibility of satisfactorily redressing the problems. Diane's statement suggests a complex understanding of colonisation, with her comment that she did not think, “giving land back is going to heal the soul”. This discursive solution did not include defensive articulations that were apparent in the discourses that participants who had not been

through the processes of Treaty education deployed. Diane demonstrated that a *power cognizant* discourse was available (see pp. 23-27), which enabled a conceptualisation of a solution that did not construct two opposing incompatible alternatives. The Treaty workshop process usually provides attendees with the opportunity and supportive space to express and address their fear and sense of threat around Treaty issues.

Other participants who indicated that they had **not** participated in any antiracist or Treaty education did not speak as comfortably or with as much certainty about their viewpoint often pausing for quite some time and appearing to choose their words carefully. The inability to support this discursive positioning with precise information seemed to contribute to some hesitancy. Sharon took a long time, with many pauses to make her point. She said,

Sharon:[I] think that's too much - I think that um - true there have been wrongs done to them but - I think - that um - I do think that they [Māori] should be paid out a certain amount - ah - and there should be certain - ah - you know compensation - but - I just think - it is starting to get out of hand.

Sharon acknowledged in generalised terms, that there had been wrongs to Māori that required a solution; however, she did not identify anything specific. Sharon also revealed her unease about the situation with her statement “I do think that they [Māori] should be paid out a certain amount” She implied that there might be a possibility that too much could be given to Māori and, to use her words, that, “it is starting to get out of hand”.

This excerpt illustrated an example of a struggle that participants with no Treaty education often demonstrated in their accounts about the Treaty and Māori claims. Sharon expressed her commitment to liberal values of fairness and tolerance by acknowledging the need to compensate for wrongs to Māori (Taylor & Wetherell, 1995; Tilbury, 1998). At the same time, she indicated that she thought that this situation was getting out of control. This is a contradictory discursive location: on the one hand, tolerance is suggested; on the other, there is an assertion of the need to monitor Māori, a position that supports/implies an imagined role as representatives of the national space. Hage (1998) pointed out an important insight in his thesis, that ‘white evil’ nationalists

and ‘good’, tolerant ‘white’ Australians are structurally similar. He stated that those who practice tolerance “...share and inhabit along with White ‘evil’ nationalists the same imaginary position of power within a nation imagined as ‘theirs’...” (p. 79).

Participants who had not participated in Treaty education frequently articulated their often-unconscious discursive location within a ‘white’ national terrain. Hage (1998) advocates conceptualising a representation of Whiteness as terrain in his research in which he interviewed ‘white’ Australians about their responses to immigration. Built into his suggestion of the usefulness of a spatial metaphor to describe discourses of Whiteness, Hage queries the advisability of using classifications such as ‘racism’ for analytical purposes although he acknowledges the political usages of the term. His rationale is insightful and he continues:

I [will] argue that there is a dimension of territorial and more generally, spatial power inherent in racist violence that the categories deriving from the concept of race cannot by themselves encompass. I [will] maintain that they are better conceived as nationalistic practices, practices that assume, first an image of a national space, secondly an image of the nationalist him/herself as master of this national space and thirdly an image of the ‘ethnic/racial other’ as a mere object within this space (p.28).

Hage’s (1998) analysis is useful because it adds depth to Frankenberg’s (1993) conception of a *colour/power evasive* discourse especially the ‘power evasive’ aspect. Participants’ tended to avoid using racialised terms, and Hage’s conception of the three features of nationalist space or territory enables an analysis of participants’ discursive identifications in relation to their sense of centrality and sense of entitlement.

Many of the participants combined varied discourses in their narratives. Jacinta was a participant who frequently emphasized how she learned to be reasonable and tolerant in her family environment. Jacinta had not attended a Treaty workshop although she recounted that she had read much about the Treaty and New Zealand history. She appeared not to use ‘race’/culturally specific terms unless it was unavoidable. In her explanations about learning to be/being ‘white’, Jacinta had made an additional statement that warrants particular attention. I have already discussed how Jacinta emphasized the certainty of the ordinariness of being ‘white’ (see chapter four) and her

final comment deserves specific attention as it revealed a hidden dimension, a notion of territory that Hage (1998) emphasizes.

Jacinta: I think that because New Zealanders became more multinational and more Polynesian. I think, in a way it's probably made people more, or made me more aware of what I am. Before we just really existed, you accepted it. It wasn't up for discussion and we accepted everyone.

This excerpt signalled a discourse that Jacinta utilised, which assumes a notion of centrality and certainty around the ordinariness and acceptance of being 'white', an image of ethnic/national space in Hage's (1998) terms. The discourse enabled Jacinta to communicate a sense of certainty in her assertion that being 'white' was just accepted, normal and central. Jacinta's final statement "we accepted everyone," continued the spatial image of centrality, which contained a gesture of reasonableness and tolerance. What is powerful about this discourse is Hage's (1998) premise that those in control have the power to accept/or not accept those who are deemed different/"other". This discourse can hide a relationship of power because within the discourse of acceptance/tolerance resides a confirmation of the power to be unaccepting/intolerant. In this way, "a mode of domination is presented as a form of egalitarianism" (Hage, 1998 p.87). Jacinta articulated that as a young child, she had no conception of her racialisation, and Hage's (1998) framework of national space facilitates an analysis of the hidden power dynamic in her perceptions of a tolerant community that she articulated that she remembered.

A number of participants who had no Treaty education demonstrated that a discourse of national terrain caught them in a dilemma. In an imagined role as protectors of national territory, while simultaneously expressing tolerance, participants also appeared to be positioned in a discourse concerned with the risk that their "other"/Māori might present to Pākehā assuming the right to dominate and control. The difference drawn between Diane's and Sharon's positioning on the Treaty claims, discussed previously, were examples of a consistent pattern of responses between the two groups of participants. The Treaty workshop attendees were more knowledgeable about and easily discussed the history of Pākehā and Māori relations. In contrast, participants with no formal Treaty education generally appeared to have little precise knowledge and used

discourses that located them as representatives of national terrain with an interest and entitlement to preserve what the discourse endorsed was rightfully theirs to monitor.

Two participants, Briar and Bridget, who had not participated in a Treaty workshop, gave explanations that were different from the other ‘non Treaty educated’ participants as they acknowledged the legitimacy of the Māori Treaty claims. Briar was an avid reader and had spoken quite frequently about her pride in her European heritage during her interview. She and I had been talking about the term Pākehā, which she had initially explained that she did not claim. Briar continued with the following explanation.

Briar: Yes, well, I don’t want to be labelled, but strictly speaking, I suppose, strictly, I suppose I am a Pākehā New Zealander if they want to talk about it in the Māori language, that’s fine. However, English is an adopted language here too. It happens to be the worldwide dominant one at the moment, but that won’t necessarily always be. It will always be my native language for better or worse and if I choose to learn Gaelic (laughter).

Helen: Yes, well that’s another thing isn’t it.

Briar: That’s an optional extra, yeah, honest to goodness I know the poor Māori were pushed off their land very forcibly and wrongly. But look what happened to the Scots, the highlands were devoid of nine tenths of their population, we were pushed off into the sea that’s why we are here.

Helen: Yes, that’s right.

Briar: What do we do - go back to the Queen and say excuse me, but your ancestors - (laughter) I mean, you have got to be real.

Briar acknowledged the injustice of the confiscation of Māori land then drew a comparison with her Scottish ancestors whom she explained the English had driven from their land. This reasoning although understandable, appeared as a reverse form of a “citation of exception response” in the guise of “me too” that Frances Raines (1998) described in her deconstruction of some “benign” manifestations of operationalised ‘white’ privilege (p.87). Raines (1998) explained that this response, which she terms “dysconscious” racism, involves “an uncritical habit of mind including perceptions, attitudes, assumptions and belief that justify inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given. It is not the absence of consciousness but an impaired consciousness or distorted way of thinking about ‘race’ as compared to, for, example critical consciousness” (p.79). Raines explains that this habit of mind does three things. First, it shifts attention from the subject, Māori land confiscation that we were

discussing. Second, by ‘dysconsciously’ shifting the focus from Māori to the Scottish, it potentially stalls perceived concerns about Māori. Finally, beyond shifting the focus, this ‘benign’ response could simultaneously diminish Māori land issues (Raines, 1998). An interesting aspect of this excerpt was that once Briar had established the link between the Scottish situation and Māori, she employed a discourse that enabled a change in association. This discourse facilitated a change in pronoun from *they* to *we* ostensibly allowing a similarity with a dispossessed community, which had the potential to minimise Briar’s contemporary hegemonic location in Aotearoa.

Bridget had had no Treaty education, although her unique perspective was notable among the participants. Bridget had talked about her ability to pass as Māori from a young age and about her rejection of prejudice around her at primary school. I asked Bridget a similar question to Briar.

Helen: What are your thoughts about the present claims of Māori?

Bridget: I think they have every right to claim and once again, I feel rather guilty because I know my father, oh I do not know these claims go way back. I know Dad was heavily involved getting land off the Māoris when we first shifted to R. I remember him coming home completely distraught about what was happening. But he was sort of pushed along with the job and trying to go forward and had us kids to be fed and watered. Mum expecting a better life so he just did what he had to do. But he thought it was really the wrong thing, - But even then he was doing it for his job and that’s where his pay packet came from, so I suppose you do what you have to do to support your family and I was one of them.

Bridget’s discursive response in this excerpt was significant and poignant. She was the only participant who articulated her own personal knowledge of, and a family link to the New Zealand Government’s ‘acquisition’ of Māori land as late as the 1960s and 1970s. Bridget located herself as a young onlooker to a reality form which other participants appeared protected. In contrast to Bridget, they used discourses that enabled them to perceive that colonisation was in the past, and racism was separate from their lives. Bridget’s account reveals her personal observations, her empathy for her father and the conflict that she reported that her father showed.

Bridget's account of her personal knowledge and experience of Māori land dispossession was a sobering story amongst the perspectives of other participants. Bridget used a discourse that enabled her to identify, acknowledge and express her feelings of guilt at the same time as she recounted witnessing her father's distress about the situation in which he found himself and her account of his sense of injustice about it. This excerpt demonstrates the conflict and tensions that participants at times conveyed as they negotiated their positioning within the limitations of the discourses they deployed (Frankenberg, 1993). These discourses contained sentiments of guilt influenced by a sense of injustice while simultaneously articulating the intractability of participants' situation.

The responses of some participants highlighted the presumed effectiveness of Treaty education and the significance of this form of education in addressing the contentious relations between Pākehā and Māori. Accurate information about the contraventions of the Treaty over time, the actual content of Treaty claims in relation to grievances and the rigorous legal process for settling claims, gives a solid base of relevant knowledge to Pākehā who attend Treaty education. They also usually understand justice issues more clearly.

Another constant theme emerged, which differentiated the two groups and related to the ease of claiming or resisting a Pākehā identity. The Treaty-educated participants demonstrated more confidence in the use of the term, which appears to be a measure of the success of this type of education in relation to Pākehā New Zealanders acknowledging the Treaty and feeling comfortable in reframing/changing their views toward Māori (see chapter four). There was a correlation between non-Treaty educated participants' refusal to use the term Pākehā and the discourses in which they were constituted. This association included a positioning of centrality within national terrain and an assimilative nationalism. (The discourses of *assimilative nationalism* are discussed in chapter four)

Interviewees who had **not** participated in Treaty education acknowledged their limited knowledge of the Treaty and of the claims of Māori and some indicated their presumed inability and/or motivation and sometimes apathy/resistance to inform themselves more.

Rosemary, a secondary school teacher who did not claim Pākehā as a label, demonstrated some contradictory views in her discursive choices when I asked her whether she had formal education about the Treaty:

Rosemary: No, no just what you read in the paper. Oh, I have done it like third form social studies, relieving and things.

Helen: Have you actually read the Treaty?

Rosemary: No

Helen: Do you feel you understand it?

Rosemary: No probably not, I mean [I] have never read the whole Treaty, no...

Helen: Do you think it is important for us as Pākehā to understand um about the Treaty?

Rosemary: Yes I do. Well it's our history and we haven't got much have we - have we- compared to most other countries -. Yes but I am probably like most New Zealanders and never quite make it [to a Treaty workshop]

Although Rosemary acknowledged the importance of knowing about the Treaty and the issues around it, she used discourses that had questioned the significance for her. She also questioned the solvability of the Māori claims and her power to do anything.

Rosemary: I mean there is nothing much that I can do I mean all the decisions are made at government level aren't they - I mean you sort of give up, don't you.

Rosemary utilised discourses that distanced her from the Treaty issues we were discussing, a form of disembodied racism that was discussed in detail in chapter six (Moon, 1999). Rosemary's discursive change in pronouns at strategic points had the effect of spreading the responsibility among all Pākehā. These discourses demonstrated the power that is manifest in an ability to choose to disassociate and more significantly, to articulate a powerlessness and lack of resolve because of that claimed disassociation (Rains, 1998). The discourses just discussed were significant, and showed the influence that Treaty education has had on those participants who engaged with it. The crucial insight for this chapter though, surrounds the difficulties that all participants had in articulating what it means to be 'white' and the significance of their racialisation, their Whiteness. This discourse was persistent throughout the data gathering process regardless of the interviewees' participation in antiracist or Treaty education.

The outcomes of Treaty education, revealed in the articulations of the research participants, validate and support my questions that investigate Pākehā racialisation in Aotearoa. An apparent gap in understanding of how racialisation is significant in the Aotearoa context and how this discursive constitution implicates those on both sides of hegemonic social relations, supports an exploration of Whiteness in Aotearoa. Many researchers in the field outside Aotearoa comment on the ease with which ‘whites’ can renounce Whiteness and the privilege that accompanies it. Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg (1998) succinctly state that ‘whites’ alone could opt out of their racialisation, could proclaim they were non-racialised. “Yet no matter how vociferously they may renounce their Whiteness, white people do not lose the power associated with being white” (p.22).

The use of a discourse utilising the term Pākehā also revealed some differences between those participants with or without the Treaty education. Although Pākehā New Zealanders were increasingly using Pākehā as a descriptive label, there was support for a prevailing standpoint that Pākehā New Zealanders were still benefiting from being located within a terrain of Whiteness. Being ‘white’ in Aotearoa, as shown by my research participants was a normative cultural location. The participants did not experience Whiteness as a conscious racialised identification - Whiteness remained invisible to those inside its contours.

Wellman (1993) made an important insight that extended this analysis He argued that:

Racism is more effectively analyzed as a strategy for the maintenance of privilege than as prejudice. The focus on issues that blacks [Māori] raise in ‘white’ thinking also makes it possible to assess the various privileges that whites are defending and the ideological ways in which this is accomplished (My inclusion in square brackets) (p.42).

Wellman’s succinct statement highlighted a specific way that racialisation, in particular Whiteness, operates discursively. His point sustains another theme that emerged from the data, which suggested that members of present day ‘white’ culture find it difficult to see/talk about the privileged and advantageous cultural practices/markers/discourses of Whiteness. Analysis of the focus group discussion, all Treaty educated, supported Wellman’s claims. The term ‘privilege’, or any acknowledgement of the cultural

advantages ascribed to Pākehā women in this society were concepts not used by any of the ‘Treaty-educated’ women during the three-hour discussion. In fact, the participants gave considerable attention firstly to their perceived disadvantage in being ‘white’, and secondly to their perceptions of Māori women’s advantage manifest in their strong cultural identity. Mary contributed this,

Mary: There’s never-ending disadvantages to be[ing] ‘white’. As women learn about male oppression, they discover they’re ‘white’ oppressors - it’s a disadvantage to be ‘white’ - hard to be proud of ‘white’ culture because of its bad points.

Patricia who expressed herself this way summed up an example of the second point:

Patricia: Do others feel inadequate with Māori women secure in their identity as Māori women? I often feel naked, inadequate, especially in group of Māori women, like [in a] group [of] Catholic women. [I feel] in awe of Māori women -not Māori men - strong Māori women [are] inspiring!

The focus group comprised a group of women who had interacted with some Māori women in the course of their community work²⁸. Patricia’s question appeared to revive some memories for the women in the focus group. Despite their extensive education about the history of Aotearoa and their ready acknowledgement of the historical and present day injustices to Māori, the women articulated a vulnerability and inadequacy in the context of being challenged by some Māori women.

The previous discussion highlights the contingent nature of the discourses of Whiteness used by the participants. Many international scholars have argued that Whiteness as a concept has different manifestations in different contexts and at various historical periods. However, Frankenberg (1993) states concisely that “Regardless of whether people chose to be ‘white’, Whiteness is a particular social identity in societies with a colonial history” (p.20). There is still much debate about the term Pākehā and its

²⁸ These women had been part of an intercultural planning group preparing intercultural interdenominational church service. The Māori women in the group had challenged all Taiwi women about the Eurocentric nature of the service, which was difficult for a number of Pākehā women.

political legitimacy. However, my research evidence suggests that the use of different words does not change the material reality or the embedded dominant discursive practices in any society (Frankenberg, 1993). The hegemonic social, cultural and economic relations in Aotearoa have continued to include a racialised dimension even though the use of ‘race’-specific terms are less common in most contexts. Participants in this research have shown that racialised understandings and discourses still play a powerful yet predominantly unacknowledged role in contemporary social and cultural relations in Aotearoa.

Cheryl Hyde, (1995) suggests that claiming an identity, such as being Pākehā, could be a conceptual diversion by a Whiteness discourse that could conveniently distract ‘whites’ from its relevance and power. This view has some resonances in Aotearoa because the term Pākehā is usually voluntarily asserted or resisted as identification. The research participants’ contributions and the international literature and research on the topic demonstrate that racialisation operates at conceptual, discursive and ideological levels (Crenshaw, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Hytten & Adkins, 2001). My argument is that understanding hegemonic relations and in particular the struggle over language and meaning that are part of this, demand that those in power address their discursive strategies and structurally hegemonic locations. Although Pākehā claiming has become more generally used and is perceived as a positive manifestation of a relational identity with Māori, any exploration of the relevance of Whiteness is still missing in the Aotearoa context. Whiteness is still unrecognized, unacknowledged, and consequently not named nor analysed by many. The articulated discourses of the participants in my research demonstrate that exploration of racialised discourses could be useful to enhance understanding and could represent an effective interrogation of racialised and neo-colonial inequalities in this land (Roman, 1993).

Similarities in Discourses

An important **similarity** among all participants’ responses (Treaty-educated and not Treaty-educated) is pertinent to this chapter. The similarity pertains to the consistent inability, difficulty and/or unfamiliarity that participants demonstrated when encouraged to articulate their understandings of racialisation, or being seen as being

‘white’, even though racialised discourses ‘saturated’ their talk and silences (Crenshaw, 1997; Frankenberg, 1993; Leonardo, 2004; Mazzei, 2003). In the interests of gaining some clarity about all participants’ understandings of Whiteness such as the significance of this concept in their lives, I asked all participants in the individual interviews whether they viewed being ‘white’ as “just their skin colour” or something more. Most participants identified that Whiteness did signify more than the “their skin colour” to them, although their surety about how this is manifest was often left unexplained/able. Most participants showed tacit recognition of the significance of Whiteness in their lives as New Zealanders however; their inability to elucidate any further, illustrated the power of Whiteness to dictate the limits of discourse (Maher & Tetreault 1998).

Sarah had not attended a Treaty workshop. She did not claim Pākehā as part of her identity and thought that things Māori, such as children learning Māori in schools had just gone too far. I asked Sarah the skin colour question.

Helen: Do you think that being ‘white’ means only the colour of your skin? Or does it mean more than that?

Sarah: In some way, it probably means more than the colour of your skin because if we look back to our European ancestors, we have probably been led into things, which perhaps ‘white’ people have. I am particularly thinking as regards music and dancing, like we would be brought up with ballet or Irish dancing or tap dancing. We weren’t kind of into Māori dancing or brought up with like Polynesian dancing. This is only something we have become aware of later. Um like, we haven’t been brought up with reggae music or Polynesian music; we have been brought up with classical music. And it’s probably come down without realizing it because that’s probably kind of part of our culture in a way. Um I think perhaps we are influenced not just [by] the colour of our skin without realizing it what we just take for granted is actually part of our culture, the way we have been.

Helen: Mm. Mm.

Sarah: Maybe perhaps as much as you can say the Irish eat lots of potatoes.

Helen: (Laughter) Yes.

Sarah: Yes, when you think about it. No, I think it’s more than the colour of our skin.

Sarah tried to make the links between culture and ‘white’/fair/pale skin and used the analogy of the different types of music and food types. She gave responses to this skin colour question that highlighted her recognition of the complexity of Whiteness as a

concept. She was able to give some rationale for her reply to this question. Sarah couched her responses in terms of a common strategy that participants frequently used when facing questions not commonly addressed within a Whiteness discourse, queries seemingly “outside the rules”, conceptions/questions that they may have not previously considered (Maher & Tetreault 1998). Sarah appeared to be thinking aloud, not saying what she had already thought, but in a sense, speaking to find out what she thought. She appeared to be revealing her thought processes as she worked through her responses (Tilbury, 1998). Sarah was not able to draw explicit links between culture and the significance that she attributed to skin colour, although her discursive strategy enabled her to conclude that she did think ‘white’ means more than skin colour even though she could not explain her rationale in any detail.

Bridget had not participated in a Treaty workshop and had taught primary students in predominantly Māori communities as a young woman. She frequently acknowledged the ‘differences’ of Māori in her interview. At the time of her interview, Bridget was also facing the potential breakdown of her marriage, which appeared to influence her response to this particular question.

Helen: Do you think being ‘white’ or talking about being ‘white’, do you think it means more than the colour of your skin?

Bridget: It probably does, but then I’m ‘white’, well European or whatever. I used to think I had a sort of brownish complexion. Oh, it probably does. It probably does. It’s sort of where your background lies, I suppose. Where you come from, that’s what I’ve always thought... sort of understanding where you’ve come from. But then, learning to live with it, but then learning to live in your own way but I suppose if you - it depends on, you know, I’ve never really had to get by with, you know, I’m going to have to get by with a lot less [?money]. I used to do it but then I had my family to back me up. Now I am the family so I’ve got to - I don’t know how to answer that one.

Helen: Yeah, no, that’s all right. No it’s fine. It’s not a test or anything. It’s just too sort of ... to get your thoughts on it. And it seems to me ..., I’m just wanting to check this out with you. It seems to me that you’re equating being ‘white’ with having, you know, being financially comfortable and things like that. Do you think there’s a correlation between the two?

Bridget: No, it’s probably just me. No, it doesn’t necessarily follow, I don’t think. I think it’s putting those things into importance which is probably the difference. I wish I could just say, “Right, that’s enough!” and go walk-about.

Bridget attested that being ‘white’ is “probably” more than just her physiognomy. She also strived to reconcile a discourse including an *essentialist* understanding of skin colour. Bridget acknowledged that she was visibly and culturally ‘white’/European yet she also perceived herself as having a brownish complexion. In the interview, Bridget’s reconciliations exposed the confusion of a taken-for-granted ‘natural’ characteristic that is ‘white skin’. Importantly, Bridget acknowledged that being ‘white’ was an extensive cultural construction, which related to having ‘white’ skin. Bridget’s ability to play with the rules also revealed the tension that does exist between descriptors attributed by others related to skin pigmentation and how the described see/describe/claim themselves.

Valerie Stolcke (1995) discusses the tension around the creation of identities in her research on ethnicity, gender and the subversion of nationalism. She states that traditionally identities have been created in a “tension between policy-orientated definitions from the outside and self definition”. Stolcke adds that identities alter “in accordance with local, national and global power, and politics, and are pragmatic and contested” (p.1). Bridget’s definitions were quite fluid and she initially made a link to the economic cultural capital that she implied is part of being ‘white’ by connecting her support of her family within her marriage, and the lack of support for her impending divorce. She was clearly thinking through how she would adapt to a change in her financial circumstances. When asked to clarify this, Bridget denied any assumed connection between racialisation and being financially comfortable by individualising it with her comment “No, it’s probably just me” using a discourse that attributed her positioning to her personal perspective with little cultural group implications.

What became evident during the interviews was the confusion/contradiction that many participants conveyed as they struggled with discourses that they had available to them ranging from *essentialist* understandings of ‘race’ through to a *colour evasive* construction of ‘race’ as well as discourses similar to Bridget’s reference to the cultural content of her European-ness. However, the fluidity of Bridget’s discourses enabled her to play with the complexities and tensions of the discursive ‘rules’ around skin pigmentation. The previous excerpts illustrate the variety of sometimes contradictory discourses that can be utilised when Pākehā women attempt to explain the significance

of being 'white' or Whiteness. The confusion and contradictions as well as the limits of the discourses available to participants attest to the constructed nature of these understandings and the potential that resides in possibilities for change.

Usefulness of Discussion

An important aspect of this research has been an interrogation of the dimensions of Whiteness discourses that were manifest through participants and my talk. My intention was to ascertain how the process/mechanisms of contemporary racialisation among Pākehā, in particular some Pākehā women, could be addressed in antiracist education. I had posed some questions in the final stages of the interviews, which could give some indication of participants' views about the usefulness of our discussion and the potential for a similar exploration as an educational strategy for Pākehā New Zealanders generally.

I asked participants how they found the interview/discussion that we had and whether they thought that it was useful. The overwhelming response was in the affirmative and a frequent explanation given was that participants had not thought about some of the questions before and some participants suggested that the discussion prompted some reflection. When asked this question Diane, who had attended a Treaty workshop, expressed her view that all New Zealanders need this discussion and she was clear why she thought early childhood was the best time to introduce these ideas.

Helen: This sort of discussion that we are having, do you think it's a useful way of sort of helping us understand who we are in relation to understanding ourselves and other cultures? And that type of education do you think it's sort of

Diane: Yep, I do. I do think it's helpful and it makes me realize, I mean, just takes more thinking about it, because in terms of who I am as 'white' and all that. And what is, you know, Pākehā culture and New Zealand culture or whatever? I mean it just; I don't think it's only me. I actually think our country; it needs to be done nationally because of the confusion and the differences. Yes, I do think it's helpful.

Helen: Yeah, yeah.

Diane: But it's brought more questions than answers.

Helen: Yeah, how do you think um we can go about that? Do you, have you got any ideas like someone said they think it should start at, you know, that

sort of thing should start at preschool, that whole understanding of being aware should be part and should be started very young and some people say well secondary school. Well then how do you see it?

Diane: I think it needs to start young because when I look at what was ingrained in me, that's the bit that's hardest to get rid of.

Helen: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely, right - that's where it should start. Yes

Diane: Really, so whether that should be in the preschool, but I mean that's when a child absorbs the most in those early years.

Helen: And I suppose too, the other thing, you know, for me is that it's in your home environment as well isn't it.

Diane: Oh totally and that's where, I mean how do you do that in tandem because you have to have your kids and your parents, there has to be some kind of parallel process going there. And I mean I look at um M. who I was talking about before, my son-in-law. Now he was saying - Now if D. comes home singing Māori songs, look out - that is his daughter.

Diane frequently spoke about a difficulty that she had coming to terms with her family prejudice and working through her racialisation herself in her adult life. She expressed a similar view to other participants, that the earlier in a child's life that they are exposed to these ideas, the better. Diane also pointed out that the home environment was critical as well, giving the example from her own family in the excerpt above. This insight of Diane's about the influence that both educational organizations and the home environment have on children's early socialisation, indicated her awareness of the power of these institutions. She emphasized the imperative that a dual approach (including parents and children) was an important consideration. This view exposed the enormity of the task that could face social justice educators who extend an antiracist pedagogy to include interrogations of Pākehā racialisation.

Antiracist Educators' Discursive Location

In this section I trace some of the dilemmas and different positionings that three participants who worked as antiracist educators, expressed in our discussions. An important point to reiterate at the outset is that I had commenced the individual interviews with Zita and Sheila early in the data collection process. Their interviews were the first of the individual interviews. It became clear as I progressed through the analysis of this inductive study that my ideas and perceptions about some terminology around 'white' racialisation, were changing.

I had initially used the term ‘white’ identity as a form of Whiteness, which accounted for a particular interpretation and some concerns that the educators expressed about the apparent narrow focus of this terminology. My changing focus throughout the research process and my acknowledgement that educators continually develop their pedagogies are accepted companion developments in qualitative research.

One of the participants in my study, Rebecca, had been involved in youth education and activism for some years. Rebecca was a member of a group of Pākehā Treaty workers and she was committed to Treaty education work and the value of its philosophy. I was also a member of this group and I had interviewed Rebecca when our group was in the planning stages of organising a gathering for Pākehā Treaty workers. In her interview, Rebecca had voiced some concerns about Treaty education. When I asked her, as I did with all other participants, what she thought about the questions that we were addressing, as well as what her perspective was on the usefulness of such explorations of Whiteness, Rebecca gave an extensive reply.

Helen: Mm. Mm. Do you think that this type of exploration that we have [been] doing is... Um, would be useful thing in anti racist education, in, um [that] type of work?

Rebecca: What we were talking about just now?

Helen: Yes, just what we were talking about now.

Rebecca: Yeah I think it does. I remember saying to Joan (pseudonym) on the phone just a couple of days ago, saying that I’ve been feeling frustrated about just starting on this Pākehā culture tree and that. [I think] there needs to be a lot more, like in a way I felt like we need to reshape it. It just feels like we’re doing the same old thing over and over again.

Helen: Yes, mm.

Rebecca: And we haven’t – yeah, where’s the critique of it? I don’t see us changing! I’ve been doing it since - 1988 was the first time I did a cultural analysis with A B and as far as I can see it actually hasn’t changed that much..... P. F. did quite a good thing with us in the P. (Outside Aotearoa) where he had the culture tree. And we did all that and then underneath he had the roots of the culture tree which was our system and - which I think is really important for us as Pākehā to have that, for ‘white’ people to have that diagram or to look at it in that way as a complete thing, that the roots are actually part of our um process or - our system.let’s hope this hui we’re planning will help.²⁹

²⁹ hui is the Māori word for meeting or gathering

Rebecca had talked in her interview about her concerns regarding the strategies and processes in Treaty workshops. Her assertion was that Pākehā need to make more expansive explorations of their positionings or to use Rebecca's metaphor, their examination of the roots of the culture tree. Rebecca and I had been expecting that the group who attended the gathering we had planned with others would develop some new and exciting strategies for reinvigorating our facilitation processes and content.

Zita and Sheila had both been involved in antiracist education as facilitators for up to ten years; Zita, with voluntary community groups and Sheila within the compulsory cultural safety course in the nursing and midwifery degree programmes. These women were both experienced educators who had witnessed many changes and developments in their area of education over time. Consequently I was interested to hear their views about the usefulness of examining racialisation/Whiteness.

At the time of these interviews I was unclear about the specific focus of a conscious identifiable racialised identity. Most participants appeared to interpret, and I initially understood the concept of Whiteness/racialisation, within embedded cultural assumptions that associated the term 'white' with biological meanings that seemed to fuse the concept on to 'white' people. Underpinning our conception was our difficulty in understanding how to prise the term 'white' from its biological and essentialising origins. Most participants appeared reluctant to think of themselves as 'white' or to view racialisation as having any social significance. As my understanding of discourse analysis deepened, the theoretical notion of the constitution of subjects through discourse assisted the analytic process and enabled a separation of the process of racialisation from these Pākehā women (Foucault, 1980).

Zita had been involved in antiracism community work for twenty years or more and had made a huge contribution to the persistence and continuing development of this work. It was important to obtain her understandings of the relevance of an interrogation of racialisation, a pedagogy of Whiteness in the Aotearoa context. Therefore, I spoke with her about the literature that had taken my attention in the process of this research.

Helen: I've sort of done some reading you know, there's a lot been written at the moment about Whiteness and 'white' identity, coming out of Britain but also coming out of the States mainly, (mm) but also in Britain and some um out of Africa as well, um, what are your thoughts about this concept, do you think it is a useful concept to use?

Zita: One of the problems I would have with that is that at this stage our own theory is - is quite deeply developed (mm) And our situation, the difference, it's um ... our context is addressed; we are already addressing our context. When I've done ..., the exchanges I've had particularly with the British is that their context is very different and that their analysis is very different and not, frankly, very good. (mm) Um I mean it may be sharpening up now (mm) But the last few engagements I've had with British theorists I've thought not only is your situation very different (mm) but you are just pussy-footing! [Oh I see] So, so it's, it's not all that helpful here and I doubt that it's all that helpful there. The most interesting stuff I think that's coming out of Britain at the moment, is coming out through British Asian um sources (yes) like the theory of multiple positioning and so on which is coming through in psychology. That seems to be ah quite ... an accurate reflection of the situation.

Helen: Yes, we're all mongrels, [laughter]

Zita: Whereas a lot of ... a lot of British stuff is just ... just very sophisticated denial of power. I've had more contact with people and theory out of the States but again their situation is very different, um in that they have not yet begun to address the situation of the native Americans, who are the (mm) most, you know. I mean that relationship with the first nation people is one of the things that we have begun to fashion crude keys to (mm) which really nobody else is helpfully doing. [No, no,]

The points that Zita made confirmed perceptions of antiracist education found in this study. Zita was clear that antiracism theory development in Aotearoa is more advanced than the US or the UK. She suggested that theory in the UK and the US was in a celebration of diversity mode such as multiculturalism, which generally did not address the power relationships among the different ethnic groups. Many international educators have critiqued this 'diversity' approach to antiracism theory (Bonnett, 1996, 1998, 2000b; Friedman, 1995; Giroux, 1993; Martin & Davis, 2001; McLaren, 1997). Many forms of multicultural or multi-ethnic education have had an emphasis on difference, diversity or collective identity.

Confirming Zita's perspective, Afshar and Maynard (1994) state that this approach can mask "the mechanisms that structure and maintain the differences...It can foreclose analysis of the power dynamics that are a feature of difference, leaving intact the same

conceptualisations of groups whose material lives are still subsumed within inequitable social relations” (p.22). These authors suggest that by studying Pākehā for example, and focusing on how they differ from Māori, the power relations between the groups can be ignored and in fact often obscured from analysis. Zita’s critique confirmed what I had found in some articulations of other participants’ perceptions about the values of antiracist education. The majority of participants appeared to perceive that antiracist education was primarily useful for Pākehā to understand and accept “other” cultures.

Zita also emphasized the importance of contextual differences and she voiced her scepticism about the usefulness of racialisation in any context. On reflection I surmise that Zita interpreted my conception of Whiteness as an identity claim such as ‘white’ identity, and therefore her uncertainty about the usefulness of a pedagogy that utilizes a politics of identity for members of a hegemonic group was understandable. Most anti-racism educators encouraged a political commitment to a claiming of a Pākehā identity as a statement of a commitment to a Treaty-based society in Aotearoa. Kathy Hytten and Anee Adkins (2001) give a cogent description of what Zita may have interpreted my conception of Whiteness was at the time of her interview in 1997. They state, “We do not use Whiteness in the way of an essentialised identity that all white people have internalized, but as widely circulating discursive forms that contribute, but do not constitute, people’s identities and experiences in society and its institutions” (p.435).

Zita’s remarks about a concept of Whiteness highlighted how a lack of attention to racialisation discourses, to the concept of Whiteness by Pākehā researchers and educators, presented a dilemma for me. On the one hand, I agree with Zita’s caution that guards against the potential for facile reassignment/adoption of theorizations of racialisation from one context to another. However, Bonnett (2000c) cautions that: “The task of ‘white’ watchers is to develop a more international vision of their subject matter, one that draws on but is not dominated by United States perspectives...” He adds that, “as much as the moment in United States is myopic, it is an insightful critical moment” (p.36).

On the other hand, imperialistic colonial expansion underpinned the historical development of contemporary Western societies. These developments do have many

contextual divergences; however, they also have fundamental similarities. The ideologies and practices of ‘white’ racialisation present in **all** previous British colonies including Aotearoa contain the rationalisations and hallmarks of European Enlightenment thinking, ideas and understandings of which the concept of Whiteness was a primary feature. My study has revealed that participants had available to them a range of racialised discourses of Whiteness that they deployed/inhabited (see chapters four to seven).

My point in highlighting these similarities is that there is a potential that although Pākehā anti-racism educators legitimately emphasize the uniqueness of our history and contemporary context, the reproduction and maintenance of racialised Whiteness as shown on the analysis of the research data, appears up to now, to continue unabated and unaddressed. Therefore Pākehā are unable to understand significance of this discursive process. Additionally, Pākehā attention to the importance of the ‘coming of age’ of unique ‘home-grown’ academic research and scholarship in Aotearoa may have masked some fundamental processes of racialisation that Pākehā have in common with other western industrialised ex-colonies.

This stance just discussed, supports and complements the critical and valuable developments in antiracist educational theorising and research that have so far taken Pākehā insights to constructive and transformative outcomes in this area of education. However this research analysis has shown that an abundance of sedimented explicitly racialised understandings were available to contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders to use in various contexts. In addition the participants and I, despite our assertions of tolerance, neutrality and non-racialisation, were all constituted through, and deployed identifiable racialised discourses of Whiteness (Applebaum, 2004).

My central concern is that the ‘cultural’ focus of antiracist educator’s direction in Aotearoa, particularly those involved in transformative antiracist education, may have taken Pākehā attention away from the significance of the power of racialisation because the discourses are invisible, fluid and elusive. I question the ease with which one could conflate and confuse a change in terminology, such as the justifiable replacement in identification assertions of the term ‘white’/European Caucasian with the Māori word,

Pākehā, with a decline or absence in a racialisation process of contemporary Pākehā New Zealanders. This conflation/confusion as well as the predominance of present bicultural politics focused on the racialised “other” such as Māori and increasing ‘unfamiliar’ immigrant populations, may have contributed to the apparent perceived irrelevance of investigations of racialised discourses in the Aotearoa context.

Peter McLaren (1997) makes a pertinent observation on this point. He remarks that “we cannot will our racist logics away ... We need to work hard to eradicate them. We need to struggle with a formidable resolve in order to overcome what we are afraid to confirm exists, let alone confront it” (p.259). The prohibition against the use of explicitly racialised language for Pākehā New Zealanders, that the participants in this study demonstrated, especially in relation to discussing themselves, appears to mask the implicit racialisation of contemporary Pākehā communication practices and discursive interactions.

Analysis of the data in this study showed that the invisibility and seeming irrelevance of Pākehā racialisation was maintained precisely because it was generally not a conscious aspect of identity development on those who concurred that they were ‘white’/seen as ‘white’. The racialisation that I observed in interactions with participants was not a substantive conscious identity as such but a conceptual ideology and a racialised discourse that constituted us as racialised Pākehā subjects through our interactions.

Another participant, Sheila, had been involved in teaching cultural safety for almost ten years and had talked for a number of minutes about the stresses of her work and the constant struggle to maintain competent staff to teach cultural safety. I asked Sheila about her thoughts about the concept of Whiteness. I have included her full response, which I will address in sections.

Helen: Just talking about this aspect of Whiteness, and that sort of thing. How do you see it or what are your thoughts about the concept in its relationship to Pākehā identity?

Sheila: What kind of term - , I’m kind of fascinated with the word Whiteness. Like Whiteness has positive connotations and negative connotations - like its positive in terms of clean and pure you know the epitome of my washing is when it is absolutely ‘white’ like my nice ‘white’

knickers. And then it also has negative connotations and that you have to be 'white', you have to be pure, you have to be chaste you have to be, you know, that virginal thing. So that I kind of like have difficulty in relating it to – to concepts of race so I'm kind of stretching my brain to think about it in terms of Pākehā Whiteness and yet Whiteness itself is a Pākehā term it's hugely imbedded in your culture. The concept of 'black' and 'white', 'black' being dark like being scary and dirty whatever - 'white' being clean and pure and godlike um virginal and chaste, motherly, you know, what do you call it, apple pie – very, very 'white' so it's...

Although Sheila had more words to say than many other participants, her discursive strategy initially focused on abstract connotations of the term using binary oppositions associated with the terms 'white'/'black'. This discourse makes it difficult for Sheila to relate Whiteness to concepts of 'race' although it enables an acknowledgement that Whiteness is a culturally embedded Pākehā term with symbolic meanings pervading Pākehā understanding. This discourse also enabled the identification of connotations of 'black' with being dark, scary, dirty, and 'white' with purity, being godlike, virginal and motherly. These understandings were powerful expressions of a historical tradition, representing a crude difference in the shade of skin that symbolised distinctions between binary oppositions such as vice and virtue, hell and heaven, devils and angels, contamination and purity (Anthias & Yuval Davis, 1993). I continued with another question.

Helen: So do you see it as a colour and do you think it matters?

Sheila: I don't see it as a colour and I don't - oh gosh - do I think it matters oh see, I don't see - I don't see relationships within a biological framework. So um and race and your physical characteristics, physical characteristics, skin colour being one of them and I think my experience of some Māori people, in particular the pain of being 'white' Māori is harder than being Māori, Māori. So that concept of Whiteness so I just can't sort of ...

When I asked Sheila if she thought Whiteness mattered, she appeared to be toiling with a common dilemma about the difference/significance that Whiteness, or 'blackness' for that matter, makes in commonsense understanding in society generally. This recurrent problem contrasted with Sheila's discursive location which she emphasized was not to view relationships within a biological framework. Although the discourse enabled Sheila to acknowledge that Whiteness mattered, its limitations seemed to hinder her from indicating how and in what ways 'white' racialisation mattered. Sheila deployed a

discourse that tied cultural identification with skin colour, which highlighted how the ideological and discursive forms of Whiteness so easily remain invisible and undetectable.

A discursive pattern that was similar to other participants' explanations of Whiteness in this part of Sheila's response is an example that she gave to illustrate her point about the tension between self-identification and the labels others give. The discourse focused on Māori, the racialised "other" and was noticeable in its ability refocus on Māori to demonstrate how 'white' racialisation matters in some contexts, while simultaneously maintaining the invisibility of Whiteness. The discourse that Sheila deployed is instructive to problematise: given the power of unmarked Whiteness to mark the racialised "other", the discourse appeared to prohibit the use of an example of the significance of a brown Pākehā as opposed to a 'white' Pākehā - in fact within this discourse the notion of a brown Pākehā appeared unthinkable/unavailable. Sheila and I continued our discussion.

Helen: So in a sense in that situation are you actually saying that it does matter?

Sheila: Yes it does it actually does YES, YES. (With emphasis)(Mm) Mm.

Helen: Well to sort of explain it a bit more. What I'm saying is separating your own understanding of it from the way society or ideology has used Whiteness? And the way it is generally understood and perceived in our society. I mean to you um, do you think it's an important thing for Pākehā to explore - into dealing with, finding out who we are and the significance of that or otherwise?

Sheila: Yes. Yes, finding out who you are and where you come from and what you carry, to me is absolutely essential and if that's, if that's tracing your Whiteness then I totally support it. Um.

Helen: I'm getting the understanding from you that you don't actually see it as significant to actually do it like that?

Sheila: You mean physically?

Helen: To look at Whiteness in all that it means and the weight that it [carries] or whatever, what is ascribed to those who are seen to be 'white'.

Sheila: Oh yeah, **Oh yes**.

Helen: And that whole power that, that...

Sheila: 'white'

Helen: Yes that um, that um, I mean in a sense it's a problematic term, isn't it! Well it seems to me it's a problematic term in that it's using a biological construction - I mean it's biological but in actual fact it's been constructed by society to wield a huge amount of power and in that way it's problematic. But also because it is problematic for me, it seems that it's

something that does need unpacking - to actually deconstruct it, to problematise it.

Sheila: Are you talking about 'white' privilege?

Helen: I'm talking about anything that is just related to Whiteness and being 'white' and being seen as 'white'.

In the above section my initial attempts to explain the concept to Sheila while simultaneously facilitating a shift from a biological understanding of Whiteness to its ideological and discursive properties, to separate Whiteness from people, was initially unsuccessful. The strategy of facilitating the separation of Whiteness from 'white' people in Pākehā conceptions/understanding appears to be a useful strategy in antiracist education.

Sheila: And being seen as normal? (Mm) that Whiteness is normal?

Helen: Well yes, well yes, whatever that's, that's...

Sheila: That's what needs to be unpacked is that concept of being normal and you [have] the power to define what is normal (Mm) and the all pervasiveness of um normal. Yes definitely, that needs to be unpacked. (Mm) and if that's what Whiteness is, if normal is Whiteness then yeah really need to look at that. Because if you don't look at that, you are standing apart and pitying, you're wandering around with your blue rinse. And you're patronizing, um, and you're actually not - it feels like from where I sit that you are not going to be hugely effective because you're working from a "I'm going to do good" framework Rather than from a framework of ... "I don't have a right to do good or not"! Um this is what I have and this is why I have it and I deserve it no more or no less.

Sheila appeared to perceive my interpretation of Whiteness as a biological conception and this became clear when I queried her again about her apparent reticence to link exploring Whiteness with Pākehā explorations about finding out whom they/we are and where we/they come from. Once we clarified our understanding that I was inquiring about Sheila's interpretation of Whiteness as a social construct, we continued our discussion more easily and fluidly. In this section of Sheila's excerpt, my response to her question, "you mean physically?" appeared to clarify for her the links between her understanding of social power and a broad conception of Whiteness. Sheila was able to articulate all the aspects of Whiteness that participants had deployed/inhabited such as "the power, the normality," the "standing apart and pitying," and the "I'm going to do good". In that particular section Sheila's description of a type of Whiteness as "wandering around in your blue rinse" was intriguing because we both knew that she

was describing, an older **'white'** middle class woman by the **blue colour** of her hair dye.

Sheila: (Mm) I suppose the pragmatist in me is saying and are you benefiting from having it, and is society as a whole benefiting from you having that - or that amount of it (Mm) is that what you mean by Whiteness?

Helen: Yeah, Yeah, Yes I'm not - I'm actually asking you! (Laughter)

Sheila: Which is the difficult thing!

This excerpt shows the complex path that Sheila and I traversed as she attempted to describe the images that the term 'white' brought up for her and as I attempted to focus her response on her perceptions of the significance of the concept of Whiteness in Aotearoa society. We were 'talking past one another' for some time in her interview, partly because I was in the early stages of conceptualising how to encourage a critical understanding of the concept of Whiteness. I had also couched my questions in terms of 'white' identity. The pervasiveness and elusiveness of the discursive dimensions of Whiteness were evident in our interaction, which Sheila's final comment highlighted, "...which is the difficult thing to do".

Overall Sheila's interview illustrated to me the power of a discourse of Whiteness that refuses to say its name (Essed, 2004). A memo that I wrote after Sheila's interview demonstrates an important feature of my discussions with the antiracist educators. This problem concerns the gap that existed between the language that antiracist educators were familiar with, and the language that I was learning. I was becoming familiar with a language, which helped to identify and elucidate the racialised discourses of Whiteness through which we were silently and unconsciously constituted. A significant aspect that an application of an interrogation of racialisation as a pedagogical approach in Aotearoa would encompass, is an examination of the terminology that Whiteness discourses permit and make untenable. A memo following Sheila's interview reads thus:

I introduced my topic to Sheila, just telling her briefly what I was doing in my research and how I was wanting to get some insight into how as 'white', as 'white' women particularly, we are racialised and she questioned me about what I meant by racialised. I said that we see others as racialised, we

see Māori in lots of ways as being identified by their racialisation. And I said that what I'm trying to bring to the surface is how we are racialised as well. I continued saying that our perceptions and expectations, our behaviour, our socialization is racialised. Sheila appeared quite perplexed by my explanation, and when I used the term Whiteness she gave no indication that she recognized the term either. Sheila said that she didn't understand what I meant. I felt as though I was speaking a different language and it took us some time before we found a common discourse to discuss our ideas.

Gibson, (Memo 11.12.96.)

The strong association of Whiteness with essentialism, as substantive rather than conceptual, was a prominent discourse that both Sheila and Zita along with other participants, used in our discussions. Moreover my undifferentiated questioning did not help participants separate the substantive from the conceptual determinations of Whiteness (Goffman, 1990). Once Whiteness was separated from 'white' people, the concept can be interpreted as conceptual, discursive and institutional, focused on actions/interactions. Hytten and Adkins (2001) maintain that once 'white' people achieve this separation, such as Sheila's realisation that I was exploring Whiteness as a social construct, as a discursive racialisation then "Whiteness offers a symbolically efficient way to name a constellation of social forces and cultural practices that systematically impose and reinforce the dominant culture in our institutions" (p.26).

Through the process of analysis, it was evident that the interviews with the antiracist educators during those initial stages of data gathering exhibited a lack of clarity about some conceptualisations and the accompanying terminology. I found that I was agreeing with most points the participants were making, however I also remember feeling uneasy about this. As I progressed through the interviews and continued to read the available literature, my understandings of the concept of Whiteness and the subtle process of discursive racialisation developed.

Both antiracist educators appeared to interpret my understanding of Whiteness as substantive internalized fixed identity, not as multiple, shifting, conceptual, and discursive. My analysis demonstrated that the racialisation that was traced and revealed was not constituted in substantive conscious negotiations of identity, but was preformulated silently and invisibly in the ideologies, discourses and institutions of the hegemonic group in Aotearoa (Van Dijk, 1993). This embrace surrounds and protects

Pākehā. We/they cannot live outside/without it as we/they unconsciously take part in maintaining and reproducing it. What is critical for antiracist educators and researchers is to engage it, problematise it, and disrupt it.

Conclusion

The silence about racialisation in Aotearoa, suggests three possible oversights in Pākehā antiracist pedagogy. First, the lack of engagement with racialisation suggests that Pākehā educators' focus on culture and cultural identity may have missed some significant racialised assumptions of Pākehā. Francis Maher and Mary Kay Thompson Tetreault (1998) suggest that it is important “to acknowledge and understand how “assumptions of Whiteness”, shape and even dictate the limits of discourse” (p.321). The participants' accounts, analysed in the preceding chapters, demonstrated implicit and at time explicit assumptions of racialised Whiteness in their communicative practices and discursive strategies. Second, Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek, (1999) propose that more sophisticated maps of hegemonic locations, which include a ‘discursive field of Whiteness’ are important strategies for antiracist education. Again, participants' accounts in this study revealed that their racialisation was primarily discursive and often invisible to them.

Third, Carrie Crenshaw (1997) recommends that educators carry out “critical ideological work” to overturn the silence and in the process make the racialisation process such as Whiteness visible. It would seem legitimate to argue that an engagement with the racialisation process, which includes critical ideological work, in particular, an interrogation of assumptions of Whiteness as a discursive field including how racialisation is able to shape the limitations of discourse, could have relevance in the Aotearoa context.

Antiracist education in Aotearoa, in particular Treaty education, has made significant inroads into addressing the contemporary social injustices in Aotearoa as the distinctiveness of the Treaty educated participants demonstrated. This discussion however, has shown that the racialisation of Pākehā, the silent invisible racialised discourses through which participants were constituted, were pervasive although

invisible to both those participants with and without Treaty education. In addition, many of these racialised discourses initially invisible to me as researcher. I have drawn similarities with the international literature, and research exploring the construct of Whiteness. The participants and I deployed/inhabited discourses of Whiteness both in our interactions and in the content of our discussions. Therefore an important aspect of antiracist education in Aotearoa could interrogate Pākehā understanding of racialisation; in particular, the discursive process maintains and reproduces institutional and social hegemony. As already discussed, this study was limited to an investigation of the racialised discourses that were available to some middle class Pākehā women.

To conclude, I emphasize a critical point that Maher and Tetreault (1998) make in their outline of some benefits in exploring 'white' racialisation including the concept of Whiteness in antiracist education. They state that such an inquiry has the potential to assist participants and educators to see themselves and each other differently, not as either 'innocent' or 'guilty' in relation to racism, but as "participants in social and ideological frameworks" (p.156). While these frameworks are not of their own making, as discourse analysis so successfully uncovers, participants and educators can nevertheless come to understand and challenge them.

Chapter Nine

Some Pedagogical Implications

Viewing Whiteness as conceptual and not essential leads to a clear directive... not only to think differently about people we must also think differently about institutional configurations and discourses, how they convey 'white' privilege and how they can be reconfigured. Institutions, of course, do not exist in the absence of people within them.

Hytten & Adkins (2001 p.435)

Introduction

In the preceding chapters, the readings and analyses made of the discursive constitution of 28 Pākehā women participants as racialised subjects in contemporary Aotearoa have revealed the complexities of these processes. Nonetheless, the accumulative evidence gathered and discussed, has shown the significance, influence and most importantly, the invisibility of these racialisation processes to the participants. The analyses in the foregoing chapters have confirmed the dominance of a racialised discursive system within the talk of some Pākehā women.

Key perceptions that participants consistently expressed, related firstly to their limited consciousness of their constitution as subjects within a racialised discursive system. Secondly and subsequent to this constraint, participants were unable to recognize their hegemonic constitution and location within unequal social relations. It transpired that participants tended to rely on dualistic discourses of 'race' and 'difference' manifested in an engagement with *essentialist* rationalizations in some form of rejection or acceptance. Racialised discursive formulations, such as a *colour/power evasive* form that Frankenberg identified, were foremost in their talk. Participants were generally reluctant to articulate explicitly racialised terminology; however, they relied on these in specific contexts such as talking about relationships. They were often silent when 'acceptable' explanations appeared insufficient or overtly racist to them. Another prominent discourse constituted participants as national subjects with an accompanying sense of entitlement to monitor and judge those whom participants consider as their racialised "other". In addition, participants' accounts attributed similar discursive

formulations to the behaviour of various family members. Although participants tended to distance themselves from family members' actions/talk that participants appeared to consider overtly racist.

Overall, the study's analysis interpreted participants' identities and forms of subjectivity as instantiated in discourse, in varied contexts, through a sedimentation of discursive practices. Examining participants' discourses, which they articulated/engaged in their perceptions, their recollections of their family relations, as well as the actual communicative and discursive strategies participants' deployed in the interviews including their silences, generated a potential opening for a broadened antiracist/social justice pedagogy. Consequently, an analysis of the combined influence and constraints that these racialised discursive strategies place on Pākehā, including the apparent invisibility to Pākehā of these locations, has uncovered a Whiteness pedagogy's relevance in the New Zealand context. Moreover, the pedagogy has a potential to highlight links between hegemonic social systems and structures and individuals' constitution/location within these institutional dynamics.

Historically, antiracist educators have articulated a difficulty in the facilitation of dominant group members' recognition and understanding of their hegemonic location, and the contingent nature of their positioning, in iniquitous social systems and structures. Although, current approaches to social justice education address aspects of this educative problem effectively, the prominence of participants' racialised discourses outlined above, and their apparent discursive containment within a closed racialised system of binary opposites, calls for a different although complementary pedagogy. I contend that a specific acknowledgement and interrogation of Pākehā racialisation, a pedagogy of Whiteness, has the potential to address the epistemic power invoked through this racialisation process. The focus of this final chapter then is a discussion of the analytical premises and conceptualisations significant in this pedagogical approach, and discussion of some practical strategies for implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness.

In recognition of important pedagogical frameworks currently used in social justice and Treaty education, I begin by discussing some significant insights, about which the social justice education participants and I talked. These insights form a sound foundation for

the development of an interrogation of Pākehā racialisation. Initially I address the complexities of cultural politics in Aotearoa and the distinctive development of antiracist education, which forms a basis for an engagement with a critical pedagogy of Whiteness. Second, I outline some critical premises that distinguish an interrogation of racialisation, in particular a pedagogy of Whiteness, from those social justice approaches presently used and already discussed. Following this important groundwork, I outline initial practical strategies that have the potential to identify the range of participants' learning needs for implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness. The discussion then changes focus and addresses the “management” of associated interactional dynamics that can surface in an educational environment when facilitating this pedagogy. These include approaches to knowledge, power analyses and participant identification, the use of dialogue and the “management” of emotions in the learning environment. The final discussion highlights and reiterates the necessarily reflexive nature of this study.

Current Social Justice Pedagogies: a sound foundation

The participant educators discussed three important antiracist and social justice pedagogical assumptions during the interviews. These assumptions are important to outline because they form a constructive base on which an interrogation of Pākehā racialisation can be developed. The points include a close working relationships with, and accountability to Māori; an investment in developing a uniquely ‘home grown’ approach; and the maintenance of a flexible and reflexive relationship with participants that responds to their learning needs and the changing political and cultural knowledge of Pākehā New Zealanders.

Accountability to Tangata Whenua

I have already discussed the efforts of this strong community of Pākehā educators who work successfully in many parts of Aotearoa and whose pedagogies have been effective. A crucial aspect of their success can be attributed to these community

groups'³⁰ close working relationships with, and accountability to Māori. The philosophy of working with Tangata Whenua and responding to their insights has underpinned Pākehā antiracist education since the 1970s. Consequently, various determinants of the focus of antiracist education relate to the response of some Pākehā groups in the 1970s to Māori calls for Pākehā recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi, as well as the contemporary effects of Māori alienation from their economic base, their land. Sheila, who worked as an educator in an institutional setting, described a specific situation where she suddenly made the link about the challenges Māori were making at the time. Some Pākehā were beginning to listen to Māori and to recognise their predicament. Sheila was describing how Māori critique influenced Pākehā initiatives to develop Treaty work. Sheila recounts,

Sheila: I remember some Māori women, some young Māori woman saying at a meeting, at a conference of the - I can't remember, saying, "I am sick to death of hearing about the Māori problem, I'm not a problem, I have a problem and it's the Pākehā. [Yes laughter] No its not the Pākehā, its the Pākehā system [laughter] and click, click, click, this light bulb went on and I thought, of course, we have been doing this upside down and back to front. No wonder we're stuck.

From Sheila's account, the young Māori woman appeared to read and was able to articulate "the signs and systems of power" that excluded Māori while challenging Pākehā members to shift their focus from Māori to themselves, to the Pākehā system (Fanon, 1970). The resulting Pākehā pedagogies in their response to such challenges included many effective strategies, although Pākehā racialisation as a discursive formation was not embraced as an explicit pedagogy. Part of this initiative that influenced the particular development of Pākehā social justice education in Aotearoa, was gaining public acceptance/recognition of the term Pākehā as a demonstration of Pākehā commitment to Te Tiriti O Waitangi. An interesting aspect of this historical development is that although Pākehā social justice education has not focused on contemporary Pākehā racialisation, critiques of this location permeate Māori analyses of

³⁰ The development of curricula addressing antiracist education in place in tertiary institutions such as the one that I was employed in, are constrained by government policy based on an ideology of biculturalism and curriculum requirements. This does not lend itself to the flexibility of being able to respond as readily to students' learning needs.

contemporary social relations and their links to ‘white’ imperialism in Aotearoa (Smith, 1999).

However in this research participants’ discursive constitution suggested that an inclusion of a pedagogy of Whiteness in antiracist but *unracialised* pedagogies, while still maintaining an accountability to Māori, has the potential to address the power that is invested in this particular racialised discursive practice (see pp. 18-20 for further discussion). The continued networking with and accountability to tangata whenua is a principal Treaty of Waitangi obligation of any antiracist initiatives in Aotearoa.

Maintaining a ‘Home Grown’ Pedagogy

Zita, a Treaty educator, emphasized another philosophy that was significant for the Treaty education community. She stressed the importance of developing a uniquely ‘home grown’ approach, which has guided the development of Pākehā Treaty work in Aotearoa. Zita highlighted the community’s aspirations to develop and maintain localised theory and pedagogy. Zita explained their position clearly saying,

Zita: It was a little further down the track that we began to understand that yes, there’s an international analysis but you also have to get very detailed in your [yes] own situation -

Helen: Yes, it has to be contextualized

Zita: There must be universals but there must be contextual detailed work done.

Zita acknowledged the international analyses and fittingly emphasized the importance of the local contextual work for antiracist education. Zita’s explanation of the antiracist community’s philosophy of using working models to develop and adapt their pedagogies is an example of the application of a contextual and local perspective. I support this philosophy as it underpins the impetus for this research and as well as my own teaching in collaboration with my colleagues. However, the constraints when working in state institutional environments that are driven by Government policy and monetarist initiatives, limit the opportunities to engage fully in this supportive and reflexive philosophy in these institutions.

My study in practice, represents an example of the significance of the interdependence of both international and local perspectives, which Zita acknowledged and other academic commentators have highlighted. Mike Featherstone (1997) drew attention to the relationship of both in his analysis. He points to the range of different positions that can emerge in response to the process of globalisation. He outlines the possibility of an immersion in local culture that Treaty workers have advocated, which has the potential to “resist[ing] being drawn into wider collectivities” and which consequently has the potential also to “erect[ing] barriers to cultural flows” (p.97). The Pākehā women in my research demonstrated many similarities in the discourses that they deployed/inhabited, which have been shown in many international studies and literature. Significantly, participants revealed that they were constituted as subjects through racialised discourses, and that their articulations were interspersed with racialised ideologies, perceptions and understandings. Implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness has an additional capacity to offer Pākehā comprehensive understanding in order to explain the complexities of their lives, and to recognise the power dynamics in contemporary social relations, in particular the invisible hegemony of racialised discourses that are replicated throughout the world (Shome, 2000).

Philomena Essed (2004) highlighted an additional insight that can inhibit an appreciation of international and local interdependence. Essed investigated manifestations of racism in the Netherlands and drew attention to the tendency that dominant groups have, particularly in relation to their ‘white’ supremacy, to particularize and valorize their tolerance/fairness/ advanced theories/advanced practice compared to other nations’ cultural relations. Zita had used a similar rationale to comment on a belief that was common among Pākehā in the 60s and 70s. She was recounting the effects of Treaty education in the 1980s onward. She said,

Zita: But I mean, but we have dented the “we have the best race relations in the world” which people in my generation felt ... Yes, I mean, that was a thing that, that you hear, I heard at school and I heard in society and it was sort of a given. This country has the best race relations in the world [oh yes] Māori people, ah this is quite how it’s said, “But Māori people are jolly lucky to have been colonised by the lovely English [yes that’s right] instead of the cunning Spaniards or the wicked French or the horrible Portuguese” or whatever. They didn’t sort of matter to them - yes [laughter]

A striking similarity was evident in Zita's and Essed's (2004) arguments. The relative autonomy of localized Whiteness to work its own range of power relations such as a focus on Pākehā cultural identity has the potential to minimise the pervasiveness of its global embrace. These critiques signified the importance of approaching antiracist education with reflexivity, networking and accountability within both a **local and global** framework. Raka Shome (1999) included an analysis that explains the pervasive nature of an international 'white' racialisation and cogently integrates the complex dynamics of Whiteness in historical and geopolitical relations that have relevance for social relations in Aotearoa. She states that:

...the gross disparity in economic and political power between the ('white') West and the non-West allows for (and has historically allowed for) an internationalization of 'white' Western cultural influence through various mechanisms that is, and historically has been, unparalleled by any alternative discourse. As Edward Said (1994) puts it, it is 'not a question of a directly imposed regime of conformity. ... Rather, it is a system of pressures and constraints by which the whole cultural corpus [**of the 'white' West**] retains its essentially imperial identity and its direction' (p.323). (My emphasis). Whiteness, thus, is not merely a discourse that is contained in societies inhabited by 'white' people; it is not a phenomenon that is enacted only where 'white' bodies exist. Whiteness is not just about bodies and skin color, but rather more about the discursive practices that, because of colonialism and neo-colonialism, privilege and sustain the global dominance of 'white' imperial subjects and Eurocentric worldviews (p.108).

Shome's scrutiny, which described the influence of Whiteness around the globe, highlights two important aspects that I would advocate and inform a pedagogy of Whiteness. Shome emphasized that Whiteness is not a system of coercion but a system of pressures and constraints that retains its essentially imperial identity and direction. Shome also pointed out that Whiteness is not only contained in societies inhabited by 'white' people. The importance of separating the ideological and discursive elements of Whiteness from 'white' people is another crucial understanding already discussed, that a pedagogy of Whiteness has the potential to facilitate. Overall, an understanding of the interdependence and pervasiveness of Whiteness within varied geographical regions would help to establish the global links of Whiteness as it is experienced and deployed/inhabited in Aotearoa.

The social justice educators that I interviewed had many valuable insights to offer a possible pedagogy of Whiteness. Their reticence about the applicability and constructiveness of an analysis that examines overtly racialised discourses such as Whiteness appeared partly based on the evolution and specifically intercultural focus of history in Aotearoa. The reticence that participants Zita and Sheila verbalized about the applicability of a pedagogy of Whiteness appeared to relate to the uniqueness of Pākehā New Zealanders' cultural and political development (Best, 2003; DeVault 1995; Mazzei, 2003). Pākehā discursive racialisation was an unfamiliar conceptualization, and was therefore understandably resisted because of its essentialising connotations and tendencies.

A Reflexive and Flexible Approach

The Treaty educators also emphasized that antiracist educative processes need to be flexible and reflexive including a responsiveness to the learning needs of their participants and the changing political and cultural knowledge of Pākehā New Zealanders. Zita, a Treaty educator, described these processes well when we were discussing some resistance to change by some participants in antiracist education. Zita said,

Zita: But some real serious change [has happened] in some places which is important because one of the things that it's easier to get change around, is working models. A lot of people can't even begin to imagine how to do [things] different[ly], but once somebody's got something up and running people say, "Ah, we could do that. Well, we'd have to do this and we'd have to change that a bit and we don't have those but of course we have these!" Once there are working models people pick it up faster.

Helen: It's the practical application isn't it?

Zita: It has something to do with how people, most people learn I think [I suppose so, by doing I suppose we learn by doing] or by watching! And some of those things are quite difficult to theorize about beyond a certain point. I mean, you can have something that looks s - hot on paper and the first time you test drive it you think oh, oh! But we'd better try it again just in case it was just unfamiliarity. And about three times round and you just know that there's a big invisible bug beginning to take shape, which you know you would never have predicted in the theory, in the theoretical stage. You have to test it by driving it.

Zita emphasized the importance of working models for effecting change. She related how some ideas or strategies were difficult to theorise, and suggested that strategies that look good on paper sometimes do not work on implementation, and a strategy that tests ideas a few times is useful. These pedagogies of using a working model continue to challenge the lack of Pākehā historical knowledge, particularly in relation to Te Tiriti O Waitangi, as well as their understanding of culture and racism. An example of how an extension of this approach can be applied in a Whiteness pedagogy is discussed in the practical strategies suggested later in this chapter.

A third insight that Zita and Sheila, both working in the area of antiracist education, confirmed in their accounts was the difficulties inherent in the tenor of Pākehā responses to antiracist processes. My questions and the responses of these two participants show how we appeared to position ourselves within a cultural discourse of identity politics and identification. Zita in particular, highlighted the problems associated with the development of local theories. In Zita's interview, I had explained to her that I had been reading international literature on antiracist education that was highlighting the significance of Whiteness and I was interested in her view on the applicability of this pedagogy in Aotearoa.

Helen: Do you see that there's any room for sort of a focus or using that whole thing about Whiteness in anti-racist education in Aotearoa?

Zita: Mm, Mm. I'd have to, have to read it up and find out more about it or to watch somebody using it. Most of, mostly the anti-racism networks pass new stuff around by either at gatherings or by sitting in. When we're out of our patch, we try and sit in on each other's stuff just to pickup each other's scripts. But as I was saying before, I don't think that exploring 'white' identity, Whiteness or- would be particularly useful. I would of thought that if I were going to put more energy, more time energy for instance in workshops into cultural identity than I currently do - which I wouldn't do at the moment. I'd have to take something else out that's more of a priority - I would rather people looked at economic identity and the Whiteness if you like of capital would be more relevant. That um one of the things that is problematic is that people are too tied up with their personal stuff and think that if they can think themselves into a personally clean safe space, then they're okay. [Laughter] Whereas what we actually need is more collective analysis and consciousness about what's happening to us economically, culturally.

Helen: At the institutional – yes.

Zita's response extended her conception of using working models and highlighted the significance that as an experienced educator, she placed on a theory - practice reciprocity as well as other methods that the antiracism networks in Aotearoa use to develop their pedagogy. Zita made a link between Whiteness and capital and suggested the relevance that explorations into the Whiteness of capital. Zita's final comments supported the position that I had reached in this thesis, which maintains the difficulties and inappropriateness that are inherent in Pākehā attempting "to think themselves into a **personally** clean safe space". Zita emphasized the importance of a collective analysis as a way of challenging individualised thinking processes.

The Place for a Whiteness Pedagogy in Aotearoa

Generally the suitability of exploring an identification associated with Whiteness, that the educators questioned, was understandable. I was aware that the Whiteness theory that I was proposing could be interpreted as an essentialising project dependent on, or reverting to, outmoded notions of 'race' (Barnett, 2000). It would appear that an original focus, principally on exploring Pākehā cultural identity, in order to avoid legitimising *essentialist* racist expressions and understandings, might have contributed to a delay in an expansion in Pākehā antiracism pedagogies. A perception that an explicitly racialised pedagogy such as a pedagogy of Whiteness is inappropriate in the Aotearoa context is, in a sense, explainable. However this research clarifies and highlights the discursive and contingent nature of human identity even as it illuminates the powerful hold the Pākehā majority maintains within hegemonic racialised discourses in Aotearoa. A pedagogy of Whiteness promotes a constant re-examination of racialised discourses. The pedagogy also has the potential to inform Pākehā understanding of themselves as constantly being produced while simultaneously reproducing their subjectivities within a matrix of relations of domination and subordination, and representation (Foucault, 1972, 1980; Butler, 1997a, 1997b; Applebaum, 2004).

The invisibility of this matrix, or to use a spatial metaphor, this Whiteness terrain, is significant. Notwithstanding an intense theoretical interest in critical pedagogies, the preceding discussion reveals the possible analytical incapacity that antiracist initiatives

had because of its cultural focus, to question its own “white ground”. Although these cultural approaches have contributed much to facilitating understanding of unjust relations that impact on human difference (Barnett, 2000; Hage, 1998). Consequently, the outcomes of this research provides an opportunity for an expansion, a loosening of the boundaries around antiracist pedagogies that appear to have been understandably maintained as part of developing a uniquely “home grown” methodology.³¹ I suggest an incorporation of a methodology that interrogates the concept of racialisation, in particular an exploration of the assemblages that constitute Whiteness. I propose this not so much as an examination of what Whiteness is, but what the maintenance and reproduction of this invisible entrenched racialisation process with its apparent normalcy, makes possible - what Whiteness does - in contemporary Aotearoa.

Key Premises of a Whiteness Pedagogy

In addition to, and including the three points just discussed, international theorists have identified five theoretical premises that inform a pedagogy, which has the potential to specifically interrogate and evaluate racialised discourses (Frankenberg, 1993). First, Whiteness is recognized as conceptual and not essential. Subsequent analyses emphasize the institutionalized **effects** of Whiteness, rather than personal expressions of racism. Furthermore, the connotative impact of using the expression Whiteness and the strong association of the term ‘white’ with imperialism and colonialism pushes the matter of ‘white’ racialisation to the forefront. The concept also offers a symbolically efficient way to name a constellation of social forces and cultural practices that systematically impose and reinforce the Pākehā racialised dominance in Aotearoa society (Hyttén and Adkins, 2001).

Third therefore, Whiteness requires continual reinforcement and maintenance, yet simultaneously protecting the mechanisms that socially reproduce and maintain privilege from being visible. This invisibility is an important component of privilege itself. A major undertaking of a Whiteness pedagogy involves the facilitation of an

³¹ Some exploration of the history of evolution of anti-racist education and some possible reasons for my research focus on Whiteness appearing to be unassociated with present pedagogies, are discussed in the literature review.

understanding that Pākehā racialisation is a powerful device that generates its own invisibility on those on whom it holds sway (Frankenberg, 1993, 1997, 2004; Goffman, 1990; Hartigan, 1997; Hytten & Adkins, 2001; Hytten & Warren, 2003; Mahony, 1995; McIntyre, 1997). The paramount consideration that emerges from these contentions is that all theories of Whiteness are ultimately about power and not about skin colour (Barnett, 2000).

A fourth assumption that underpins this pedagogy is the explicit focus that the educator places on **racial** awareness, as opposed to **racism** awareness, in order to foreground the construction of dominant racialisation (Brewer, 1999). Prevailing discourses discussed by participants framed racism as an individualistic phenomenon, expressed in individual intentional speech/acts. An advantage of a Whiteness pedagogical approach is that **racism** awareness while not a specific focus remains an implicit companion to **racial** awareness as the process involves power analyses. Fifth, the strength of a discourse analysis methodology used in a Whiteness pedagogy is its capacity to reveal how dominant subjects are constituted within unjust social systems and structures. In particular, discourse analysis delineates discourses of Whiteness in their many manifestations and illuminates how dynamics of Whiteness are able to pervade and saturate Pākehā daily perceptions and articulations.

These five assumptions highlight the importance of making a distinction between the formation of cultural identity that has been an important concentration in antiracist education in Aotearoa, and a discursive formation of Whiteness that requires a different approach and analysis (Foucault, 1972, 1980; Butler, 1997a, 1997b; Applebaum, 2004). Alison Jones (1999) and a Māori colleague Kuni Jenkins, conducted an important research project in Aotearoa that highlighted significant discursive location of the Pākehā ('white') students. Jones' strategy was to separate the students into two evenly numbered groups, with Māori and Pacific Nations students in one group, and mainly Pākehā in the other. The discourses Jones identified that the Pākehā students deployed revealed the apparent inability of the students to recognize their collective 'white' power to define the narrative of racialisation, while simultaneously articulating their loss of and desire for maintaining their power of surveillance (Barnett, (2000).

Implementing a pedagogy that addresses and facilitates the exposure, disruption and reconceptualisation of discursive racialisation, in particular Whiteness discourses, will take time as such an approach can only be achieved in stages (Applebaum, 1996; Hytten & Adkins, 2001). The implications of this can seem overwhelming, especially as dominant contemporary educational ideology does not address the reality that Western educational processes are embedded and infused with powerful and invisible discourses of Whiteness (Giroux, 1997a). Richard Dyer (1997) describes this well. He states that:

‘White’ people, unable to see their particularity, cannot take account of other people’s; ‘white’ people create the dominant images of the world and don’t quite see that they thus construct the world in their own image; ‘white’ people set standards of humanity by which they are bound to succeed and others bound to fail (p.9).

Many contemporary social justice educators are familiar with, and work within the constraints of institutions that base their processes on a neo liberal individualistic (read Whiteness/’white’ supremacy blind) ideology (Giroux, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c). Nonetheless, social justice educators acknowledge and accept the challenges inherent in their pedagogy. Henry Giroux (1997b) is clear that “the left must not only construct a new politics of difference, but extend and deepen the possibilities of critical cultural work by reasserting the primacy of the pedagogical as a form of cultural politics”(p.98). A key link that stems from conceptualising the pedagogical as political is that all pedagogies are political. Most social justice educators will confirm the political nature of pedagogy from their experiences of maintaining a counter hegemonic presence in dominant educational institutions.

Not only is the pedagogy (a pedagogy of Whiteness) intent on “outing” Whiteness and describing its mechanisms, it also crucially presents a critique, the goal of which is to disrupt and problematise its assumptions (Doane & Bonilla Silva, 2003). The significance of such an evaluative approach is that it enables conceptualisations of Whiteness that uncover its significant characteristics, and participants are able to develop strategies of reconceptualisation (Applebaum, 2004). Setting out with the above understandings as part of their “tool kit”, will be helpful for educators to scan the nuances of participants’ discourses that attest to racialised manifestations of Whiteness.

Practical Pedagogical Strategies

Hytten and Adkins (2001) emphasize the importance of a **strategic** approach toward a Whiteness pedagogy. For them this approach encompasses the means toward a broader goal of social justice and "...it implies careful attention to our pedagogical tactics" (p.439). So how can an educator conceptualise a strategic approach to a pedagogy of Whiteness with persons located in a position of dominance and who may have a number of "building blocks of their knowledge" that may inhibit their/our ability to see their/our constitution as dominant? What would a pedagogy of Whiteness look like in Aotearoa? It would be a pedagogy that approaches Whiteness as conceptual, not essential; a pedagogy that also works to facilitate participants and educators to reconfigure themselves as contributors within powerful social and ideological frameworks (Hytten & Adkins, 2001; Maher & Tetreault, 1998)? The following section of this chapter offers some practical strategies/activities for initially implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness, with some discussion of the "management" of associated interactional dynamics that can surface in an educational environment when facilitating this pedagogy.

Who am I?

A simple strategy that almost invariably engages participants' attention about identification and consequently racialisation is an activity in which the facilitator asks participants to write down individually three aspects of their own identity that they consider important (Stephenson, 2005). The participants are then encouraged to discuss their choices with another person. The activity continues as participants observe and discuss their reasons for their choices in larger groups. Participants then discuss and reflect on any social/political/cultural implications they can identify that may have influenced their choices. A general feedback session to the larger group provides an opportunity for the facilitator to identify the range of the group's learning needs and is an associated aim of the activity.

This basic activity can indicate directions in which the facilitator can proceed. The value of this activity is usually evident in the consistency of students' responses that are directly associated with their identity formation. Tappan (2005) asserted, and I have

found as well, that claimed identity descriptors are necessarily different for persons in diverse social locations, because they stand in varying relationships to structures and systems of power, privilege and authority. Those individuals who are located closer to power structures are less aware of their location because a society's norms and values are a reflection/expression of their own, and they have not needed to assert their different norms and values. I have discussed the implications of the research participants' responses to this question in chapter seven (see p.172).

This activity draws on Kolb (1984) experiential learning approach, which I use most frequently in this form of education, as I have found that it is successful because drawing on participants' own life experience and consequently their views and understandings of the world, facilitates participants' understanding of the relevance of the pedagogy. This approach is useful for initially engaging Pākehā learners' attention about the dynamic and constructed nature of what they may consider is normal, ordinary and unimportant, such as the significance or otherwise of their racialisation. Kolb (1984) contends that experiential learning enables 'deep' learning in education and he asserts that individuals learn from their immediate experiences/feelings, which occurs in all human settings.

Additional insights can be gained if an ethnically diverse group of participants engages this activity because the silence around Pākehā racialisation facilitates an awareness of the constructedness of identity. As with the research participants and from my experience as an educator, Pākehā participants who take part in this activity do not usually identify their ethnic identification. Consequently their hegemonic racialised location enables discussion of a number of points that can set the pedagogy in action working specifically with a particular group's learning needs.

This activity necessarily evokes queries about identity terminology and the political salience of terms over time. Useful follow-up sessions from this activity can involve discussion and analyses of language and terms including the historical and political salience of certain terms. Gregory Jay (1997) identifies some pertinent questions that can assist participants. He suggests that it is important to historicise Whiteness posing questions such as, who invented 'white' people. When was the term first used as an

identification/descriptor/ category? In Europe? New Zealand? Who was included? Who was excluded? Has the list of the included ethnicities changed over time? Why? Participants will often pose their own questions.

An important initiative that facilitators can introduce to move discussion onto critical analysis can comprise of questions such as, If ‘white’ is not a coherent cultural or ethnic category, what kind of category is it? Is it Social? Economic? Political? Other initial exercises, activities, projects and inquiries can incorporate the following:

Keyword exercises: Participants can collect entries on ‘race,’ ‘white,’ ‘Caucasian,’ ‘black,’ and (for example) from at least two dictionaries and two encyclopaedias. Compare the results, and ask students to try writing their own definitions of some of these terms. Alternatively, they can use an interview technique and gather definitions etc of terms such as ‘white’ New Zealander, part Māori, an eighth Māori, Māori blood, Pākehā, European by interviewing other students, friends, family members, teachers, and librarians. An associated exercise that encourages an epistemic analysis that examines the influence of metaphor and symbols, involves asking participants to identify and list words that are associated with the terms ‘black’ and ‘white’.

Historical research: students find uses of the words ‘white’ New Zealander, Pākehā, European, and Māori in legal or political documents such as Hansard.

Media analysis and literature analysis (particularly children’s traditional fairy tales) are useful for broadening analyses to cover the social influence and power of these institutions and disciplines. In these two activities, participants look for images of Whiteness in the media, newspapers, magazines, television, novels and fairy tales. Novels by Maurice Gee and Patricia Grace are useful for comparison. Questions can be posed, such as what kinds and types of Whiteness appear most often? Are there different classes of Pākehā people? If so, how are they represented differently by the media, literature? How long can one watch television or read a newspaper or magazine without encountering anything other than Pākehā, or mostly ‘white’ people or espousing Pākehā norms and values? Have participants bring in copies of major newspapers and magazines, and analyze the distribution of images of Whiteness and Otherness. Make a list of the top grossing films of the last five years and consider whether their characters and presumed audience show a bias toward Whiteness.

Many simple activities such as those suggested, can encourage participants' engagement with the salience of Pākehā racialisation process. They also provide the opportunity for educators to facilitate participants to make the links between racial awareness and racism awareness giving participants the capacity to initiate analyses of power relations within social norms and structures in New Zealand society.

Kristen Myers (2003) found in her research of private conversations of 'white' talk that "although people publicly claim to be color blind and antiracist, examining their private talk reveals a different reality. Old racism has not died out, it has simply gone underground and become more nuanced" (p.143). The mundane nature of the "talk" and ideas that these exercises evoke are precisely what makes them so compelling. It becomes apparent in the process of these activities that "talk" is not simply the individual expression of racialisation. They are political in that they express agreed upon racialised/racist ideology among those who are seen as 'white'. Bonilla-Silva (2001) argues that these dominant ideologies are meanings that express "relations of domination" which become master frameworks used to measure and provide basic scripts and rules of engagement (p.63). Teun van Dijk (1993) asserts that a 'white' dominant group is able to reproduce its abuse of power only through an integrated system of discriminatory practices and sustaining ideologies. Everyday conversations help these ideologies take root, as structure and action are dialectically interconnected.

Facilitating Interrogations of Whiteness

The difficulty is to know what education does call for in a democratic but racist society.

Thompson, A. (1997, p.16)

I will now discuss some considerations that may assist educators in their interrogation of Pākehā racialisation. I discuss three primary dimensions that are useful to consider as a general guide when contemplating this pedagogy (Titone, 1998; Hytten and Adkins, 2001). These dimensions consist of:

- a) the exploration and co construction of a particular knowledge base that may demand concrete changes in practice including reading the signs of power

- b) establishing an analytical critical climate in the classroom and the use of dialogue for facilitating an ethical educator participant relationship
- c) the role of emotions in the pedagogy of Whiteness.

In this thesis, I have already discussed interactional processes that developed between the participants and me during our interviews. I emphasized the efforts that I made at times to break through the silence of Whiteness by asking questions that appeared to broke the rules of “*whitespeak*”, a form of polite talk, but also my collusion within the process. This experience has convinced me that specific analytical skills and knowledge would be required of an educator implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness. There are likely to be institutional controls that will affect the content and implementation of a pedagogy of Whiteness such as policy directions, resources of time and staff, curricula, collegial support and many others; however, discussion of these is beyond the scope of this thesis.³²

A pedagogy of Whiteness demands that an educator works towards creating a climate that will maintain group dynamics that facilitates hospitality, openness and boundaries. (Titone, 1998) Consequently, physical space and psychological atmosphere are central to the learning environment when theorising pedagogically about racialisation.

Discussion of physical space, although important is beyond the scope of this thesis. I focus on aspects that influence the psychological environment. The psychological environment is central because this pedagogy explores and interrogates dominant subjectivities, which involves an exploration of dominant subjects’ sense of themselves and their worldview. The mechanisms of denial around ascriptions of Whiteness and discussed through out the thesis, are so powerful yet hidden that an unrelenting potential exists for alienating participants, such as Pākehā in Aotearoa context (Rains, 1998). Educators have debated and discussed the potential for dissent within this pedagogy for some time and there have been a number of suggestions how this can be “managed”, including challenges to the idea that dissent should be “managed” at all (Boler, 2004).

³ See Penketh, L. (2000). *Tackling Institutional Racism: Anti-racist policies and social work education and training*. And Bishop, R., & Glynn, T. (1999). *Culture Counts: Changing Power Relations in Education*. (chapter two).

The contingencies that influence the facilitative responsibilities of educators using pedagogy of Whiteness are significant. The following discussion explores contingencies that affect the climate of pedagogy of Whiteness. The first two discuss approaches to knowledge and analyses of power. The subsequent three sections address group “management” such as participants’ varying cultural identities such as their location in relation to social/institutional power, the concept of dialogue as a useful strategy and the final discussion explores the complex and important role of emotion as an intrinsic aspect of this pedagogy.

Not Just New knowledge

There is the possibility that as ‘white’ women can apply new frameworks to old landscapes the meanings that they gave to Whiteness, implicitly or explicitly were also conceptually transformed.

Frankenberg (1993, p.241)

A major problem that educators can face is participants’ understanding of what they need to learn/know on the one hand and on the other hand the focus of this type of education. Zita explains this complexity well when in her interview she distinguishes the specific skills that are required to help participants to understand the profound nature of human difference and the constructedness of human truths.

Zita: But I mean, but we have dented [oh yes] “we have the best race relations in the world” which people in my generation left school not just believing. We thought, we didn’t know it was a belief that we held; we thought it was a piece of knowledge we knew, [oh, I see] if you can see the difference. And people of the previous generations, it seems to me um, so that you weren’t just up against, arguing against a belief, you were almost arguing against a sort of building block of people’s knowledge and world view.

The common expectation that participants usually have is that they will be learning new knowledge/information, but they often have little understanding that the educative process may actually challenge and change/broaden the manner in which/how they think. In other words this process addresses, not what participants think, but how they think, opening up the “either/or”, framework to a “both... and...” conception. Antiracist pedagogy commonly works with participants’ consciousness of themselves

and their worldview. The process works by revealing and addressing the dimensions of power, particularly their collective power in human relationships. Nelson Rodriguez (1998) stresses the importance of including the issues of power that examine a Whiteness pedagogy, in particular the power dynamics that occur in within the participant group.

Rodriguez (1998) states that this critical dimension in a pedagogy of Whiteness deepens participants' analyses from an instrumental understanding of knowledge to an understanding of knowledge as ideological. Analyses of power do not come easily to people who have an investment in Whiteness, whom Rodriguez describes, are frequently power illiterate. Recognition that educators are often challenging participants' building blocks of knowledge rather than a belief that they hold calls for advanced skills. A strategy that involves participants looking at the power of Whiteness can expose how deeply implicated we /they are in a system of 'white' supremacy.

The pedagogy has the potential to facilitate participants' understandings of their positioning within social relations of Aotearoa. The goals of the approach are to disrupt and problematise the normality that is racialised Whiteness and through this analysis, participants will gain insight into the socially constructed nature of Whiteness and become literate about power relations that pervade iniquitous systems. This counters *essentialist* notions of a fixed ascription which the participants in my research grappled with, and from which they often found no relief. Learners who engage in pedagogy of Whiteness will be encouraged to envision a re-articulation of Whiteness rather than either simply accepting its dominant normative assumptions or rejecting it as a racist form of identity (Giroux, 1997a; Yudice, 1995). Moreover, a pedagogy of Whiteness has the potential to connect participants to their sense power and agency as they learn to construct anti-hegemonic discursive strategies and communication patterns so that they can negotiate just relations with all peoples, as well as act as advocates that challenge the present social inequities in Aotearoa.

Nevertheless, as most scholars and educators working in the area of anti-racist education will argue, racism and 'white' supremacy are integral features of the structure and organisation of most Western democratic societies. Antiracist educators

acknowledge that racism permeates all areas of society from its ideological underpinnings through to educational practice. However, an understanding of ‘white’ supremacy and particularly the discursive attributes of Whiteness appear to be absent.

Reading the Signs of Power

Central to this challenge is a pedagogical approach for teaching “Whiteness” ...that provides the conditions for students to address not only how their Whiteness functions on society as a marker of privilege and power but also how it can be used as a condition for expanding the ideological and material realities of democratic public life.

Giroux (1997c, p.4)

Henry Giroux (1997c) acknowledges that introducing and implementing a pedagogy of Whiteness is not easy even in those contexts such as the US where this specific pedagogy has developed into a prominent educational approach. He is clear though about the aims of this pedagogy. He asserts that dominant ‘white’ subjects expand the ideological and material realities of democratic public life and address how their Whiteness functions. The goals that Giroux identifies are not a simple matter and are difficult to achieve. The difficulties as already recounted, relate to the complexities of pedagogies and methodologies that are able to facilitate dominant subjects’ awareness, such as Pākehā consciousness, of their location within structural and social domination/injustice. The difficulties are never far from an educator’s mind and constitute much discussion/debate among social justice educators and academics. The participants who were antiracist educators and I all agreed on the difficulties of facilitating participants through an antiracist educational process. Zita drew attention to constant companion in this work which simply put is “assume nothing”. Zita gave an incisive description on this pedagogical approach.

Zita: Telling, telling anything but the standard story is tiring because you have to argue it from first principles every time. [That’s right] I mean that’s part of it, you are never able to make any assumptions [no] whereas the person who’s telling the standard story is allowed to assume that everybody knows what they mean and pretty well everyone agrees with them - but certainly, that they know what they mean. Whereas when you tell a new story its first principles every time out [laughter one-step forward three steps back]-or at least testing whether you’ve got to.

Zita's account highlights the relentless demands that a critical pedagogy asks of an educator. She indicates that there is a need "to argue it (your perspective/analysis) from first principles every time", which she states in tiring. This reflexive approach is generally necessary to engage Pākehā. The understanding that some participants in this research maintained for example Susan, "we're all New Zealanders; "we are all the same, we're all equal" demands that educators assume their participants may fail to understand the significance of inequalities in society will not have the skills to read them. An overwhelming and pervasive "reality" in the socialisation/production of the dominant/Pākehā and others who have earned a position within the terrain of Whiteness is their/our illiteracy about power and its constitutive relational basis, which put simply, is the dynamic that constitutes (and is simultaneously constituted by) the powerful in relation to the powerless (Giroux, 1997b).

Participant Identity

The significance of the cultural identities of participants in a pedagogy of Whiteness may present different considerations than those that are commonly in place in Treaty education. There is a pervasive binary framework of Māori/non-Māori that usually influences who facilitates, who participates (ethnic identity) and the focus of the educative process in Treaty education. It is worthwhile exploring some comments made by Rebecca, a participant in my study, about the impracticality of working within this fixed constructed binary framework. One of the preferences that the Pākehā antiracist education groups in Aotearoa have, that those employed in institutional settings are usually denied, is their ability to specify their preference for working with non-Māori. Rebecca, who was very experienced in facilitating Treaty workshops, was talking about the difficulties of insisting on their preference for working with non-Māori participants. This is how Rebecca describes the flexibility and wisdom of her group's approaches to this predicament and the practical implications of working within this model of a binary Māori / non-Māori opposition:

Rebecca: Yes, we often do, that's our preference, [for non-Māori] but then some groups don't have enough Māori to do separate training, so there's that. Some Māori are in denial of being Māori saying, "Well no, I'm really Pākehā and I want to

[be] part of this training programme. I don't want to feel excluded or treated differently." And that's where they are and I don't see that they should have to struggle with that or that stuff as well. Mind you, we always monitor them like hawks and we always say to them "If you begin to feel differently about this, you can renegotiate it any time." And then people who just, who don't know they're Māori suddenly sometimes crack open and that can be a vulnerable place. [Oh yes I've seen that] So you can't always have what you prefer [no] But overall we always very clear that we are doing -we are Pākehā people doing a Pākehā process that is geared to Pākehā roles. And so we say to people that are Māori or of mixed ancestry if you know ... in that you are Māori um you are entitled to monitor the process. If you are of mixed ancestry, you chose to explore your Pākehā heritage but um you may want to reconsider that! Because some of the content feels different for people who are Māori or who, even if they are not very much in touch with it but know that somewhere back in the family tree there are some Māori ancestry that they've never explored. Particularly when you do the historical work, you can see that it feels different I mean I don't know what the... I would hesitate to hold forth about what the difference is, but that it feels different. We know that from experience and most of what we know we know from experience.

The complexities around of the politics of identity are evident in Rebecca's explanation. Her account also reveals the intricacies and confluences of *essentialist* and constructionist representations that complicate the common use of a dualistic framework in this Treaty education. One could ask on what basis Rebecca is deciding that a person who looks Māori and claims to be Pākehā, is actually a Māori in denial. Is this an *essentialist* determination? Or is it an indication of Rebecca's recognition from her experience in this work, about the profound impact that fresh exposure to the histories of Aotearoa has for those with Māori ancestry? It would seem that an exploration of the histories and in particular the violence and destruction that was part of the coming together of these two groups of people, changes how those participant's with Māori ancestry respond. They may feel the need for a Māori process, facilitated by Māori and aligned with Māori experience.

The skills required for facilitating a productive process with such complexities and eventualities is obvious. The pervasiveness of the predominantly *colour/power evasive* discourse among New Zealanders and discussed in literature review, does not exclude those who have Māori ancestry. The excerpt just quoted demonstrates that a Whiteness discourse harbours a cultural illiteracy/cultural naivety that can be unintentionally exposed during Treaty education. Employing a pedagogy of Whiteness has the potential to take some of the risk/uncertainty out of such an approach because it directly addresses

the suppressed ideologies that dress up as an allusion of “sameness” while simultaneously masking relentless power dynamics that drive the discourses of Whiteness. This strategy has the capacity to be constructive/productive because the dynamics of power in the discourses of Whiteness will be explored as a collective process, involving participants located in/negotiating varying positions in the social dynamics of power.

Democratic Dialogue: rearranging or reasserting power

For some decades, liberal ideology has underpinned pedagogical approaches to bicultural/multicultural education (Bishop and Glynn, 1999). Much of the international literature on emancipatory education still advocates the appropriateness of dialogue as a significant educational practice, particularly in relation to intercultural/multicultural education. The mantra, “we just need talk to about it” or as Alison Jones (2004) coins it, “the talking cure” fits in comfortably with the *colour/power evasive* discourse because this interpretation of dialogue implies a democratic interaction within a level playing field (Frankenberg, 1993). The discourse denies injustices and the profundity of difference such that subjects are different “all the way down” (Applebaum 2004). Many Whiteness theorists advocate the effectiveness of this dialogue as a pedagogical tool. Despite this, some recent research has problematised this strategy of employing dialogue as an appropriate strategy for maintaining a democratic climate in antiracist/social justice/multicultural education (Applebaum, 1997, 2004; Boler, 1999, 2004; Jones, 1999, 2004; Roman, 1997; Thompson, 1997, 2003, 2004).

Jones’ (1999) important research, discussed in the literature review, exposed the limitations that a desire for dialogue across cultures has, because of the “problematic imperialist assumptions that often underlie it” (p.299). The manner in which Jones was able to reveal the limitations so decisively was through a strategy that she and a Māori colleague implemented to teach the students in two evenly numbered groups, Māori and Pacific Nations students in one group and mainly Pākehā in the other (see p.36). This strategy demonstrated, using student journals, that the dominant students’ feelings of desire for and exclusion from the “heard voice” of the marginalised provided fascinating, although unsettling data for analysis.

Jones (1999) analysis identified four main themes in the students' diaries. Firstly, the Māori students' general expressions were positive about the experience. The remaining themes related to the Pākehā students' reflections. They include Pākehā students' desire for a romantic cosy togetherness, their sense of threat at being excluded, and their sense of a thwarted need for absolution or redemption from the marginalised. This research appears to speak powerfully to an opening that I consider a pedagogy of Whiteness with its epistemic approach has the capacity to address. Although racialised discourses of Whiteness were evident in the Pākehā students' views, there appears to be no facility for an interrogation of 'white' supremacy and the accompanying racialised discourses because of an apparent focus that Pākehā students sustained on a corollary, such as the marginalised group's experiences of 'white' racism. This may have been just Pākehā students' interpretation of their learning, although that particular response in itself has the hallmarks of a Whiteness discourse.

The strength of a Whiteness pedagogy lies in its ability to assist Pākehā to consider the power that racialised discourses maintain in their lives and the power that they have to revise them. The epistemic approach positions Whiteness as strategy and not as identity position. It aims to expose dynamics of power at a collective and individual level. The value of the pedagogy is that it reveals the significance of racialisation such as Whiteness as ideological and discursive. The pedagogy also reveals how Whiteness permeates social structures, public discourses, and institutions and thus systemically conveys racist material effects (Warren 2001). Given the difficulty that participants in my research experienced in finding the language to articulate their understandings of Whiteness, it is possible to assume that the focus on the Whiteness of this discourse has the potential to change the power dynamics that Alison Jones (1999) justly critiques. Whether in separate or ethnically mixed groups, Pākehā may struggle to maintain their dominance in dialogue as many may be lost for words in a similar manner to my participants. This development could also provide an opportunity to deconstruct and analyse the silences.

Megan Boler's (2004) latest publication of a collection of position papers covers many aspects of the debate about the use of dialogue that are pertinent to a pedagogy of Whiteness. Some theorists advocate a pedagogy of discomfort (Boler, 1999, 2004;

Diller, 1999); another suggests a separation of subordinated groups from participants of the dominant group (Jones, 1999, 2004). Boler's (2004) summary confirms Jones' (1999) concerns about dialogue as a means of facilitating a democratic classroom. She writes,

Dialogue in the sense of an egalitarian reciprocal respectful model of interchange may be unrealistic to expect in many situations in a society divided by prejudices and imbalances of power...The apparent virtues of tolerance and civility in fact take on the force of yet another constraint that can silence the students it presumes to protect (p. xvi).

The effectiveness of dialogue in a pedagogy of Whiteness is unclear. Whether the specific interrogation of the racialisation of the dominant group will alter the balance of power to such an extent that it results in changes in dialogue is uncertain. Facilitating Pākehā understanding and recognition of the role that discourses play in creating racialisation in the form of Whiteness has the ability to support both educators and participants about how racialised definitions evolved and have contributed to Pākehā hegemony and dominance in Aotearoa. The dynamics of the interviews in my research did demonstrate that the struggle with speaking and silence (a Pākehā language deficit) is accentuated when Pākehā explore how one gets to be 'white' and what it means to be white.

Emotions in the Classroom

The best antiracist and antisexist work I have studied and seen in action is not about confrontation but rather a mutual exploration.

Boler (1999, p.199)

Boler (1999) introduces a pedagogy of discomfort in her groundbreaking insight into the politics of emotion in education. Her main critique of the Western tradition of liberal individualism is that it has a deeply rooted rhetoric that involves "hollow invocations of values of dialogue, democracy and rationality" (p.177). Boler emphasizes that this tradition restricts participants' explorations "**to an individualised process with no collective accountability**" (p.177). Boler's (1999) pedagogy of discomfort reverses the traditional trend and relies on collective not individualised processes. The value of a

collective approach is that participants and educator are able to conceptualise an understanding of how their sense of self and perspectives are shifting and contingent.

Another important aspect of this educational pedagogy is the recognition of the politics of emotion in education and the challenge that this perspective presents to the separation of reason and emotion that has defined our thinking about the role emotion plays in our lives (Boler 1999). During this learning process, participants use strategies conscious or unconscious to acknowledge and make sense of their emotional responses to material that they engage with and discuss. Included in this, is the difficult work of understanding that systems of domination and oppression need addressing and challenging in society. Participants learn that they not only have collective power but also varying amounts of personal power as well. As Ruth Frankenberg (1993), argues that, “Any system of differentiation such as 'race' shapes those on whom it bestows privilege as well as those it oppresses” (p.26).

Educators have the responsibility for negotiating boundaries among participants and facilitator. An effective strategy that locates some boundaries around a constructive environment is to develop a group-learning contract³³ at the start of the process. If appropriately worded the contract can put the onus on each person to think before they speak in a way that is not common in Pākehā culture. The tenets of a liberal ideology emphasize an individual’s rights as opposed to collective responsibilities. There is a tendency for Pākehā to put more emphasis on their right speak and to be judged on the intention of their views and how they are expressed. This focus takes precedence over taking responsibility for the impact of what they say on others. William Aal (2001) in his discussion of an appropriate pedagogy to use in antiracist education has some useful points to offer that will guide participants’ examination of theirs, and others views. He asserts that, “Pedagogy needs to address impact and not be preoccupied with intention...” which he identifies as a hallmark of individualism (p.306).

³³ I point out here I used this strategy in my role as an educator in a public institution. The subject I was teaching (Cultural Safety) was a compulsory part of their nursing or midwifery degree course. Public opinion considered the course was politically controversial and most students were young white middleclass heterosexual women. These students awareness of the social inequities in Aotearoa was usually minimal.

Aal (2001) continues with relevant suggestions of important concepts that will assist participants to move from guilt to action when exploring discourses of Whiteness. They include participants need to understand their position, such as what social strata they come from. They need to understand their stand, such as to whom they are accountable. They also need to understand their bias such as whose interests do their attitudes serve; understand the impact on others such as who benefits and who loses from their actions. Aal (2001) concludes, "To move from intention to impact can move us from guilt to action" (p.306).

However what develops when these issues are brought close to home and are seen to implicate the participants' personal lives, the atmosphere can change. This is where the skills of social justice educators are paramount. There is a need to develop an analysis of this phenomenon, the commonly denied emotional response, as it has the potential to thwart, subvert or prolong participants developing openness to engage constructively with the issues. This is where an exploration of the rhetorical devices, the discursive formulations, that maintain the ideology, invisibility and power of Whiteness are helpful.

Diane Gillespie (2003) proposes a strategy that can be useful when an educator finds that participants have not yet developed trust and confidence in their group interactions and are not ready to examine or uncover their unconscious beliefs and strongly held assumptions. An environment of open dialogue as previously discussed can precipitate expression of unexamined views, which commonly surface in the course of rapid interchanges among participants. Gillespie emphasizes that aside from facilitator intervention, few opportunities exist for slowing the discussion down and allowing participants to reflect on their unexamined assumptions. Her solution is the use of case studies that have the advantage of initially allowing participants to distance themselves in the face of emotionally charged subject matter: "the case is about someone else" (p.49).

Gillespie contends that good cases often compel participants to speculate about certain features before they respond so they do not have to self-disclose personal views as they can frame their comments and opinions about the situation as "if/then" scenarios. In

addition, cases studies allow participants to test interpretations and hypotheses, a process that has certain pedagogical advantages in multicultural classrooms. I have used this strategy with nursing students. However, I emphasize the importance of directing interrogations and analyses toward participants' racialised discursive location at stage of the educational process when participants are more settled as a learning group.

As an adjunct to the present challenges to social injustices in Aotearoa, a pedagogy of Whiteness has the potential to address the sedimented racialisation of Pākehā, by examining the ideologies of 'white' nationalism and the location of Pākehā within the discourses of Whiteness. Participants revealed the sedimented racialisation in their discourses and communication practices. Stephanie Wildman and Adrienne Davis (1996) give a pertinent warning that, "...what is not seen cannot be discussed or changed" (p.316). They also highlight a struggle that I have wrestled with in this project, that an exploration of Whiteness "is an elusive and fugitive subject - The pressure to avoid it is great" (p.316).

Concluding Acknowledgements

A key understanding that Hytten and Adkins (2001) highlight, is that studying racialisation, in particular Whiteness, is just one of many ways for "studying issues of power, domination, and reproduction relative to gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability, as well as race" (p.435). I acknowledge this pedagogy is only one approach among many others that addresses issues of power and it would work well in conjunction with these other analyses (Weber, 1998). However, analyses of some Pākehā women's narratives in the preceding chapters confirm that racialised discourses saturate their conceptualizations and consequently their perceptions of people's difference, as well as their actual communicative patterns and discursive strategies. A pedagogy of Whiteness is an important area of exploration in addition to pedagogies already used in Aotearoa social justice education. Not only do I consider that this strategy is one of many, I also emphasize that my suggestions for possible directions are not conclusive or definitive. I realize and hope that I have portrayed how my journey in the terrain of Whiteness is unfinished. A number of researchers and educators have

identified their inconclusiveness and insecurity surrounding social justice social justice educators in this voyage into Whiteness.

Audrey Thompson (2003) in her appraisal of dominantly located social justice educators advocates a sense of uncertainty and the need for continuous interrogation to guard against the dangers of assuming any certainty about what a social justice educator is. Applebaum (2004) also adds that, “not only have we not arrived but we can’t know, either in a pragmatic sense or a visionary sense, what the ends of the journey look like. What will come to count as anti-racist will change as we take on new lived possibilities” (p.9). Ruth Frankenberg (2004) in her reflections on her past work uses the metaphor of the “*unsteadiness of the ground*” in her engagement with Whiteness. She suggests that a reflexive and recursive approach is imperative as she points out that “one’s research practices will be amenable to formation and transformation in ways that are, perhaps, only fully explicable well after the fact of perception itself” (p.107). Therefore, what I offer, as possible directions for a pedagogy of Whiteness are contingent and open to change.

Conclusion

This chapter reiterates that a limited understanding of how racialisation processes shape lives, thwarts Pākehā awareness of how difference and even racial oppression shapes both dominant and oppressed lives. A pedagogy of Whiteness has been proposed that will assist in deepening the insights of the Pākehā majority and those who benefit from ‘white’ dominance/supremacy in Aotearoa. I have presented the development of antiracist education in Aotearoa, suggesting a rationale for the inclusion of an interrogation racialised discourses of Pākehā in Aotearoa. Some practical strategies were outlined as a means of initially engaging participants in the process of interrogating Whiteness. This was followed by a discussion of some facilitation considerations for the educator.

Overall, the thesis answered two central questions. First, what is the range of racialised discourses that constitute the subjectivities of some Pākehā (‘white’/European) women? Second, can an examination of racialised discourses be

useful for present social justice and antiracist pedagogy? The research examined and analysed the accounts of 28 Pākehā women, which contained a range of racialised discourses that contributed to their constitution as racialised subjects. Central to the study was analyses of dominant discourses and the contemporary challenges that analyses of racism and aspects of identification present in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Analyses were located in the historicised context of contemporary Aotearoa/New Zealand, where current socio-cultural politics of biculturalism are underpinned by an historical Treaty, Te Tiriti O Waitangi, which was signed in 1840 by hapū, groups of the indigenous peoples of Aotearoa, and the British Crown.

The thesis assembled and discussed evidence that racialised discourses, in particular various discourses of Whiteness were available to these contemporary Pākehā women. With few exceptions, participants revealed that they were constituted within discourses of Whiteness through their communication choices and discursive strategies in their interviews in two distinct ways: firstly in their perceptions expressed in their narratives and recollections, and secondly in the discursive forms used in participants' interactions during the focus group and interviews. These 28 women, some of whom had participated in antiracist education such as Treaty of Waitangi workshops, utilised discourses that exposed the pervasiveness and significance of racialised discourses as they attempted express how they 'learned to be white'. Participants maintained and reproduced discourses of Whiteness that had gendered and some class influences, contained in their perceptions, talk and significantly in their silences.

The analysis has showed how remnants of *essentialist* ideologies of 'race' based in the nineteenth century imperialism are constantly reworked and are seemingly invisible to those constituted within these racialised discourses, apparently giving these outdated representations little chance to fade away. Given that subjects are constituted within relations of power, through a process of compelled reiteration that maintains and sustains normative social structures, the significance and salience of a contemporary racialised linguistic system was shown to be available to Pākehā in contemporary Aotearoa. The insights that were gained from listening to the talk of the twenty-eight women illuminated how the complexities and layers of understanding and the racialised discourses that participants articulated, were often contradictory and unintentionally,

deceivably nuanced. What clearly emerged was a need to resurrect and address the outdated ideologies that underpin suppressed racialised discourses and terminology to reveal and disrupt the ideologies underpinning this language.

Based on the analysis, critical pedagogies of Whiteness in education were suggested, which have the potential to facilitate Pākehā women's ability to reconceptualise and articulate strategic discourses that address complex forms of identity, understanding of difference and representation. In addition, these reconceptualisations have the potential to reveal the central relationship that the dominant discursive formulations have to social norms and structures; a vital development that a contemporary socially just society demands.

This research has consistently revealed examples of the pervasiveness of the ideological underpinnings and discursive strategies of Whiteness by the Pākehā women participants. The outcomes of my research findings have crucial consequences for all areas of education. If Pākehā understand Whiteness as the subtle playing-out of relations of domination and subordination in everyday routines and the minutiae of life, there is no aspect of educational life free of it. The pervasiveness of the discourse entangles all educators who unavoidably work within processes that reinforce its existence and endorse its continuation (Dominelli, 1997; Sleeter, 1996). The implications of this insight present a challenge to all educational establishments to review their policies, ideologies and pedagogies for learning in Aotearoa. A significant factor when introducing, an examination of racialisation, a pedagogy of Whiteness, in Aotearoa is that Pākehā do not commonly assert or acknowledge the concept of Whiteness in contemporary cultural politics or educational parlance. Yet my research shows significant similarities to discursive practices/strategies of dominant subjects in much of the international research.

My research has identified, and Moon and Flores (2000) among a current wave of researchers on Whiteness have argued, that an important premise on the antiracist agenda is the need to map the terrain of Whiteness (Hage, 1998). The significance and relevance of asking questions about the contours of Whiteness is a necessary pedagogical strategy to disrupt and problematise this normality, this “everything

nothing” category. The goal of this process is to facilitate learners’ development from dead-end understandings of Whiteness as a fixed biological marker and the helplessness and defensiveness that stems from such understandings, to the liberating and emancipating notion that Pākehā conceptions of their hegemonic location can be reconceptualised and are negotiable (Frankenberg, 1993). A Whiteness pedagogy approach can disrupt and problematise the normality that is Whiteness and through this process develop Pākehā awareness of the strategic discourses of Whiteness and most importantly the **silence** that surrounds its power and invisibility.

Through this research study I have gained a deeper understanding of the profound dimensions and dynamics of hegemonic locations, in particular how as Pākehā women, we learned and maintained our racialised and gendered location at this time in Aotearoa. The significance of Whiteness as an assemblage of discourses and discursive practice has been demonstrated in the accounts of the Pākehā women that I engaged in this research and through the participants and my interactions. A pedagogy of Whiteness has been discussed and suggested as a potential educative strategy for addressing Pākehā racialised discourses. This pedagogy will complement the present antiracist strategies, particularly those strategies that combat the pervasiveness of prejudice and ‘white’ supremacy in Aotearoa society.

EPILOGUE

My Journey into Whiteness Continues....

I have learned much since the class of '93 and this research is formally complete. However my personal journey into Whiteness, in particular the discursive racialisation of my location continues unabated as I grapple with its contours. Examining the invisible Whiteness of being has been fascinating and frustrating; however, its elusive and chameleon-like character has tested me throughout this study. A distinctive characteristic of Whiteness that emerged in the process was its ability to appear enduring in one context, and to appear to have no substance in another.

There have been times when I had developed some understanding or insight only for another gap, a question, a chasm to open up and I would feel stumped again, which I understand is a normal phenomenon in the research process. Nevertheless, in this study I found that although I have progressively gained more analytical insights, the confines of my location within this discursive terrain of Whiteness has preserved/retained my vulnerability/susceptibility to its grasp. My ability to identify and analyse the discursive racialisation of Pākehā has given me little immunity from its power.

A metaphor that I found useful to understand my emotional responses to the uniqueness of the dynamic forms of Whiteness is water, or more accurately the elemental compound H₂O. While water is a fluid state, at certain contingent moments it is transformed into a solid state - ice. In another moment, it appears to vaporize and evaporates. The effectiveness of the analogy is that H₂O in its vapourised state can condense and transform back into water and then freeze and hit you with its solid state, like a block of ice! Most of the time there seems to be nothing there and what I think has vanished into thin air can return in a form that is decidedly real, solid and seemingly immovable.

In my familiar day-to-day “ordinary” and “normal” experiences and interactions with other Pākehā, my *thoughts* often suddenly come to a stand still as an expression, opinion or interaction disrupts the ‘normality’ and I *feel* frozen by the starkness of the

racialised or racist content of what I or someone else has said or implied. A really important aspect of this H₂O metaphor and one that describes the concept so accurately for me is that the change can happen in a nanosecond and the sense that all is well and there is nothing to sully the air, can change from vapour to solid ice in an instant.

Through this research, I have attempted to interrogate some content of our Pākehā (in)ability to understand and talk about our racialisation in an effort to address Cherríe Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa's suggestion that the ordinary, normal and clearly emotional, non-theoretical, is a possible place from which "serious anti-racist work among 'white' feminists can begin". The available pedagogical strategies for addressing the emotional content of Pākehā prejudice and discrimination continue to be discussed and evaluated by social justice and antiracist educators in Aotearoa. However, numerous opportunities arise in an educational environment for educators to introduce participants to an understanding their unconscious discursive racialisation and the limitations/constraints that some of these conceptualizations place on Pākehā - constraints that include Pākehā (in)ability to address the emotional content of these processes and to express the complexities of social identity and representation.

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Letter to Prospective Focus Group Participants

53 Westholme Street,
Otautahi/Christchurch 5.

Dear

You are invited to participate in a small focus group discussion that is part of my course work in Sociology at Canterbury University. The aim of the study is to explore some of the ways that women talk about cultural identity, ethnicity and cultural difference and its significance in their lives. Your involvement in the study will consist of your participation in a discussion with me and some other women who took part in the planning of the celebration service in 1993. Our discussion should take only an hour or so.

I am quite excited about this project and look forward to sharing with you what I have learned as I prepared for this study and to hear your different insights on the topic. I hope to do, more work in this next year as part of my thesis in Education.

I am happy to discuss any queries you may have about taking part in the project and I will be contacting you by phone in the next week to ten days to talk about your possible participation in the focus group discussion.

Thankyou,

Yours faithfully,

Helen Gibson. Ph: 3525774

For Phone discussion:

If you are not able to be involved in the group discussion it would be helpful if I could talk to you on the phone for 10 to 15 minutes about some of the issues we will be discussing in the focus group. I will be sending to each participant a copy of the questions I would like to ask and we could discuss these on the telephone.

Alternatively, you might prefer to write something indicating your responses to these questions. (On phone) Possible Time and date of focus group discussion is 25 Sept to 1st Oct.

Appendix B

Question Form for Focus Group Participants

Women Exploring Whiteness In Aotearoa

FOCUS QUESTIONS

These are the issues I would like us to discuss. We may not necessarily consider them in this order:

How would you describe your cultural identity and in what respects is it important to you?

Which of the following labels would you apply to yourself, New Zealander, Pākehā, European, 'white'?

Of the labels that you would not choose for yourself, are there any that you would feel uncomfortable with, or object to others applying to you?

Is it important to recognise differences among New Zealanders? Why?

Do you think that there a specific relationship between Māori and those who might be labelled 'white' European or Pākehā?

Is it important to look at relationships not just between and Pākehā, but those of other ethnicities?

Is it useful to look at differences between women associated with ethnicity and language?

Some people have argued that many Pākehā are not very conscious of their ethnicity - about cultural differences between themselves and Māori, Samoans, Chinese, Japanese. Do you agree?

Why do you think this happens?

Have your ideas about your own ethnicity/cultural identification changed in the last 5 or 10 years? If yes, what sort of experiences prompted those changes?

Has this discussion been useful in clarifying your ideas about cultural identity?

Women Exploring Whiteness In Aotearoa

These questions could follow up in discussion:

“WHITE”, PĀKEHĀ, EUROPEAN, CAUCASIAN, NEW ZEALANDER, KIWI:

Who do you think that these other labels apply to?

What do they mean to you?

Are you more comfortable with the label New Zealander than with the term Pākehā?

Why? Why not?

How does the label Pākehā compare with the label ‘white’?

Is the label ‘white woman’ meaningful to you?

Do you feel uncomfortable about this label? Why?

MĀORI PĀKEHĀ RELATIONSHIPS:

If yes, what do you see this specific relationship to be?

OTHER NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING ‘WHITE’ WOMEN:

How important are differences between ‘white women’ whose first language is other than English, e.g. Dutch, Dalmatian, German, French?

Appendix C

Consent form for All Participants

University of Canterbury Department of Education

CONSENT FORM

Women Exploring Whiteness in Aotearoa

I have read and understood the description of the above-mentioned project. On this basis, I agree to participate as a subject in the project, and I consent to publication of the results of the project with the understanding that anonymity will be preserved. I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.

Signed.

Date.

Appendix D

Information Sheet for Focus Group Participants

Women Exploring Whiteness In Aotearoa

I intend to ask someone to take notes during the group discussion. If this is not possible, I may need to tape our conversation in order to ensure that I have an accurate record of what is said. If the discussion is taped, the tapes will be transcribed by myself and wiped once the process is complete. If you have further comments to make following the discussion, I am happy for you to either ring me or write your responses and send them to me. If any part of the report is published, the contributions from individuals will be anonymous and those involved in organizing the church service will not be identified as participants in this study. My intention is to protect your anonymity.

Appendix E

Letter to Prospective Interview Participants

Dear

As you may be aware, I am doing some research for my doctoral studies and I have chosen to talk to around fifty New Zealand women about their lives as 'white' women, and what this means for them. Some women I will be talking with individually and some in groups. I would very much like the opportunity of talking with you as part of this research. I prefer an informal, relaxed meeting, perhaps a chat over a cup of coffee for an hour or so!

One of the main reasons for my study is that as women we don't often get asked about our lives, in particular our experiences as 'white' women. It seems an appropriate time in New Zealand for us to be exploring our experience as women, particularly as 'white' women, hence my interest in talking with you.

I am happy to discuss any queries that you may have about taking part in this research and I will ring you in the next week to ten days to find out whether you are interested and to work out a time that suits us both. My time is flexible so I should be able to fit in with you.

Enclosed is a consent form for you to complete which acknowledges my responsibilities as interviewer, your rights as well as protecting you as an interviewee. If for any reason you do not wish or are unable to take part, I am interested in any response that you may care to give, even your thoughts about what it feels like to be asked to participate in such a study as this.

I feel excited about this research and I look forward to talking with you.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Gibson

Appendix F

Semi-structured interview question guide

Can you give me just a brief overview of your life, where you were born and grew up and a little bit about your family, sisters, brothers, and so on?

What is important for people to know about you, how would you want people to see you, to identify you?

How do you identify by class? (10/9) has that changed from your childhood into adulthood?

How do you identify ethnically?

During your growing up years, did you have much contact with people of other cultures? Can you expand on that some more?

Can you remember when you first became aware that you are 'white'? Can you expand on that some more?

Have you ever been in a situation where you have become aware that you are 'white' and different or in a minority? What sort of feelings did that bring up for you? Has that experience changed the way you think in any way, what has stayed with you from that time if anything?

Have you ever felt uncomfortable about being 'white' or part of the 'white' culture? Can you say some more about that?

Have you ever felt proud of being 'white' of being part of the 'white' culture? In what way? Anything more about that?

Have you ever had to think about who you are and what has prompted that?

What does it feel like being asked these sorts of questions, talking about this?

What are your family's understandings about being 'white'? Was it ever discussed, if not how was it communicated?

Have your feelings about being 'white' changed as you have got older, are they different now?

Have any members of your extended family married or been in a close relationship with someone from another culture? How has that effected family relations in any way?

How would your parents have felt if you developed a close relationship with someone from another culture?

(10/9). Have you ever been attracted to or had a relationship with someone from another culture e.g. Dutch, German, Asian, Māori?

How would you feel if your children married or developed a close relationship with someone from another culture?

Do you see your education as having had any impact on your understandings of being a woman?

Do you see your education as having had any impact on your understandings of being 'white'?

(10/9) How do you see your family as having had any impact on your understandings of being a woman?

(10/9) How do you see your family as having had any impact on your understandings of being 'white'? Has this changed for you as an adult? The way society sees you as a 'white' woman? In what way? Any tensions/conflicts for you here?

A) If someone came into your home, would they be able to tell that you are 'white'?

b) (23/9) How would you respond to a family from another culture say Māori or Pacific Island moving in next door?

How do you feel about talking about being 'white'?

It seems that 'white' people seem to have difficulty finding the words to talk about being 'white', Have you thoughts about why this is so? If you yourself have not thought about this much before? Have you any thoughts as to why?

Do you think that being 'white' means only the colour of your skin? Why or why not?

Do you think that we as 'white' people act in a certain ways that are noticeable to other cultures?

In what ways do you act or interact that are 'white'?

If you identify as Pākehā at what time in your life, when and what prompted your choosing this identity? OR If you don't choose Pākehā as an identity, what are your reasons?

What significance does claiming Pākehā identity have for you, what does it mean for you?

Before asking the following questions I emphasized to participants that they were free to pass on them if they chose to do so:

What are your thoughts about the political situation in NZ?

How do you identify politically? Is there any political group that you support or identify with?

After this discussion do you see and different uses for this type of exploration in anti racist education or education for understanding other cultures and how other cultures see us? Could you elaborate on how you would go about this, have you any ideas?

a)When did you first hear about the treaty of Waitangi? b) (23/9) Have you heard of the Declaration of Independence, can you tell me what you know about it?

What are your thoughts and feelings of the present claims of Māori?

How do you see the relevance or otherwise of the treaty of Waitangi?

Have you had any other education about the Treaty at school or as an adult?

(15//9)Have you read the Treaty and do you feel that you understand it?

Have you heard of treaty workshops?

Do you think that they are a good idea?

Have you done one or would you do one?

Do you see that you can do anything or that you have a part to play in working through the cultural problems that we have in NZ?

Is there any thing further that you would like to say?

How you have found this interview?

I would really appreciate you writing to me if you have any more thoughts about this discussion as it will probably bring up more ideas etc that you have not thought of during the interview

Appendix H

Transcription Code and Writing Conventions Followed

Bold	For emphasis
“ ”	For direct quotes and indicates a particular interpretation of a word/s
-	Hesitations, silences and pauses
...	Three unspaced ellipses indicate omission within or between sentences
[]	Indicates alterations made by researcher to enhance clarity and grammatical flow
(Laughter)	Included where possible, demonstrative expressions are included in parenthesis

General Writing Conventions

<i>Italics</i>	Identifies some analytical terms that are significant to the thesis and have a particular meaning
‘ ’	Terms enclosed in single parentheses indicate candidate’s interpretation of the term as having a constructed non-essential meaning as well as the candidate’s recognition that many interpretations of these terms are in common use
Whiteness	Use of capital letter for this term throughout the thesis indicates a particular interpretation which is defined on page 23 for consistency

Appendix I
Ethics Approval Letters



University of Canterbury
7 September 1995
Private Bag 4800
Christchurch
New Zealand
Telephone: 03-3667001 Fax: 03-364 2999

Ms H Gibson
C/- R Du Plessis
Department of Sociology
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Ms Gibson

The Human Ethics Committee has considered and approved your research proposal "Women Exploring Whiteness In Aotearoa.

The Committee also returns three spare copies of your application.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J A Cockle'.

f~f7~::~

J A Cockle (Miss)
Secretary

**University of Canterbury**

Private Bag 4800

Christchurch

New Zealand

Telephone: 03-3667001 Fax: 03-364 2999

5 August 1996

Ms H Gibson

53 Westholme Street Otautahi

CHRISTCHURCH 8005

Dear Ms Gibson

Thank you for notifying the Human Ethics Committee of your intention to continue, at greater depth, the research project approved by the Committee last year. On the understanding that the procedures will be the same as those followed in the pilot study, the Committee does not require you to apply for approval again.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "R.H. Stoothoff".

Professor R H Stoothoff *Human Ethics Committee*

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