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Talking Terrorism

A discourse analysis of people's talk about terrorism in their world.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Psychology at Massey University, New Zealand.

Lesley C. Olley
2009
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Abstract

This study explores the talk of people living in New Zealand Aotearoa as they confront the phenomenon of Terrorism. Ten participants were interviewed about their views on international terrorism and local terrorism, the impacts of terrorism, and the meanings of terrorism. The data was analysed discursively and two key discourses emerged; a sense of Justice discourse and a discourse emphasising the safety of New Zealand Aotearoa. The justice discourse was supported by a raft of anti-repertoires including anti-American/George Bush talk, anti-media resources, and fear and revenge repertoires. The safety discourse saw participants identify resources that keep them safe from international terrorism and reject recent attempts to allow terrorism to wash up on New Zealand shores. These discourses are discussed in the context of recent terrorist events.
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