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Non-Māori Viewing of Māori Television:
An Empirical Analysis of the New Zealand Broadcast System

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

Since its launch in March 2004, Māori Television has been redefining broadcasting standards and operational ethics in the New Zealand mediasphere. The channel's overall viewership has increased on a yearly basis, growing to over two million unique viewers by 2010, 83% of which is made up of non-Māori viewers. It is to the issues raised by this unusual situation that this thesis directs itself. Why do non-Māori watch Māori Television? What shows are they watching? What messages do they derive from their viewing habits? And how is the channel, as an indigenous broadcaster, affecting notions of narrative, identity, and nationhood in New Zealand society? These questions are addressed through a qualitative analysis of data collected from focus groups, questionnaires, and one-on-one interviews with non-Māori viewers of the Māori Television channel.

The thesis begins by exploring the broadcasting system in which Māori Television is positioned, outlining the legislative processes and media systems non-Māori are shifting from. It then describes the Māori social and communications paradigms which ultimately resulted in the channel's emergence on the nation's airwaves. This is followed by a description and justification of the research methodology.

The ensuing analysis of the viewpoints and assertions made by the research participants indicates that there are significant patterns in non-Māori perceptions of Māori Television and its evolving role in New Zealand culture. These perceptions include: a) an acknowledgement of Māori Television's contribution in filling a perceived void in New Zealand public service broadcasting; b) an appreciation of the quality of its broadcasts, often described as providing a compelling, inclusive, ethical, and professional service to their audience; c) a belief that the channel is facilitating a reconceptualisation of bicultural politics in New Zealand and nurturing the development of a better understanding of post-colonial cultural identity. The thesis argues that the Māori Television channel provides non-Māori a 'third space' for a re-negotiation of non-Māori identity in New Zealand, offering them a reconciliation with Aotearoa. In this sense, the channel is argued to challenge bifurcated cultural practices by presenting counter-narratives of nationhood and of the national imaginary which move beyond traditional notions of 'settler identity'.

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Chapter 1: Introduction.

This thesis will analyse and present findings as to why non-Māori view the Māori Television channel. It will examine the channel's place within the current New Zealand mediascape and analyse what makes Māori Television distinct from other national broadcasters in New Zealand. Through qualitative empirical research, the channel's non-Māori audience were asked for the reasons they viewed the channel and how they perceive Māori Television in relation to their New Zealand television viewing habits and their engagement with the nation's mediasphere.

The *Fourth Estate* in New Zealand is a complex entity, transitioning through several major paradigm shifts over recent years. In 2009 New Zealanders consumed on average over three hours of television per day (Friesen, 2009), a figure which has increased on an annual basis. It is a firmly established and well documented cultural force in New Zealand society (Horrocks and Perry, 2004). However, in geopolitical terms, New Zealand has a small population with limited industry resources and in the modern globalised media systems has struggled to find a balance between the media as a market driven commercial entity and one of social and public interest.

In March 2004 New Zealand's first 'national' indigenous television channel began broadcasting. The new Māori Television channel situated itself alongside several other national 'free to air' UHF and VHF networks such as state owned Television New Zealand's *TVOne* and *TV2*, and privately owned *TV3*, *C4*, and *Prime*. Prior to the channel's launch, Māori programmes on New Zealand television (including repeats) totalled a mere fifteen hours of broadcasting per week (Stephens, 2004, p.108).

Māori Television was founded under the Māori Television Services Act 2003 after almost "three decades of agitation by Māori" (Ibid, p.113). The Act stipulates the duties of the channel are to:-

promote te reo Māori me ngā tikanga Māori through the provision of a high quality, cost-effective Māori television service, in both Māori and English, that informs, educates, and

entertains a broad viewing audience, and, in doing so, enriches New Zealand's society, culture, and heritage.

(Māori Television Services Act, 2003, 8.1).

The act also stipulates an additional obligation to “broadcast mainly in te reo Māori” throughout the broadcast schedule making specific reference to that of ‘prime time’ (ibid). Former Māori Television CEO, Ani Waaka argued that the channel’s launch would provide “comfort to those who, over the past 30 years, had fought for the Māori language to be recognised in New Zealand” (Kiriona, 2004, para, 13).

The Māori Television channel is a statutory agency positioned within the nation’s state sector. However it does not fall under any ‘traditional’ state sector categories. It represents a “unique and workable relationship between the Crown and Māori” (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, p.2). The Māori Television Services Act does not go as far as positioning the channel as a ‘Crown entity’, however it does make it accountable to the Crown through the Minister of Māori Affairs and the Minister of Finance. The channel’s additional stakeholder is Te Putahi Paoho (The Māori Television Electoral College) which is itself represented by several national Māori organisations (ibid).

As will be explained later stage in the thesis, Māori Television is an unconventional entity in New Zealand broadcasting. It is positioned outside the standard ‘space’ occupied by other national broadcasters, thus creating a ‘new space’ within the New Zealand mediasphere. The channel’s self described ‘vision’ is to be a “world class indigenous broadcaster”, maintaining and upholding “core Māori values” (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, p.4). It presents the ‘tagline’ on its corporate profile as: *Mārātou, māmātou, mā koutou, ma tātou*, which translates to the English language as: *For them, for us, for you, for everyone*. This statement in many respects encapsulates the ideals and ethos of the Māori Television channel and will be further discussed in the following chapters.

The organisation has several obligations stipulated under the Māori Television Services Act (2003), which commits the broadcaster not only to 'revitalise' and 'promote' the Māori language and culture, but to provide programming which will "enrich New Zealand society, culture and heritage" (RIMA, 2009, p.5). Consequently, the channel positions itself as an 'inclusive broadcaster' for all New Zealanders, supporting the principles of tikanga and Kaupapa Māori (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, pp.4-6). Māori Television operates as a bilingual broadcaster delivering programming in both te reo Māori and English languages. It offers the New Zealand audience 51% te reo during primetime and 61% te reo across its broadcasting schedule (RIMA, 2009, p.10). The channel's day-to-day operations reflect a philosophy of upholding and maintaining core Māori values, in terms of *high standards, truth, honesty, integrity, respectfulness and empathy* (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, p.5). The channel's seminal focus is to produce and broadcast programming of "significance for all New Zealanders", thus establishing itself as the "face of New Zealand" and the "voice of Aotearoa" (Ibid, pp.3-6).

In its first year of operation the channel attracted a modest 687,000 unique viewers in New Zealand, growing to over one million viewers by 2007 (RIMA, 2009, p. 5). In April 2010, the channel broke a "major milestone" when media research company AGB Nielsen reported that the channel accumulated over "two million unique viewers" (Māori Television Marks Two Million Milestone, 2010). Current CEO Jim Mather argued that the channel's success was due to the station broadcasting content of "significance to all New Zealanders" (ibid). These comments, along with many others expressed by Māori Television and those in the media industry, highlight the growing popularity of the channel in the six years since it was launched; increasing its annual audience share by an average of 18.6% (RIMA, 2009, p.5).

However, these figures need to be approached with some caution, as this figure provided by AGB Nielsen constitutes almost half of the New Zealand total population (New Zealand Census, 2006).

AGB Nielsen conducts its audience research primarily through a device called a 'peplemeter' which it uses to determine what channels are being viewed at a specific time throughout the nation. It is difficult to work out exactly how the organisation formulates its data, and it is unclear as to precisely what the 'two million' viewership figures actually mean. It is not clear, for instance, exactly how much time these 'unique viewers' actually spend watching the Māori Television channel, or whether they would consider themselves to be 'regular followers'. In spite of these reservations however, the fact that a 2009 government initiated Māori Language Attitudes Survey (2010) found a similar pattern of viewership makes it clear that the channel's audience share among both Māori and non-Māori audiences has indeed grown substantially over recent years.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most noteworthy statistic which emerges from AGB Nielsen is the assertion that 83% of the indigenous broadcaster's viewership is made up of non-Māori audiences (Nielsen Media Report, 2010). This is an extraordinary figure and makes Māori Television unique in that it is a phenomenon not shared by other global indigenous broadcasters. Consequently, it is to an examination of the background and reasons for this pattern of viewership that this thesis directs itself. The research question I will address is why are so many non-Māori watching Māori Television?

The Māori Language Attitudes Survey (2010) found that that over one quarter of the non-Māori population surveyed view the Māori Television channel 'often' or 'very often'. The latest Census demographics state that the non-Māori population of New Zealand is over three million people (New Zealand Census, 2006). On that basis, an estimation of the number of non-Māori watching the Māori Television channel on a *regular basis* can be estimated to be at over 750,000. Whichever figure is taken to be the most accurate, what can be argued is that a significant and growing number of non-Māori are tuning in to the Māori channel. Questions must be asked over why non-Māori watch Māori Television. What programs are they watching? What are the reasons behind their viewing

habits, and how do they perceive the channel message and its position in relation to the New Zealand broadcast system and mediasphere?

Several theories and hypotheses exist as to why so many non-Māori watch Māori Television but within academia very little empirical research and qualitative data exists asking the non-Māori audience why they watch the channel. For example, former General Manager of Māori Television Larry Parr argues that

the channel has attracted disenfranchised [*sic*] [Pākehā] viewers from the mainstream channels, who like Māori Television because of its public service broadcasting and minimal advertising.

(Parr, 2007 ctd in Smith and Abel, 2008, p.6)

However, as Parr himself (2007) points out, this “has come at the expense of our own rangatahi [younger generation]”, a position which has the potential to have serious impact on the future of the Māori Television channel, and will be discussed at a later stage in the thesis.

Parr’s statement has much validity considering the history of te reo Māori and the establishment of Māori media in New Zealand. The Waitangi Tribunal and the subsequent Te Reo Māori Report (1986) established that the Māori language was a ‘taonga’ (cultural treasure) and is “the embodiment of the particular spiritual and mental concepts of the Māori” (Te Reo Māori Report, 1986, p.25). Māori Television itself perpetuates this position by arguing that the Māori language is the “cornerstone of Māori culture”, arguing the position that “first and foremost, Māori Television is a broadcaster with the promotion of Māori language as its core objective and key responsibility” (Pānui Whāinga; Statement of Intent, 2009). Māori Television’s legislated responsibility to revitalise te reo and tikanga Māori has given rise to accusations (Black, 2006) that it is failing to ‘talk in’ to Māori and may be

reverting back to forms of *'talking out'* to Pākehā (see Barclay, 1990) due to its large non-Māori audience share. However, considering that many Māori are not yet proficient in te reo Māori (Health of Māori Language Report, 2007), it can be argued that the English language broadcasts are just as much for Māori as they are for non-Māori audiences. Māori Television faces a difficult challenge when it comes to Barclay's concepts of *talking in* and *talking out*. It must position at its core the duty to revitalise te reo and tikanga Māori while simultaneously appealing to a 'broad viewing audience' of New Zealand society. Considering that the 'broad viewing audience' of New Zealand doesn't speak te reo Māori, this may seem like an extremely challenging dichotomy and perhaps an impossible position for the channel to mediate.

However, an argument can be presented that *talking out* is an acceptable cultural broadcasting method for Māori Television when Kaupapa Māori is observed and practiced. Māori Television is ultimately a Māori owned and controlled broadcaster which presents a self-identifying te ao Māori narrative. Like Iwi radio before it, Māori Television has become a twenty first century *'platform for Korero'* in New Zealand. It is a communications 'space' situated outside that of the perceived notions of 'hegemonically controlled' Pākehā mainstream media (see Spoonley, 1988, 1990; Fox, 1990; Walker, 1990a, 1990b; Abel, 1997; Stephens 2004; Phelan & Shearer, 2009) and thus has a dual opportunity to simultaneously *talk in* and *talk out* to New Zealand society. The current *ethos* of the channel when it comes to the concept of *talking out* is that the channel "affords all New Zealanders opportunities to connect with our underlying Māori culture and heritage, which defines our uniqueness as a nation" (Māori Television's CEO Jim Mather qtd. in RIMA, 2009, p.9). "Above all", adds Māori Television Chairman Garry Muriwai, "we have disseminated the Māori language and culture to a wide audience" (Māori Television Chairman Garry Muriwai qtd. in RIMA, 2009, p.4).

Smith (2006, p.28) argues that the channel, as a social force, has the potential to “transform the everyday culture of Aotearoa/New Zealand”, helping build a collective sense of *Nationhood* for all New Zealanders. One of the critical functions of Māori Television according to Smith and Abel (2008, p.19) is to “bring to light hither unseen visions of Aotearoa / New Zealand; to see with ‘Iwi eyes’ the shape, the contour of the nation’s scape”, a vision beneficial for both the Māori and non-Māori peoples of New Zealand.

Nevertheless, as former GM of Programming at Māori Television Joanna Paul argues, although time should be taken to celebrate the success and potential futures of Māori Television, what must not be forgotten is the long struggle which took place to get the channel to air in Aotearoa and for the preservation and revitalisation of te reo Māori (Paul, 2005). This position is particularly relevant to this thesis and attention will be given to the history of the Māori struggle for Te Mana Te Kawanatanga, and how the emergence of Māori media ultimately *shaped* the operational framework of what we now know as Māori Television. That history inevitably influenced how the channel operates, what content it broadcasts, and how the channel differs from the mainstream ‘Pākehā’ media. Considering the hypothesis that the channel is positioned in a separate ‘space’ outside that of the existing New Zealand mediascape it is essential to understand what ‘space’ Māori Television now occupies in the broadcast system in order to fully understand and articulate why and how non-Māori are viewing the channel. At the same time, however, the history of Māori media also needs to be understood in terms of how it relates to, and was influenced by, the history, policies and legislation surrounding the New Zealand broadcasting system. To this end, this thesis starts with a contextualising examination of developments in media legislation and the current uncertainties over the future of many aspects of New Zealand broadcasting with specific focus being given to that of ‘public service broadcasting’.

When Māori Television launched in 2004 it launched into a system undergoing substantial transitional changes stemming from neo-liberal political policies of the 1980s. The resulting legislation saw a new wave of foreign media ownership and heightened levels of media commercialisation, situated within the media globalisation paradigm. Considering the hypothesis that Māori Television acts as a separate 'space' within the mediasphere, combined with an increasing non-Māori viewership, it is important to gain an understanding of what media 'system' they are coming from.

The following chapter reviews theory and research surrounding the New Zealand broadcast system and the evolution of Māori media in order to ascertain why, and more importantly, how Māori Television sits outside the paradigm of the traditional New Zealand mediasphere along with questions over the requirements and commitments to public service broadcasting. Additional questions will be raised over the future of biculturalism and bicultural rhetoric in the New Zealand media and its impact on the performance of identity narratives among Pākehā audiences in a post-Māori Television Aotearoa / New Zealand.

Chapter 2: The New Zealand Mediascape and Māori Television: A Review of the Literature.

2.1 Introduction

Academic literature surrounding Māori representations in the New Zealand media are predominantly argued from perspectives of hegemony and ideology and frequently rely on concepts of *false consciousness*. Although this position will not be blindly followed, the analysis of the relevant literature and that of the New Zealand mediascape will be conducted from a similar perspective drawing on the works of Gramsci (1971), Williams (1977), Gitlin (1980) and Hall (1977, 1981, 1983). Such scholars argue that the mass media, as the Fourth Estate, actively *produce* the dominant ideology of a nation state through hegemony and socialisation. For Van Dijk (1996, p.14), the “mainstream news media are inherently part of a power structure of elite groups and institutions, whose models of the ethnic situation provide (sometimes very subtle and indirect) support for the ethnic status quo of white group dominance”, deviation within this system is ultimately a threat to the hegemony of the dominant elites. In this respect, the media does not simply *reflect* debates on cultural diversity, but *defines* public understanding and actively shapes public opinion and the construction and understanding of cultural diversity (see Siapera, 2010). For Chomsky (1989) the mass media create a form of “*thought control in democratic societies*” through “*necessary illusions*”, creating what is known as the ‘manufacturing of public consciousness’ (Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

When this position is taken and combined with perspectives from Jones (1997), the opportunity presents itself to question the framework and functions of the New Zealand mediascape and the emergence of Indigenous media in New Zealand. Jones argues that within academic discourse, post-colonial nations have a tendency of positioning themselves as liberal, multicultural and pluralistic societies while underneath such rhetoric lies a social structure and foundation which is based on monoculturalism and is fundamentally ‘oppositional’ to the indigenous peoples they once colonised. Both bicultural and multicultural discourses projected by the state are a way to assert ideological

and hegemonic control over not just the indigenous or the minority citizens of a nation, but over all citizens in society. When settlers first arrived to colonise Aotearoa, they brought with them ethnocentric and Eurocentric ideologies which became embedded in the foundations and infrastructure of what is now modern post-colonial New Zealand society. These ideologies and discourses placed the Māori peoples as the inferior 'other' (Said, 1979) to the colonising Europeans, forcing not only assimilation but also 'subservience' to the pre-eminence of the foreign culture and their self-identifying exceptionalism (McCreanor, 1997; Walker 1981, 1990a, 1990b; Spoonley and Hirsch 1990). Considering the position from Fairburn (2008) that New Zealand (as a modern nation state) has been unable to develop a culture that is autochthonous due to its physical isolation positions, the prevailing concept of New Zealand *nationhood* is an amalgamation of British, Australian and American cultures, all with inherently staunch colonial ties and a established history of domination and forced assimilation of indigenous cultures.

Moreover, as Benedict Anderson (1991) would argue, television (as the Fourth Estate) constructs and shapes the *social imaginary* of a nation, society, or culture by the creation of *imagined communities*. The existing literature concerning Māori and the New Zealand media suggests that New Zealand's *simagined community* is far from encompassing and representative of the diversity of Aotearoan society (Spoonley and Hirsch, 1990; Walker, 1981, 1990; Fox, 1990; Spoonley, 1995; Abel, 1996, 1997; Stuart, 1996; Stephens, 2004; Sibley and Liu, 2004, 2007). New Zealand cultural, social and media scholarly studies are littered with examples of the 'Pākehā' mainstream media failing to provide a Māori voice or simply ignoring te ao Māori in New Zealand. Through hegemonic processes, Pākehā have mis-constructed and mis-represented Māori affairs within the nation's public spheres. This goes far beyond simple 'race tagging' and 'stereotyping', representing instead more institutionalised forms of racism embedded within post colonial New Zealand society and the New Zealand media institutions.

Post colonial theory would suggest a position that discourses of ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism (Gandhi, 1998, Williams, 1999), concepts of 'otherness' (Said, 1979), the politics of recognition, and the dialogical construction of identity (Taylor, 1989, 1994) have all been present in the construction of New Zealand society and the *production* of nationhood. The current challenge for New Zealand is positioning bicultural and multicultural discourses surrounding the *recognition* of cultural diversity and inclusiveness. A position seemingly adopted by Māori Television.

2.2 Broadcasting NZ: The New Zealand Experiment and Public Service Broadcasting

The following section reviews the legislative framework in place for New Zealand television broadcasting at the time of Māori Television's launch in 2004.

The *New Zealand Experiment* is a phrase attributed to the deregulation of the New Zealand media industry and the 'radical' neo-liberal restructuring processes of the 1980s and 1990s (Bell, 1995a, 1995b; Smith, 1996; Norris, 2004; Dunleavy, 2005, 2008, 2009). Scholars such as Horrocks (1996, p.55) argue that the New Zealand broadcast system's "equilibrium is delicate, because the resources are not there for many of our social or cultural needs to be fully satisfied", adding, "this is the basic condition of New Zealand television; always in a state of near crisis". By the mid 1980s, funding for public service broadcasting had witnessed a significant decline (Dunleavy, 2008, p.802). The 1984 Labour Government set about applying a 'free market ideology' to the New Zealand broadcasting sector. In 1989 a new Broadcasting Act was passed creating two State Owned Enterprises (SOE) in Television New Zealand (TVNZ) and Radio New Zealand (RNZ). The media broadcasters although state owned would operate as commercial businesses, in which the creation of revenue and the acquisition of profit are the primary objectives. The legislation contained within the 1989 Broadcasting Act constituted for Smith (1996) a "revolution" on the New Zealand airwaves. This position is understandable considering that prior to the transition New Zealand had one of the most

‘regulated’ broadcast systems in the world with a firmly established *Reithian* public service ethos (Lealand, 1991).

The Labour Government’s philosophy sought to increase competition and customer choice in broadcasting (Day, 2000). However, as Prebble argues this quickly became the “most far-reaching restructuring and deregulation of broadcasting not only in this country but anywhere in the world” (Prebble, quoted in Day, 2000, p. 367). The Broadcasting Act saw TVNZ’s public service obligations “rescinded” (Dunleavy, 2008, p.803) with the removal of traditional ‘Reithian values’ which stipulate to inform, educate, and entertain, replacing them instead with unspecified ‘social objectives’ (Norris, 2004, p.4). Furthermore, the 1989 Broadcasting Act created two further organisations, the *Broadcasting Standards Authority* which was established to govern matters such as “fairness, accuracy, balance, privacy, taste and decency” in broadcasting (Price and Brown, 2006), and *New Zealand On Air (NZ On Air)* created in order to fulfil the nation’s ‘public service’ interests. NZ On Air was given specific operational guidelines under the Broadcasting Act, these included:

- To reflect and develop New Zealand identity and culture
- To promote programmes about New Zealand and New Zealand interests
- To promote Māori language and culture

(Broadcasting Act, 1989, p.17)

NZ On Air was envisioned as a way to ‘protect’ New Zealand programming in a world of increasing media globalisation and commercialisation and was envisioned by the then Labour Government as one of its “core objectives of building national identity” in New Zealand (Maharey, 2007). The organisation presented the following position in relation to its statutory obligations;

NZ On Air will help keep ‘New Zealand’ firmly embedded in the

fabric of the new broadcasting structure. We will assist broadcasters to ... ensure that the cultural contribution of broadcasting is not overwhelmed by commercial imperatives.

(New Zealand On Air, 1990, p.2)

In just four years New Zealand broadcasting had shifted from a highly regulated entity based on Reithian public service values, to a free market 'unregulated' and 'profit driven' commercial entity (Smith, 1996, Dunleavy, 2008). Under the new system, the New Zealand audience were no longer addressed as 'listeners' or 'viewers' but as 'consumers' and 'markets' to exploit for commercial interests (Hutchinson and Lealand, 1996, p. 8). The production, distribution, and consumption of the broadcast system would be perpetually driven by the economic market (Bell, 1995a, 1995b).

As a result of this shift in institutional policy, 'traditional' forms of public service broadcasting faced an uncertain future on the New Zealand airwaves. The dichotomy existed in that NZ On Air's 'contestable' funding allowed resources to be shared with private commercial broadcasters, albeit an understanding existed that NZ On Air should "restrict its funding to non-commercial or minority programming" (Norris, 2004, p.7). While prime time or 'commercially viable' programming was well served by NZ On Air, programming targeted for audiences outside the network's 'target demographic' was under resourced. Norris (2004, p.18) even suggests that broadcasters would turn down "fully funded" programming from NZ On Air due to the target demographics not being deemed 'commercially viable'. The commercial orientation of the television industry created the predicament that fully funded public service programming in many cases "barely broke even" due to losses in advertising revenue (Impey, 2003). The contestable funding platform, coupled with the commercial and market driven industry ideology, was unable to guarantee that all demographics and perspectives would be catered for, even though NZ On Air's objectives were created under notions of the 'representation of diversity' (Norris, 2004, p.15). Nevertheless, NZ On Air was successful in getting some public service programming on television, however, the content was positioned outside that of

the 'prime time' schedules. In fact, several Māori and Pacific shows such as *Marae* and *Tangata Pacifica*, which had previously existed in prime time locations were 'demoted' to off peak time slots of early Sunday morning and late night broadcasts (Stuart, 1996; Archie, 2007), which effectively 'marginalised' both Māori and public service broadcasting.

The levels of public service and Māori programming were diminishing on the New Zealand airwaves. Traditional 'Reithian' models, which strive towards providing equal consideration from a multitude of viewpoints and perspectives, serving to *entertain, educate and inform* the nation as a whole (McDonnell, 1991) are fundamentally oppositional to the ideals of the *free-market* approach. The New Zealand television broadcast system had become a non-Reithian, fully commercial entity, completely "detached from its public service roots" (Dunleavy, 2009, p. 803). Those with a "preference for highbrow programming" were a "fading demographic" (Norris, 2004, p.25). NZ On Air was seen by many as a "last chance to get local production firmly established in television before satellite and pay services swamped the culture with imports" (Horrocks, 1996 qtd in Norris, 2004, p.17).

However, situating public service broadcasting 'ideals' in a commercialised market-driven would prove to be an unsuccessful venture, creating what suggests is "public broadcasting, *New Zealand style*". It was a chance to "confine public broadcasting to a very narrow definition, a minimalist position that omits many of the quality elements that distinguish the remits of the traditional public broadcasters" (Norris, 2004, p.19). By the turn of the century, the amount of local content on New Zealand Television had "drastically reduced" (Dunleavy, 2008, p.806). A report commissioned by the New Zealand Broadcast Council found that New Zealand spent the lowest amount (per capita) on public service broadcasting than anywhere in the Western world (*Television Regulation and Local Content in Six Nations*, 2000). Foreign content was increasing on the airwaves and it was proving cheaper to import programming than to produce shows domestically. The states neo-liberal policies

had resulted in a New Zealand mainstream simply becoming a “diluted” version of British and American television. By the year 2004 over half of all New Zealand broadcasts were imported from the United States of America (Horrocks, 2004, pp.9-10).

The Broadcasting Act 1989 created a system in constant juxtaposition within the mediascape. Television New Zealand’s dual objectives, public service broadcasting and commercialism were, and still are fundamentally incompatible, and its future would prove an almost impossible undertaking in establishing any form of coherent balance. However, the deregulation of the broadcast system not only saw the Americanisation of programming on the airwaves but also the Americanisation of journalism and news and current affairs. During the 1990s, an influx of American producers and journalists were purposely brought to New Zealand to help facilitate the transition of TVNZ into the commercial sector creating an “American interpretive style of reporting” for New Zealand audience (Stuart, 1996; Wilcox, 1996). These actions, according to Atkinson, resulted in forms of “tabloid journalism” being established in New Zealand broadcasting (Atkinson, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 2001) and resulted in TVNZ’s news and current affairs coverage *shifting* from a more public sphere oriented form of journalism to one of the “theatrical”, centred on “controversy” and “publicity”. This transition also paved the way for the introduction of the New Zealand television news ‘personality’ (Stuart, 1996, Wilcox, 1996, Thompson, 2005).

The new television ‘personality’ brought with it an emphasis on presenter *opinion* compared to traditional forms of news reporting. The new ‘presenter’ has the power to ‘inject’ opinion into a story or lead questioning of an interview towards a pre-determined narrative. As there was little Māori personality within the industry at the time to provide a counter balance, the Māori perspective and the Māori ‘opinion’ on the airwaves was muted. This resulted in a mainstream media delivering a Pākehā message for a Pākehā audience (Stephens, 2004; Archie, 2007). News presenters and journalists were no longer ‘reporting’ the news, but were providing a form of ‘social commentary’ on

New Zealand current affairs. This position becomes more significant and multifaceted considering the foreign dominance of New Zealand media ownership. Rosenberg (2008, p.12) highlights that aside from state owned TVNZ, only two companies control the New Zealand media systems: Mediaworks (owned by Australian private investment company Ironbridge Capital) own and control TV3, C4, and a host of radio stations, and Sky Television which owns the *Prime* channel and the Sky pay-TV service. The neo-liberal and free market approaches to the media has created a news media industry in New Zealand (print, radio, television etc) controlled by just five privately owned companies and two 'State Owned Enterprises' (SOE). Considering the SOE's are heavily reliant on commercial advertising revenue and sponsorship from the private sector, it can be argued that almost all of New Zealand's news media systems are controlled by commercial and corporate sectors. This inevitably influences, and in many respects pre-determines the 'message' and 'narrative' being presented to the people. This 'monopoly' of news information and presented 'opinion' has positioned the New Zealand media as the 'gatekeepers' of knowledge who have the potential to impose editorial bias in news and current affairs reporting (Chomsky, 1989; Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

On a fundamental level the Broadcasting Act encouraged broadcasting towards the 'commercially viable majority' rather than recognising the diversity of the New Zealand audience. What little programming that existed concerning Māori or minority groups was predominantly *about* them (*talking out*), rather than *for* them (*talking in*) (Barclay, 1990), and was pushed to obscure time slots inaccessible for large parts of the New Zealand public which subsequently denied a Māori voice on a national level.

The mainstream media in New Zealand is widely criticised for failing not only to provide a sustained Māori voice on air, but in failing to accurately report *te ao* and *taha* Māori affairs to the New Zealand

public (Spoonley and Hirsh, 1990; Walker, 1990, Nairn and McCreanor, 1991, Stuart, 1996, Abel, 1997). Māori affairs were commonly reduced to forms of *'hit and run'* journalism (Tully, 2005).

The neo-liberal broadcast legislation and the resulting system it created failed to understand the importance of public service broadcasting and the “cultural significance of local programming” to New Zealand (Dunleavy, 2008, p.803). In many respects NZ on Air was partially successful in creating opportunities for local programming on the airwaves, however, the funding for both local and public service programming was “insufficient” to meet the “objectives for which it was responsible” (ibid). NZ on Air effectively became the sole ‘gatekeeper’ for New Zealand ‘identity’ on Air (Bell, 1995). The New Zealand mediasphere failed in numerous areas to represent the diversity of New Zealand cultural identity and that of the Māori ‘perspective’.

2.3 A Return to Reithian Values? The Television New Zealand Charter

After several years in power, the then incumbent Labour government became concerned over “failing standards and ratings-driven political coverage” in the New Zealand media, and an attempt was made to “reinstatate public service values in television” (Comrie, M. & Fountaine, S. 2005). In 2003, a Television New Zealand Charter was established. The Charter, although a far cry from the ‘full service’ model offered by organisations such as the BBC, was an attempt to revert back to more traditional Reithian styles of public service broadcasting (Teoh, 2003). It was envisioned by the government as a *third way* of thinking to replace the neo-liberal agendas of the 1980s and 1990s (Dunleavy, 2009). The new legislation replaced existing public service ‘guidelines’ with clearer public service ‘objectives’, highlighting, among many, those of ‘cultural identity’ and ‘minority programming’ (Television New Zealand Act, 2003, pp.4-6). The new legislation outlined the broadcaster’s responsibility to provide an “intellectual and scientific” approach to news and current affairs with “impartial and in-depth coverage” being the key ethos of the channel in order to

promote “informed and many-sided debate” (ibid). The Charter was an attempt by the government to insert regulation into a deregulated system. The Charter argued for a

balance between programmes of general appeal and programmes of interest to smaller audience...to promote understandings of the diversity of cultures making up the New Zealand population... to feature programmes that reflect the regions to the nation as a whole... and to include in programming intended for a mass audience material that deals with minority interests.

(TVNZ Charter, 2003)

However, the new legislation created a further dichotomy in TVNZ’s remit as the new stipulations in the Charter and the free market ideology ultimately prove unable to exist symbiotically (Norris, 2004; Thompson, 2009). Considering the network was attracting a 65.4% share of the New Zealand audience and advertising revenue was passing \$300 million, it is hard to imagine that the \$12 million it received from the Charter funding could have made much difference to the network’s direction or its focus on public service and minority broadcasting (Lealand, 2008). Although the wording and intentions of the Charter was a welcome introduction for the New Zealand mediascape, it ultimately failed to impact primetime programming and what increase there was in public service and minority broadcasting was, like before, positioned in late night or weekend timeslots. However, in the subsequent years following the Charter’s introduction, Cormrie and Fountaine (2005) argued that the political coverage on TVNZ’s news and current affairs programming was still being replaced by ‘tabloid subjects and sports news’, and furthermore Cocker (2006) presents the position that TVNZ was “no more of a public broadcaster” than it was before the introduction of the Charter. Further evidence exists arguing that in many respects the TVNZ Charter caused the organisation to retreat even further from its public service ideals in the following years (Norris, 2004; Thompson 2005; Dunleavy, 2008, 2009). Atkinson’s (2006) notion of ‘theatrical journalism’ was still firmly

established in the New Zealand mediasphere and at TVNZ the Charter did little to stop the foreign dominance of its airwaves. Although it had good intentions, the Charter clearly wasn't working. However, as well as advocating for an increase in cultural and minority programming, the TVNZ Charter also established and guaranteed a "significant Māori voice" on the network. (TVNZ Charter, 2003). Whether the organisation was successful in representing this voice will be discussed in the subsequent chapters.

2.4 Māori Television Service Act: Establishing a National Indigenous Broadcaster

The introduction of the TVNZ Charter coincided with the formation of the long awaited Māori Television Service Act 2003 which had been in development for several years (Te Reo Māori, 2000; Kiriona, 2004; Smith and Abel, 2008). The Māori Television Service Act provided the legislation for an independent Māori television channel, broadcasting a Māori 'voice', a Māori narrative, Māori affairs, and a te ao Māori perspective to the New Zealand public without the 'filtering' from within mainstream system. Māori would at last be in control of their own voice, their own identity and their own destiny on the airwaves.

The Act outlined that the duties of the channel were to be a "high quality, cost effective television broadcaster which informs, educates and entertains a broad viewing audience, and, in doing so, enriches New Zealand's society, culture, and heritage" (Māori Television Services Act, 2003, 8.1). Unlike the mainstream networks who have unclear and sometime contradicting objectives on who they serve (public or market), Māori Television's remit was clearly an attempt at a 'public service' for New Zealand audiences, exhibiting traditional Reithian concepts. However, unlike TVNZ which is commercially orientated, Māori Television would be publicly funded, receiving an annual sum in the region of \$45 million (Māori Television, 2009a), allowing it to situate more within traditional public service broadcasting philosophies than its competitors.

However, before a discussion is conducted into Māori Television's current operations in the New Zealand broadcast system and how it balances its various principles and responsibilities, an exploration of how the channel came to be part of the New Zealand mediascape must be undertaken. This is critically important in understanding why non-Māori audiences are viewing the Māori Television channel, considering the history of tino rangatiratanga (Māori quest for sovereignty) which heavily influenced the direction of subsequent Māori media and the resulting Māori Television channel.

2.5 History of Tino Rangatiratanga, Te Mana Te Kawanatanga, the Waitangi Tribunal and the emergence of Māori Media

One of the first Independent Māori voices began appearing in New Zealand in the 1940s. The proclaimed 'pioneer' of Māori news Wiremu Parker broadcasts reached a significant majority of the Māori community, covering aspects of tribal and national affairs, cultural traditions and philosophy (Archie, 2007). As with other forms of global indigenous broadcasting, Māori media was embedded with forms of 'indigenous aesthetics' (Ginsberg, 1991, 1994; Leuthold, 1998) and representational practices which distinguish them from mainstream and other forms of minority media (see Grixti, 2011).

However, as with other global forms of indigenous media, Māori media was only established through sustained 'cultural persistence' and 'political resistance' (Wilson and Stewart, 2008). Through processes of assimilation, subjectivity, oppression, and forced urbanisation, the Māori culture and language was in sharp decline during the first half of the twentieth century (Walker, 1981, 1982, 1990a, 1990b; Dow, 2001). The 'Pākehā centric' media had promulgated to New Zealand and the world "a myth of racial harmony in New Zealand" (Walker, 1990, p.39) with much of Pākehā

society living in a form of “racial bliss”, ignorant to the struggle for equal rights and recognition which existed in Māori society (Spoonley, 1990, p.27). What little that existed of Māori representations in the Pākehā press was actively shaped by the ‘ideological institutions’ and Pākehā journalists working within a ‘social conditioning’ paradigm, which distorted Māori affairs and te ao Māori; with ‘race tagging’ and racial stereotyping all being used in the reporting of te ao Māori affairs (Kernot, 1990; Wall, 1997; Abel, 1997; Jones, 1998).

This position was exemplified by Walker (1981, 1990) who argued that Pākehā has asserted political, cultural and economic dominance over the Māori people dating back the colonisation of Aotearoa. Walker’s writings, voiced from a Māori perspective and presented through Kaupapa Māori [the conceptualisation of Māori knowledge and principles], provided one of the first counter narratives of the nation’s colonial history, which through processes of colonial hegemony, had been held as ‘common knowledge’ in New Zealand’s Pākehā society and in many areas of the Māori community. It is well documented that the Pākehā ‘estates’ ideologically positioned te ao Māori as ‘otherness’ in the construct of New Zealand nationhood (Walker, 1981, 1990; Fox, 1990, Spoonley, 1995). Considering Māori and Iwi worldviews differ from Pākehā worldviews in fundamental ways (Walker, 2002), Māori were excluded from the Pākehā Zealand nationhood unless they fully assimilated to the Pākehā narrative. New Zealand society, at the time, was fundamentally monocultural.

A seminal moment in the history of Māori mana te kawanatanga came in 1960 and the conclusions of the *Hunn Report*. The report outlined how the Māori Language was on the verge of extinction, and was regarded by many Pākehā as a “relic of ancient Māori life”. Faced with this reality, a surge of activism began within Māoridom that refused to allow the demise of their language, and possibly their entire culture. The following years saw growing political pressure, fuelled by the new ‘urbanised’ Māori youth, and a surge of Māori organisations determined to revitalise the Māori language and culture in all areas of New Zealand society. The new Māori youth had political

aspirations to challenge Pākehā hegemony in New Zealand, and through sustained periods of activism, protests, and land marches, called for recognition of equal rights and protections granted under the *Treaty of Waitangi* (Spoonley and Hirsh, 1990). Māori groups such as Nga Tamatoa, Te Reo Māori Society, and Nga Kaiwhakapumau it e Reo, petitioned the New Zealand Parliament for te reo Māori to be an official language in New Zealand and be included in state owned broadcasting (Archie, 2007). Māori programming began appearing on New Zealand television in the mid 1970s with *Legend of Uenuku* (1974), broadcast in te reo Māori, and *Tangata Whenua* (1974), broadcast in English, constituting pivotal moments in the on-screen representation of the Māori culture, and for the first time broadcasted a te ao Māori narrative to both Aotearoa and New Zealand (Barclay, 2003).

Although a Māori 'voice' was now emerging on the New Zealand airwaves, Māori were still being subjectified in both the New Zealand media and wider society. Events at Auckland University in 1979 constituted a 'shift' in Māori culture, transitioning from a passive, almost subordinate position in New Zealand society, to one of heightened activism (Walker 1981, 1990). A culturally insensitive parody of the Māori *Haka* performance ritual was evidence of blatant racial intolerance existing in New Zealand society and Māori sought to bring this to an end. However, in covering the events, the New Zealand media presented "a distorted perception of reality", associating the Māori struggle for tino rangatiratanga with that of 'gang violence' (Walker, 1990, p.41) which quickly transformed and spread to more wider areas of Māori society leading to what Walker described as 'Māori bashing' occurring in the media. For example, the New Zealand press' coverage of the Māori loans affair was littered with emotive and sensationalised headlines involving 'Māori scandal' and 'Māori corruption' while ignoring similar financial dealings involving 'Pākehā' companies, many of which can be argued as being more severe than the loans affair. This bias reporting was clear evidence of a cultural imbalance and that of Pākehā hegemony and the 'othering' of the Māori people. For Walker, it was evidence of the "structural relationship of Pākehā dominance and Māori subordination" (Ibid, p.44). The mainstream New Zealand media effectively functioned as the hegemonic agents of the

dominant Pākehā culture and like most forms of Western media, processes of ethnocentrism and hegemony imposed an 'us' / 'them' dichotomy in the rhetoric of newsreporting concerning minority and indigenous affairs (Cottle, 2000).

Spoonley and Hirsh (1990) presented the position that the New Zealand media presented discourses of biculturalism within a 'race relations' paradigm that were 'framed' from a Pākehā perspective (see Abel, 1997; Archie, 2007). What was required was a taha Māori voice on the New Zealand airwaves to counter the bias and misrepresentations of the Pākehā media. Although regular Māori Television programming began appearing on New Zealand television during the 1980s with *Koha*, and the Māori news broadcast *Te Karere* becoming a new 'Māori voice on air', this was far from a 'sustained' and 'comprehensive' voice on the airwaves, as these two broadcasts combined constituted less than a single hour of broadcasting per week (Fox, 1990).

The continuation of political and social pressure from Māori organisations during the 1980s resulted in the Waitangi Tribunal being established in 1985. The Tribunal was to hear claims over Crown breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi; Aotearoa/New Zealand's founding document. By this time efforts had begun to get te reo Māori in areas such as education (Benton, 1988) and more te reo presence on the airwaves. However, Māori urbanisation and the dominance of the mono-linguistic Pākehā hegemony were still causing levels of te reo Māori to be in "sharp decline" (Pool, 1991). Speaking shortly before the Waitangi Tribunal, Sir James Henare stated, "Ko te reo te mauri o te mana Māori (the Language is the life force of the Mana Māori), if the language dies, as some predict, what do we have left to us? Then, I ask our own people, who are we?" (Waitangi Tribunal Report, 1986, p.34). The statement not only encapsulated the essence of the tino rangatiratanga movement, but also provided the foundations for Māori language media and would profoundly impact the future of Māori broadcasting in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The conclusion of the Waitangi Tribunal established that the Māori language was a 'toanga' (cultural treasure) and should be considered as the "embodiment of the particular spiritual and mental concepts of the Māori" (Te Reo Māori Report, 1986, p.25). The tribunal concluded that it was the Crown's responsibility to 'actively protect' te reo and tikanga Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi and ruled that the Māori had a fundamental *right* to both access, and have sustained presence in public services and state broadcasting (Ibid, p.55). A year later, a Māori Language Act (1987) was passed declaring te reo Māori an official language in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

This ruling effectively *grounded* the Māori language as an integral part of the Māori culture; centred on the *revitalisation* of te reo Māori. As will be explained later in the chapter, this created a dichotomy within modern forms of Māori media in having a duty to upholding this ideal, while simultaneously providing a service for all audiences of New Zealand; i.e. Māori and non-Māori and te reo Māori and non-te reo Māori speakers. The Waitangi Tribunal established a vision of a *bicultural* Aotearoa/New Zealand; centred on co-operation and shared understandings rather than domination and assimilation (Walker, 1990) however, many aspects of Pākehā society saw this new movement towards biculturalism as deeply threatening, as it challenged the orthodox colonial foundations of 'Pākehā' New Zealand society (Spoonley, 1990).

During the tribunal hearings the Māori Council sought for an independent Māori television channel, Māori radio network, and a full Māori news service in order to receive a 'fair share' of public service broadcasting (Archie, 2007). Although the first venture towards Māori television broadcasting failed to emerge for another twelve years, through the persistent struggle and determination of the Māori people, their goals were eventually achieved

2.6 Māori Representation in New Zealand Broadcasting: Continuations of Institutionalised Racism and Pākehā Hegemony

The Waitangi Tribunal was successful in starting the process for Māori reparation and providing the foundations for independent and autonomous Māori media in New Zealand. However, eliminating the hegemony of the Pākehā controlled media and its representations of nationhood would prove a much more difficult challenge. A considerable amount of academic literature and research concerning Māori and the media predominantly surrounds concepts of Pākehā hegemony and the ideological domination of the Māori people, focusing on the 'framing' and 'control' over the Māori narrative. These practices, first outlined in the 1980s can be argued as being still present in the political, social, and media spheres of present-day New Zealand. Scholarly attention within academia presents the argument that New Zealand state and media systems for long periods were actively promoting a 'one New Zealand myth' which according to Spoonley (1990, p.30) "aggressively fought to deny minority ethnicity and to promote the myth of a one New Zealand identity".

The new wave of activism for tino rangatiratanga was ideologically constructed and misrepresented in the Pākehā media. The Māori were perpetually reported as being a hostile, aggressive, and violent people (Jones, 1998, Wall, 1997). The New Zealand media was unable to present rhetoric through bicultural discourses in voicing the Māori position and perspective on a range of social issues. Māori tino rangatiratanga was perceived as a 'threat' and 'injustice' to Pākehā society (Walker, 1990; Spoonley, 1990) and a deep seated Pākehā 'fear' existed over growing Māori autonomy (Nicholson and Garland, 1991). Fox (1988, 1990) and Stephens (2004) present an argument exemplifying such a position. Both scholars argue that the Māori broadcasts *Te Karere* and *Koha* became the target of sustained prejudice from various areas of Pākehā society and from within the New Zealand media industry surrounding Māori 'privilege'; even though both shows combined totalled less than one percent of the total broadcasting schedule.

Positive Māori stories were still largely absent from the mainstream media. Many Māori stories circulating the nation's news rooms were 'actively rejected' by Pākehā journalists unless they centred on 'negative' or 'radicalised' affairs (Fox, 1988; 1990). For example, the media coverage of the Māori occupation at Moutoa Gardens produced 'antagonising' headlines in the Pākehā press over 'race riots' and Māori being a 'threat' to Pākehā society and its notions of nationhood. Such reporting inevitably created several *moral panics* in New Zealand Pākehā society (Spoonley, 1990, 2005). It is widely claimed that New Zealand's Pākehā journalists had a 'monopoly of ignorance' when reporting Māori social and political issues (Wilson, 1990) and had a tendency of *imagining* the indigenous peoples of New Zealand, constructing their history and their story and identities *for* them (Meadows, 2005).

The State owned media was embedded with staunch post-colonial and Americanised media traditions, ethics, news values, and practices (Archie, 2007) which resulted in an active 'shaping' (Abel, 1997) of Māori news and affairs. There was a fundamental lack of understanding of *taha* Māori that continuously misrepresented Māori affairs, perpetuated Māori negative representations and stereotypes, and portrayed the Māori as the 'other' (Walker, 1981, 2002; McGregor, 1991; Stuart, 1996; Abel, 1997; Wall, 1997; Jones, 1998). In many respects these practices still exist in present day New Zealand (Taea, 2007, Phelan and Shearer, 2009; Robbie, 2009).

Abel (1997) provides evidence of the Pākehā media's 'framing' of television news in her research on media coverage of *Waitangi Day*. Her research discovered that the media's coverage, built on notions of a 'national rhetoric' (more specifically a Pākehā national rhetoric) was constantly presenting a Pākehā (us) - Māori (them) dichotomy concerning narratives of nationhood. The mainstream media's coverage of *Waitangi Day* was argued to only provide a "fragment" of the overall story. Considering the significance *Waitangi Day* holds in New Zealand society, Abel argues that a more comprehensive coverage would have been beneficial not just for Māori, but to all New

Zealanders (Abel, 1997, p.128). Stuart (1996) argues that this framing is not only evidence of the 'Tāuiwi' (non-Māori) media failing to not only represent the te ao Māori story but failing to allow speakers from Māori to have the opportunity to argue and voice the Māori perspective. When the Māori 'perspective' was provided by the media, it was predominantly voiced by Pākehā talking *for* Māori and not Māori neither *talking in* or *talking out*.

The argument presented by Māori activists, commentators and scholars was that Māori required their own independent broadcast media to correct the bias in the Pākehā controlled media and counter Māori representations in wider society. Although news shows like *Te Karere* provided a Māori voice, and were proving successful, they were not given the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts (Fox, 1988, 1990). Without Māori journalistic presence in the mainstream media, or greater education and training for Pākehā on te ao Māori, the monocultural Pākehā perspective would be hard to challenge or dislodge (Abel, 2001; Archie, 2007).

2.7 New Platforms for Korero

There was a general consensus present in Māori to have and echoed within academia that for New Zealand to become truly bicultural, certain aspects of 'power relations' would need to be simultaneously addressed and transmitted to all parts of New Zealand society (Richie, 1992). These include Māori concepts of mana, mana whenua, mana motuhake, mana wairua and mana tangata. The redistribution of power and the understanding of bicultural discourses were envisioned to have been beneficial for the futures of both the Māori and the non-Māori peoples of New Zealand (ibid).

The Waitangi Tribunal had established the fundamental 'right' of Māori to access state broadcasting, however, there was a growing 'need' within Māori to have a new Māori '*platform for Korero*' on the New Zealand airwaves, a space 'outside' the constraints of the Pākehā controlled media and its

colonial hegemony and orthodoxies. The first attempt at Māori controlled broadcasting in Aotearoa was Iwi Radio; an opportunity to tell Māori story and present a Māori narrative from a taha Māori perspective in a te reo Māori voice. Popular Iwi broadcasters such as *Te Upoko o te Ika* and *Radio Ngati* (Hollings, 2005) made significant impact towards the revitalisation of te reo and tikanga Māori in New Zealand and became a popular medium within the Māori Community (Te Reo Māori, 2000). Iwi radio proved successful when discussing Barclays' (1991) concepts of Māori 'talking in'.

From the success of this new autonomous Māori media came the inevitable emergence of a Māori television broadcaster and the need for additional and independent funding body for Māori broadcasting. The Māori Broadcasting Agency (Te Māngai Pāho) was established in 1993 under the Broadcasting Amendment Act to provide funding for a national network of Iwi and Māori Radio organisations and to assist in the production of Māori language television programmes. It was to be positioned at the very centre of Māori radio and television broadcasting.

The need for such an organisation was evident. The Broadcasting Act 1989 and the new focus on a market driven ideology had a direct impact on Māori programming on television. The Māori news broadcast *Te Karere* was effectively 'demoted' from its pre-1989 prime time slot to a more commercially 'suitable' off peak location in the afternoon schedule (Gibson, 2008). This commercial decision by TVNZ denied many Māori (or any te reo speakers) the chance to hear a te reo Māori voice and te ao Māori message in their daily television viewing. Honouring Treaty findings was outweighed by the network's commercial interests.

The creation of a separate Māori programming department at TVNZ created opportunities for additional Māori shows to appear on the airwaves with programmes such as *Marae* appearing on television in the 1990s. The bilingual current affairs show was positioned "by Māori, for Māori" but quickly found a non-Māori audience open to hearing a taha Māori perspective. The Māori and non-

Māori audiences appreciated the shows “professional” attitude towards news and current affairs (Ngata, 2009). However, like many other Māori programmes was positioned in an off peak timeslot, and ultimately failed to reach a significant proportion of New Zealand television audience. Nevertheless, *Marae* proved a very successful Māori broadcast, allowing Māori simultaneous control of talking in and talking out.

However, Stephens (2004, pp.108-111) argues that the launch of Te Māngai Pāho ‘shifted’ the focus of Māori broadcasts to that of a singular focus on te reo. This direction pleased the Māori “language purists”, but subsequently “denied monolingual Māori [and non-Māori] the chance to understand and appreciate what little *Māori* television was available to them”. Stephens argued that where the Sunday morning Māori broadcasts had become successful was in their ‘transitioning’ from “being a *window* on the Māori world to becoming a *mirror*, a means by which we Māori could reflect on ourselves back to ourselves”. A singular focus on te reo Māori could effectively become “de rigueur”, in that not every Māori would be able to see themselves in such a mirror.

The dichotomy for Māori media entering the new millennium was clearly evident. First, was a commitment to revitalising and sustaining te reo Māori, while simultaneously allowing non te reo Māori speakers the same opportunities to access the knowledge Māori programming offered. Considerable debate ensued over how Māori programming would be best broadcast on New Zealand television (Hollings, 2005). Some argued that the potential of a specialist Māori Television channel could potentially ‘ghettoise’ the language, making it invisible and unreachable to the majority of New Zealand public, whereas others saw the mainstream route as being able to raise the profile of Māori in everyday New Zealand society (Ibid, pp.119-121).

The decision was made that New Zealand’s next ‘platform for Korero’ would be the launch of the nation’s first indigenous channel *Aotearoa Television*. Launched in 1996, the ‘pilot’ channel,

broadcast throughout the Auckland region, was hailed as a major success story for the future of Māori broadcast media. It was envisioned to broadcast te reo Māori and taha Māori narrative, thus enriching New Zealand culture and identity. Unfortunately the channel collapsed only a year into operation amid a highly publicised media controversy over claims of mismanagement and gross directorial irresponsibility (Burns, 1997). However, Burns (1997, p.7) suggest that Aotearoa Television was in fact “set up to fail”; an argument reiterated by current Māori Television CEO Jim Mather (Mather, 2009). Burns (1997) states that Aotearoa TV was given insufficient resources and funding to survive in the broadcast industry and the limited timeframes given to executives (imposed on the channel for seemingly political purposes) inevitably caused the channel’s demise.

The launch and subsequent collapse of Aotearoa Television only fuelled the Pākehā position over the rejection of Māori autonomy and questioned the need for ‘specialist Māori funding’. A growing discourse emerged that the entire venture into Māori broadcasting as a waste of ‘tax payer’s money’ and an argument circulated in the media that Māori were unable to manage large scale organisations (Bell & Guyan, 1997). The continued negative coverage in the Pākehā media over the channels mismanagement and questioning the funding process was, in many Māoris’ opinion, simply a continuation of Pākehā “Māori bashing” (Poor Reception of Aotearoa TV, 1997).

2.8 Māori Television: Futures of Biculturalism

The second venture into an autonomous Māori Television channel came on March 28th 2004 after a long awaited period of anticipation, delays and setbacks. The channel was initially proposed to go to air in early 2000 (Te Reo Māori, 2000, p.5) and again in 2002, but delays in the Māori Television

Services Bill and forms of political interference and a “legislative vacuum” saw the channel’s eventual launch date pushed back to 2004 (Smith and Abel, 2008). Like Aotearoa Television before it, the channel was proposed by Māoridom as an autonomous, independent Māori network, creating its own forms of Māori identity free from Pākehā representation and constraints (Stuart, 2003b). The channel is financed through direct funding from Te Puni Kokiri and Te Māngai Pāho with further amounts being available through contestable funding (Māori Television, 2009b). Such an organisational structure positions that the channel is not reliant on the commercial sector and advertising revenues, therefore it exists in a separate space within the New Zealand mediasphere.

The period leading up to the channel’s launch saw the media re-focus on the past failures and monetary troubles of the previous Aotearoa Television Network rather than the ‘aspirations and intentions’ of the new channel (Kiriona, 2004). Instead, what was represented in the mainstream media was a continuation of Māori ‘privilege’ and the channel being a ‘waste of tax payer money’ (Smith and Abel, 2008). A considerable proportion of attention was focused on the resignation of acting CEO Derek Fox and the previous year’s John Davy “fiasco” (Kiriona, 2004). At the time of the channel’s launch, Māori programming on mainstream networks, although having increased over preceding years, constituted a mere 15 hours per week and very little existed in the prime time schedule (Stephens, 2004, p.108.).

However, it wasn’t just Māori programming that was lacking on the mainstream networks, as previously mentioned, local content on the airwaves had reduced significantly. The New Zealand television industry had some of the lowest amount of local content on air, with just 24% of total broadcasts being produced locally; compared to figures of 70% in the United Kingdom, 90% in the United States, and 55% in neighbouring Australia (*Television Regulation and Local Content in Six Nations*, 2000).

However, at the time of Māori Television's launch, reports from NZ On Air suggested that the situation was improving (New Zealand On Air Annual Report, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008). NZ On Air presented the facts that there has been a significant increase in local content over the last several years. Broadcast Minister Steve Maharey reported that NZ On Air has produced more than 10,000 hours of local content for the free to air networks in New Zealand, compared to levels of just 2,000 hours in 1988 (Maharey, 2007). Local content was seen as an established method in building notions of national identity (ibid). However, Wood (2005, p.54) argues that this form of 'local content' is "a culture that runs with rather than against the grain of post-1980s commercialism". This is highlighted in a recent report on the New Zealand Television industry in which "home grown reality television" is now being branded as 'local content success' on the airwaves with some of the most popular ratings shows consisting of *Border Security* (TV1), *Border Patrol* (TV1), *Road Cops* (TV3) and *Rapid Response* (TV1). (Home-Grown Reality is King, 2011). However, Wood (2005) positions that this form of reality programming is decreasing 'factual' local content on the airwaves. This coupled with the continuation of high levels of imported programming has resulted in the "eroding [of] a national unity identity" in New Zealand and as Stephens (2004) argues created the potential for New Zealand society to be "passively invaded" by foreign ideologies, ethics and value systems. The mainstream media had failed to fully grasp and understand the importance of 'non-reality' local broadcasting, essential for constructs of nationhood. New Zealand airwaves still had increasingly high levels of imported programming and some of the lowest amount of local content in the western world. What little that exists of local content on air was that of 'reality television' framed as 'home grown' content.

This trend has seemingly changed however with the introduction of Māori Television. After just five years in operation the channel offered the New Zealand public a total of 87% of local programming across its schedule (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, p.8). Māori Television makes 51% of

programming 'in house' at its studios in Newmarket, of which 24% are commissioned from independent production companies in New Zealand, 13% of shows are acquired locally through third parties, and only 12% of its schedule come from international acquisitions (ibid). For Horrocks (2004, p.10), Māori Television has the potential to become the 'only source' of local programming in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Māori Television (like Iwi Radio before it) introduced a new *platform* and *space* for modern *Aotearoan korero*. It exists to provide a 'counter balance' to mainstream representations of Māori and Pākehā affairs, challenging the 'status quo' of the hegemonic Pākehā narrative (Smith, 2005; Polihipi, 2007; Smith and Abel, 2008). The channel has provided opportunities for the creation on a 'new age of Māori modernity' (Walker, 2004) and has the potential to create a new age of *bicultural modernity* in Aotearoa, a hypothesis which will receive attention during the data analysis chapters of this thesis.

The Māori Television channel exists to challenge established settler orthodoxies offering a "worlding of Aotearoa/New Zealand that speaks in a multiplicity of different voices" (Smith and Abel, 2008, p.11). The channel has the unique opportunity to operate 'outside the box' and has the potential to "change the paradigm" of New Zealand broadcasting in creating a national Aotearoan public sphere allowing both Māori and non-Māori to redefine their national identity and perceptions of nationhood (Paul, 2005, p.42). What is evident is that "Māori Television has a role to play in disrupting the hegemony of New Zealand settler society and in affirming an indigenous form of social agency" (Smith and Abel, 2008, p.4).

Where Māori Television separates itself from other networks in Aotearoa/New Zealand is by presenting a new form of Pākehā /Māori 'unity' and a vision of 'plural national identity' and 'bicultural harmony'. On a fundamental level it presents a counter narrative of nationhood for all

peoples of Aotearoa/New Zealand surrounding notions of 'inclusiveness', 'bicultural understandings, 'and 'cooperation' and effectively *mediates* the cultural diversity of the nation (Smith and Abel, 2008, p.9).

In recent years, the channel has increased its non-Māori viewership from 10% of the population in 2004 to 26% of the non-Māori population in 2010 (*Māori Language Attitudes Survey, 2010*). It has rapidly become the 'main resource' for non-Māori to access te ao Māori culture, language, and narrative (ibid). The vast majority of non-Māori who watch the channel gain a greater understanding of tikanga Māori and Māoriculture from the channels broadcasts (ibid). However the channel isn't without its critics. Having such a large non-Māori following has led some in Māoridom to voice concerns over whether te reo and te ao Māori have been themselves "diluted" in order to cater for the Pākehā audience (Drinnan, 2007). This concern is also highlighted by Massey University Professor, Taiarahia Black, who argued that the channel missed an opportunity to help revitalise and advance the Māori language regarding coverage of King Tuheitia coronation ceremony (Black, 2007, para 4). Black argues that the "language exhibition" was "basically about informing non-Māori", missing the opportunity for Māori language revitalisation (ibid, para.8), and arguing that the channel has "lost sight of their core aims" (ibid, para, 10).

Such debates highlight the channel's dichotomy over simultaneously revitalising te reo Māori and broadcasting programming for the 'broad viewing audience 'of New Zealand. The latest survey into the health of the Māori language noted that although Māori language skill proficiency had increased over recent years, the 'listening proficiency' of te reo among Māori who answered *fairly well* to *very well* was only 43%, leaving 57% of Māori unable to understand their own language with 33% of Māori only understanding a few words or phrases of te reo (The Māori Language Survey, 2007). Considering that a large proportion of the Māori community are not proficient in te reo, the English

language broadcasts on the channel are just as much aimed at Māori audiences as they are at non-Māori audiences.

Nevertheless, on a more systematic scale, Māori Television does succeed in achieving 51% of te reo programming during primetime and 61% te reo programming across the entire schedule (RIMA, 2009, p.10). Although many would want this figure to be higher, the channel does seem to be catering for its te reo speaking Māori audience, while catering for the non-te reo proficient Māori and appealing to a 'broad audiences' of New Zealanders. The current goals of Māori Television channel, outlined in their annual report and envisioned through a new *language strategy* are to "promote, revitalise and normalise" the Māori language and culture and "above all", "disseminating Māori language and culture to a wide audience" (RIMA, 2009 p.4) A position which would present the non-Māori audiences in New Zealand an opportunity for an understanding of taha and te ao Māori perspectives.

However there are concerns voiced by Smith and Abel (2008, p.48) who argue: "To what extent might there be pressure on Māori Television to present a domesticated form of Māori cultural difference (one that affirms a harmonious sense of nationhood)". They further this argument by presenting the position that the New Zealand Government could be positioning Māori Television to simply 'present' an "affirmative... yet exclusively *cosmetic* bicultural brand both national and internationally" (ibid, p.53). This is a position highlighted by Smith (2006, p.28) who argues that the channel could be used to "demonstrate political progress" while "maintaining other institutional practices that deny Māori agency".

Nevertheless, several studies and considerable literature exists in academia which argues that the Māori channel is affirming and positively shifting notions of Māori identity, creating positive Māori identities both *microcosmically* and *macrocosmically*. For example Poihipi's (2007) study highlights

the channel's impact on Māoritanga and its success in reconnecting Māori with te ao and tikanga Māori. The research found that Māori have an "overwhelmingly positive response to Māori TV" (p.17) with the channel providing an "assertion of Māori pride" and assists in "strengthening Māori identity" (p.18). Poihipi states that the channel provided forms of "inter lwi learning", celebrating lwi diversity, and provides a counter balance to the homogenised 'pan-Māori' voice present in the mainstream media.

Māori Television creates the opportunity for a thriving indigenous public sphere in New Zealand (Smith, 2006). Paul (2005) proposes that the channel has the potential to one day create an 'Aotearoan public sphere', one that negates traditional notions of the New Zealand public sphere allowing the nation to become truly bicultural. Considering the high number of non-Māori who are now viewing the channel, Paul's position deserves more thorough attention. However, it will depend on how non-Māori are engaging with the channel, what shows they are viewing, and what meaning they derive from watching Māori Television programmes. This will be discussed and analysed throughout the data analysis chapters of the thesis.

The channel's 'flagship' and most successful broadcast comes on April 25th with its coverage of ANZAC Day. Popular ever since its first broadcast in 2004, the ANZAC day broadcast has grown its audience share in successive years, and in 2010 reached a record 558,900 New Zealanders in a single day (Māori Television Marks Two Million Milestone, 2010). CEO Jim Mather describes the coverage as "public broadcasting at its best", asserting that Māori Television recognises how important the day is to all New Zealanders, something which is overlooked by other broadcaster in New Zealand (Mather, 2010). The channel's ANZAC day coverage is hailed as a success and is popular amongst both Māori and non-Māori audiences (Smith and Abel, 2008) but little has been asked (empirically)

regarding non-Māori attitudes towards the broadcast. An element of the research component of this thesis will ask the question: To what extent does Māori Television's coverage of Anzac Day contribute to notions of *nationhood* in New Zealand?

As discussed, Māori Television has several overlapping duties as an Indigenous broadcaster, a public service broadcaster, and its commitment to te reo and tikanga Māori, while simultaneously tasked to reach a 'broad viewing audience'. The solution to this dichotomy seemingly came about in 2008 when a sister channel, *Te Reo*, was launched on the Freeview network. Māori Television CEO Jim Mather argued that new *Te Reo* channel allows the broadcaster to 'fulfil our statutory obligations, while balancing commercial and cultural imperatives, while at the same time 'make a significant contribution to the revitalisation of the Māori language and culture' (Mather, 2008). The *Te Reo* channel broadcasts in 100% te reo Māori with no English subtitles, unlike many te reo broadcasts on Māori Television (Māori Television: Sales, 2009), and is aimed at those desiring a "full Māori language immersion household" (RIMA, 2009, p.8). The new 'sister' channel can be seen to help fulfil the broadcaster's obligations outlined in the Māori Television Services Act, 2003 in providing a service for the revitalisation of te reo which allows Māori Television to continue, and perhaps extend its service as a bilingual and bicultural broadcaster, presenting a Kaupapa Māori message for both Māori and non-Māori audiences in both English and te reo Māori.

The organisation argues that the *Te Reo* channel will allow Māori Television to expand its reach throughout New Zealand with the aim of positioning Māori Television as "compelling viewing" to be "included in the regular consideration" of all New Zealand audiences (RIMA, 2009, p.12). The only potential consequence is that the *Te Reo* channel could potentially allow Māori Television to slip into a form of 'Māori mainstream channel' broadcasting predominantly in the English language. While there are potential advantages of a 'Māori mainstream' in terms of non-Māori immersion in te ao Māori, it would go against the principles of why the Māori Television channel and all forms of Māori media were established. However, the possibility exists for the Māori Television channel to become

more 'mainstream' and act as a of a *cultural bridge* for New Zealand audience, offering a new range of populist shows which would act as *a transitional phase* between New Zealand diverse cultures and perspectives.

2.9 Current issues of Māori Representation in Mainstream Media

The concept of a Māori 'mainstream' channel may be a unpopular ideal in the future of the Māori Television, however, considering the current mainstream's continued failure in accurately representing te ao Māori programming and taha Māori on their networks, a Māori mainstream channel may be the only alternative to providing such a counter balance. Māori presence on television is not just about the image of Māori on screen but the *control* of the image of Māori on screen.

The current organisation responsible for mainstream Māori programming falls under NZ On Air. At the beginning of 2010, NZ On Air initiated a 'Mainstream Māori Television Program Research Report' to examine the current state of Māori mainstream programming and how best to develop and sustain such broadcasting in the future. The research found that Māori programming made 'about and by' Māori or a broad viewing audience can have a "positive impact" on New Zealand society. The study highlighted the possibility in creating "powerful programmes that suit commercial broadcast imperatives, without compromising cultural integrity" (ibid). However, considering the vast investments, both legislatively and financially in Māori broadcasting over recent years; from the TVNZ Charter guaranteeing a 'significant Māori Voice' and increased funding to both NZ on Air and Te Mangai Paho, and the investment in new Māori journalists, little evidence exists that Māori representations on the mainstream have improved in either quality or objectivity.

Examples of more recent studies surrounding 'subjective reporting' can be seen in media coverage of the Foreshore and Seabed affair, a controversial issue for all of New Zealand causing major splits in public and political spheres. Jackson (2003), Phelan (2009), and Phelan and Shearer (2009) present an argument that the mainstream media created several moral panics surrounding the Foreshore and Seabed affair, with mainstream rhetoric focusing on Māori 'stealing the beaches from Pākehā', and like previous debates, focused their rhetoric of Māori *privilege*, positioning Pākehā as the 'innocent victim' in the affair. Phelan's research also discovered the media was again guilty of presenting antagonising discourses surrounding 'Māori otherness', presenting a 'national' (we) and 'Māori' (them) argument, a debate widespread in the 1980s and 1990s. Phelan and Shearer's (2009) study highlighted continuing forms of Pākehā hegemony which are still present in the mainstream media. The study found that the media coverage of the Foreshore and Seabed debate pointed to two ideological signifiers, the "activist" and the "radical" when discussing the Māori peoples involved in the Foreshore debate (similar to Walker's findings of the 1980s and 1990s). The argument presented was that the mainstream media coverage continued ideological notions of Don Brash's 'One Nation' rhetoric.

An additional study commissioned by the Broadcasting Standards Authority regarding '*The Portrayal of Māori and Te Ao Māori in Broadcasting*' (Addis et al, 2005) found that although the mainstream media was now providing a Māori voice, what it in fact represented was a homogenised 'one Māori' or 'pan-Māori' voice, failing to recognise the diverse range of Māori opinion regarding Treaty claims and the Foreshore and Seabed issues. The report found that non-Māori journalists require better education and training concerning te ao and kaupapa Māori in order for them to present objective coverage on a Māori issue. Similar conclusions can be seen in Nairn, McCreanor, Rankine, Barnes, Pega and Gregory (2009) who present the argument that Māori issues surrounding the Taupo Airspace debate were constructed in a "threatening" manner, relying on sensational and emotive content. The research highlighted the bias and inaccurate coverage present in the mainstream news

media and concluded that discourses continue to represent Māori as “hostile and socially disruptive” and a threat to the dominant social order. Likewise a 2007 review by the New Zealand Press Council, Māori organisations, and the Human Rights Commission highlighted concerns over the “mono-cultural bias” in the mainstream media (Barker and Evans, 2007, p.73) who still actively report Māori issues in a “confrontational manner” (Ibid, p. 142).

Question must be raised over why these discourses are still active in New Zealand society? Smith (2006) provides one possible answer by suggesting that ‘settler identity’ which is based on a history of violence and oppression has to constantly project and maintain the notion of “oneness” with the occupied territory creating forms of “settler indigeneity”. Such a position is actively presented by TVNZ’s ‘*we are one*’ marketing campaign based on notions of a post-colonial ‘oneness’ (ibid). The mainstream media in New Zealand exhibit a fundamental lack of understanding or willingness to recognise colonial history, *te ao*, and *taha Māori*. Evidence of the mainstreams continued forms of embedded ‘Pākehā hegemonic perspective’ can be seen in a response by TVNZ’s CEO, Rick Ellis, concerning a question by Māori politicians over the network meeting its Charter objectives in representing Māori on air. Ellis responded by citing the shows *Shortland Street* and *Police Ten-7* as justification for providing Māori ‘presence’ on the airwaves (Eden, 2008). It was clear example that the mainstream media still do not understand what Māori ‘presence’ is or why such terminology has been placed in the legislation. Ellis and TVNZ must think Māori ‘presence’ exists solely in its physical form; characters, actors etc, and not about presenting narrative and story from a Māori point of view. Māori Party leader Pita Sharples argues that simply saying ‘Kia ora’ on a television show does not and should not constitute ‘Māori programming’ (New Zealand Herald, 2007).

Mr Ellis was further pressed by Sharples over the network increasing *te reo Māori* content in prime time. Considering the Māori news broadcast *Te Karere* has been pushed back in the schedule in successive years, there were several voices suggesting that *Te Karere* be moved forward to a 5.30pm

timeslot. The response from Ellis was not one of *cultural responsibilities* but of *fiscal imperatives*. The argument was given that moving the Māori news broadcast to a more suitable timeslot for Māori viewers would result in the network potentially losing over two million dollars in revenue due to a loss in commercial revenue. Ellis argued,

we are, at the end of the day, a commercial broadcaster...Let's be realistic about this - less than 4 per cent of New Zealanders speak Māori and so putting a Māori language programme in prime time ... it simply won't rate.

(Oliver, 2007)

From the literature and research conducted over the past several decades, can the mainstream media in New Zealand become anything but monocultural? Considering the academic attention, legislation, and funding provided to counter balance the hegemony present on the airwaves, it appears very little has changed. What little movement there has been seen over recent years has according to Abel (2010) been from one of 'racism and prejudice' to that of 'non-representation and ignorance' in the mainstream media. The commercial imperatives of TVNZ seem to be outweighing its duties to Māori broadcasting and its public service commitments with Dunleavy (2009) arguing that public service broadcasting on TVNZ will always situate within a 'paradox' between the loyalty towards the '*cultural dividend*' of the audience and the '*financial dividend*' of the stakeholder.

2.10 Broadcasting Futures: Public Service Broadcasting and the End of the Charter

A solution to this paradox came around in 2006 when the New Zealand Government announced a \$79 million dollar package to create two new digital channels aimed to satisfy the network's public service broadcasting obligations under the TVNZ charter. Launched in 2007 and 2008 respectively, TVNZ 6 and TVNZ 7 were positioned as 'non-commercial channels' although allowing forms of individual programme sponsorship (Rosenberg, 2008). TVNZ 6 offered a daytime service of pre-

school and children's programmes, shifting to more 'family oriented' content and arts and drama in the evening, while TVNZ 7 is presented as a 'factual channel' offering news, sports, documentary, and current affairs programming (Rosenberg, 2008, p.15).

The new channels, which were created to fulfil public broadcasting ideals, have effectively paved the way for the TVNZ Charter to be repealed and its public broadcaster 'obligations' to be rescinded for a second time (Trevett, 2009). However, after only a few years in operation the channels themselves are under threat of being removed from the television schedule altogether (Norris, 2010). In 2009, Prime Minister John Key announced the government's intention to abolish the TVNZ Charter arguing that there was "no discernible difference in the amount of local content that's been played because of the Charter", and that the legislation "clearly wasn't working" (Thompson, 2009). However, Thompson disagrees with Key's assertion arguing that the increased money being diverted to shows such as *Face to Face*, *Agenda*, *Eye to Eye*, *Nation*, and *Q&A* "clearly addressed Charter goals" and had proved successful; however, they are "tucked away" to early Saturday and Sunday morning timeslots to reduce the commercial risk of a prime time location.

Paul Norris warns that if the Charter is lost there will be "no longer any requirement for programmes that educated [*sic*], local drama, documentaries or minority interest programmes in the schedule".

Although even with the TVNZ Charter in place he argued "I don't think there's much public broadcasting ethos left. It's reduced it to practically nothing" (Norris, qtd in Trevett, 2009).

Moreover, Norris (2010) suggests that there does exist an opportunity to create an "embryo of genuine public broadcasting" in New Zealand, although such a venture would require a significant "revamp" of the industry (para. 15) with a potential merger between broadcasters being discussed; including that of Māori Television (para. 16). Considering TVNZ 6, TVNZ 7 and Māori Television

already “yield a more favourable rebalancing of commercial and ‘public service’ elements in New Zealand’s television system” (Dunleavy, 2009), a redistribution of funds or a network consolidation may be an unfortunate eventuality. If the government is serious about creating such a channel, or sustaining the current system then it must accept that “public broadcasting *requires* public funding” (Norris, 2010, para.21).

The mainstream networks in New Zealand have witnessed severe cuts in advertising revenues over recent years emanating from the global financial crisis of 2008/2009 (Barclay, 2009). This has resulted in “flagging cuts in local programming” occurring across the 2010 schedule for TVNZ, TV3 and Prime. Over one hundred hours of local programming have been cut from the New Zealand airwaves with the networks refocusing their efforts on more commercially viable ‘prime time’ broadcasting and a heightened emphasis on imported content from the USA and Britain. NZ On Air argue that this is only “a sensible interim solution in the current climate”, however, the resulting action has one conclusion with New Zealand audiences seeing less local content on screen (Barclay, 2009). News and current affairs shows are also facing cut-backs as a result of commercial interests. “The cash-strapped broadcaster” TV3 recently laid off a number of “distinguished journalists” and shut down its office for popular current affairs show *60 Minutes* (Hurley, 2010) while TVNZ laid off several key members of its journalistic team (Vass, 2010). What is clearly evident is that news and current affairs shows on the mainstream are “especially vulnerable” in the current media climate (Baker, 2007).

There exists a disparity in New Zealand broadcasting between ‘commercial’ news and current affairs and ‘public service’ news and current affairs on the mainstream networks. Baker (2007) presents a comparison of ‘prime time’ news and current affairs with that of the Sunday morning ‘public service’ offerings and concludes that prime time shows such as *Close Up* were dominated by ‘human interest, entertainment stories and sports’, however, the Sunday morning Charter introduced ‘public

service' show *Agenda* concerned itself with politics, social affairs and public sphere discussions. The prime time offerings on New Zealand television are in many respects a continuation of what Atkinson (2001) referred to as 'tabloid journalism'. More recently, TVNZ has initiated a practice similar to methods first used in the 1980s and 1990s. Television New Zealand have begun a process to recruit foreign media consultants to "glitz up" news bulletins and current affairs programming, effectively "Americanising" the network's news bulletins (Hurley, 2011). The new approach is "characterised by live crosses and personable reporters telling stories on camera. Journalists will often inject themselves into the story, filming or describing what they did or what happened to them" (ibid, para. 4). This practice, as former TVNZ head of news Bill Ralston claims, has produced news bulletins of "all style and no substance" with information "dumbed down" for the New Zealand audience (ibid, para.13).

If such trends continue, there is a serious concern over the future of not only public service broadcasting, but standards of journalism and news and current affairs on the mainstream networks.

2.11 Pākehā Identity Performance: Questions of Culture and Biculturalism and Hybridity

The final section of the chapter will present arguments for failing discourses of biculturalism in New Zealand. From the literature discussed the question must be raised to what extent can the New Zealand state and, more importantly, the New Zealand mainstream media claim to be bicultural? Through colonisation, assimilation and processes of hegemony Pākehā of New Zealand (as a collective power ruling group) have ideologically positioned themselves through forms of ethnocentrism and Eurocentrism as the 'dominant culture' in Aotearoa/New Zealand. They have, through form of *binary oppositions* constructed all other identities in Aotearoa as the 'other',

'normalising' the colonising Pākehā culture. Pākehā culture and identity is thus presented in society as both 'universal' and as a 'cultural marker' to how 'otherness' is defined. (Spoonley & Hirsch, 1990; Walker, 1981, 1990; King, 1985; Vasil, 2000).

Although a position in a highly contested area, it can be argued that New Zealand biculturalism (perhaps better referred to as Pākehā biculturalism) exists within a Pākehā monocultural framework. With this framework in place, what can be called 'true' biculturalism can never fully be adopted and incorporated in New Zealand society. Maclean (1996) would argue that due to the systems in place 'Pākehā biculturalism' is in many respects 'superficial' and only implemented to satisfy a bicultural rhetoric both nationally and internationally. Arguments are presented that Pākehā are more open to 'cosmetic biculturalism', however as a ruling cultural power are opposed to more legislative or fundamental forms of bicultural initiatives which could potentially alter the fabric of New Zealand society (Sibley and Liu, 2004).

However, a position argued by Bell (2006) was that the Waitangi Tribunal, which created forms of state and national institutionalised 'biculturalism', paradoxically created forms of 'bifurcation' in New Zealand society, actively separating Māori and Pākehā affairs into two separate discourses instead of initiating bicultural shared understandings and co-operation. These bicultural / bifurcated discourses in fact perpetuated the cultural binary in New Zealand of a Pākehā 'us' Māori 'them' rhetoric in both state and media institutions. An argument can be made that as such bicultural discourses have, for Pākehā, positioned biculturalism as a Māori *responsibility* and it is visibly clear that the bicultural effort/movement in New Zealand, beneficial for both Māori and non-Māori Pākehā is left to Māori institutions and organisations to satisfy. The question has to be asked; where are Pākehā in biculturalism?

There is sufficient literature available to present an argument that Pākehā have a profound lack of understanding of their own cultural identity (King, 1985; Bell, 1996; Spoonley, 1988; Radford, 2003; Vasil, 2000; Dooley, 2003; Bell, 2006). Such a lack of understanding creates a paradox when discussing both past and future discourses of biculturalism. Pākehā will be unable to become truly bicultural until an acceptance and understanding of their own cultural identity surfaces in New Zealand society and is accepted in notions of nationhood. Currently, the only way Pākehā (as a society) can be bicultural is to exist within bifurcated discourses (Bell, 2006). One can hypothesise that Pākehā culture and identity suffers from a form of 'cultural amnesia' (both actively and passively) in a rejection, or lack of understanding, of colonial history in Aotearoa. Pākehā identity performance (and thus biculturalism in New Zealand) can never be fully achieved without an understanding of who they are and the history of their own cultural identity. What is required is a need to 'redress' the past and to 'address' the present. Few 'spaces' exist for Pākehā to understand bicultural narratives and simultaneously gain an understanding of their own identity of what it means to be Pākehā or a New Zealander?

Māori programming must exist in its dual form to primarily *talk in* to Māori but also *talk out* to Pākehā, bridging the cultural gap and educating them on *taha* and *te ao Māori*. Does Māori Television provide this alternate 'space' for narratives of *true* biculturalism? Can it successfully present Pākehā with Smith and Abel's (2008) concept of a 'counter hegemonic narrative'. On face value, the channel does challenge post-colonial narratives in New Zealand, addressing both contemporary and historical issues absent from the mainstream networks. However, the question must be asked if this counter hegemonic narrative is either being received by non-Māori audiences and whether the intended message is being received by the viewer. Can Pākehā be cured of their 'cultural amnesia'? Considering the channel has helped create and maintain both linguistic and cultural heterogeneity in New Zealand (Smith, 2005; Smith and Abel, 2008), does it foster a modern sense of community and

nationhood among non-Māori audiences? Challenging established Pākehā narratives and colonial orthodoxies.

2.12 Conclusions

The preceding Literature review has presented the framework for the New Zealand broadcast system and outlined the space that Māori Television occupies and the services it offers the New Zealand public. Māori Television has significantly increased its viewership among non-Māori viewers in recent years while still committing to high levels of te reo Māori across its broadcast schedule. It has effectively mediated between its various obligations as both a medium for the revitalisation of te reo and tikanga Māori and providing this content for all peoples of New Zealand.

There is strong evidence to suggest that Māori Television is acting as a *post-Reithian* public service broadcaster in New Zealand, rejecting the existing stringent models of public broadcasting creating its own Kaupapa public service for New Zealand society. Understandably those arguing that the channel isn't a true public service broadcaster must appreciate that it is New Zealand 'closest thing' to a public service broadcaster, and with the collapse of the TVNZ Charter and the lack of secure futures for TVNZ 6 and TVNZ 7 it may, before long, become the only form of public service broadcasting available on the New Zealand television airwaves. However, there are already those who argue Māori Television is a "widely regarded...public television success story" (Dunleavy, 2008, p. 807).

The Māori Television channel aims to "strive to make a positive contribution to enriching New Zealand society, culture and heritage" (Korero Mo Whakaata Māori, 2009, p.7) "presenting a view of our country that is unique and engaging". It strives to not only make a "significant contribution to the revitalisation and normalisation of Māori language" but to simultaneously "build a collective sense of nationhood for all New Zealanders" (RIMA, 2009, p.5). Māori Television's mission is to reach

out to audiences who they may not necessarily identify with, but nevertheless co-exist in New Zealand. This is what Smith (2006, p.32) calls a form of “symbolic cultural interpellation” that fundamentally insists upon diversity and inclusiveness, creating an indigenous public sphere that parallels that of the mainstream. A question of growing importance is whether Māori Television can develop a common bicultural and bilingual national imaginary in New Zealand.

It is evident that not only do non-Māori use Māori Television as their main source of education on te ao Māori but, over recent years, there has been a *fundamental shift* in non-Māori Pākehā attitudes towards various forms of te ao Māori (*Māori Language Attitudes Survey, 2010*). Māori Television can be argued as being one of the main forces for combating the negative racial discourses which have been present in New Zealand society for many decades (Tuffy, 2008). However to propose that Pākehā viewers of the channel are becoming truly bicultural may be too strong of an assertion. Nevertheless, there does exist an argument, although a hazardous term when discussing issues of post colonialism, in that Pākehā performance identity, specifically the viewers of Māori Television, are shifting towards notions of ‘cultural hybridity’ (based on the works of Homi Bhabha’s and concepts of the ‘third space’). Derived from the writings of Bhabhi (1994, 1996), Rutherford (1990), and more directly, Meredith (1996), and Hokowhitu (2007), the hypothesis is presented that Māori Television is itself acting as a form of hybrid ‘third space’ for Pākehā to not only embrace te ao Māori culture and kaupapa, but also in allowing an understanding their own cultural identity in redefining perceptions of nationhood. In contrast to notions of bifurcation, Meredith (1996, p.4) argues that the “concepts of hybridity and the third space contribute to an approach that avoids the perpetuation of antagonistic binarisms and develops inclusionary, not exclusionary, and multi-faceted, not dualistic, patterns of cultural exchange and maturation”. Does Māori Television provide this space to the New Zealand public?

Until recently there have been very few mediums available to assert and cement this 'space' outside of Pākehā orthodoxies of nationhood. Mainstream culture in New Zealand has promulgated a national homogeneity which employs a colonial settler narrative (Smith, 2006). Māori Television is fundamentally opposed to this notions of 'colonial oneness' and its inclusive kaupapa creates bicultural, multicultural or in fact hybrid notions of cultural identity.

Such a hypothesis will be examined in the research component of this thesis, asking not only the question, why do non-Māori watch Māori Television? But does Māori Television act as a 'cultural bridge' between the indigenous and non-indigenous imaginaries? How are non-Māori engaging with the channel? What meanings do they derive from their viewing? And how does it influence their performance identities as non-Māori of New Zealand? Just as mainstream television in New Zealand has presented a national orthodoxy which "naturalises the settler-subject in the landscape" (Smith, 2006.p.29), could Māori Television be acting in a similar, yet oppositional way, by offering Pākehā a reconciliation with Aotearoa? Or alternatively, are the viewers of the channel, as Larry Parr suggests, "disenfranchised" with the mainstream media and simply looking for a less commercialised network in New Zealand.

Considering very little empirical qualitative research exists on the topic, the various questions and hypotheses require a methodological approach from various theoretical perspectives in order to fully answer and ground the research data. The research component of this thesis will be conducted through qualitative research consisting of focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires with non-Māori viewers of Māori Television.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

As the previous chapter illustrated, Māori Television enjoys an unprecedented audience share among the nation's non-Māori population (Nielsen Media Report, 2010). Consequently, the research component of this thesis asks, 'why do non-Māori watch Māori Television'? To address this question, a qualitative research method was chosen to yield the most prudent results in gauging and interpreting audience understandings. The questioning method chosen was a series of focus groups, questionnaires and interviews with non-Māori viewers of the Māori Television channel.

The nature of the thesis and the subsequent review of the literature presented the reality surrounding the sensitivities of racial and ethnic discourses in New Zealand. Therefore, for the purposes of the study I allowed the research participants to self identify themselves as being of *non-Māori* ethnicity. As a researcher, I felt I was in no position to question or attempt to define someone's ethnicity, and thus exclude an individual from participating in the study. Nevertheless, during the participant recruitment process, the position was put forward to all potential participants that the study was intended for non-Māori people who watch Māori Television.

Likewise, the stipulation regarding being a 'viewer of Māori Television' was again left to the participants themselves to define. It was decided in the initial stages of the research to forgo setting parameters of a 'minimum viewing time', instead, participants were asked if they considered Māori Television part of their 'regular viewing' of television consumption; whether this be on a daily or weekly basis.

The research participant sample totalled 66 participants from a wide range of socio economic backgrounds. The participants spanned both genders and came from an age range of 22 to 73 years old. A more detailed description of participant demographics and recruiting methods will be presented at a later stage in the chapter.

3.2 Methodology and Theoretical Perspectives

An initial trawl of the available literature yielded very little empirical research in the area of recent audience studies in New Zealand. A gap in literature existed in addressing why Māori Television was so popular among the nation's non-Māori citizens, considering that these high levels of non-Māoriviewership were present as far back at the launch of the channel (Stokes, 2004).

It was decided that an element of qualitative research was required to underpin and validate my research assumptions and hypotheses. Such a method would aid the research in an understanding of why non-Māori are attracted to the channel; learn what shows they are viewing and why; understand how the channel situates within the New Zealand broadcast system; and, most importantly, gain an understanding into the *meanings* non-Māori audiences derive from their viewing of the channel. With this in mind, I embarked on an analysis of 'audience reception theory'. The history of media, culture, and audience studies has seen a series of oscillations between perspectives on the relationship between texts, and how societies (audiences) receive them. The field has shifted through multiple paradigms of textual, content and audience reception analysis over the years, each with its own merits and limitations.

The research methodology will situate within the 'new audience research' paradigm based on Stuart Hall's '*encoding/decoding*' model of audience reception theory (Hall, 1973, 1980) due to it inherently seeking a more 'interdisciplinarity' approach within the field of social sciences. The appeal of utilising

the new audience research paradigm is that both texts and audiences are argued to be polysemic, plural, and culturally and ideologically specific (Hall, 1977; Fiske, 1987).

Hall (1977) would argue that the media '*colonises*' the ideological spheres in society; which themselves are not static or unitary, but are a "plurality to dominant discourses" (Hall, 1977, p.343). This inherently provides the "social knowledge" through which audiences perceive their own realities and that of others in society (Dant, 1991, p.166).

For Livingstone (1998), a comprehensive understanding of production, textual analysis, media affects, and audience reception theory, can only be obtained when *multiple perspectives* are implemented simultaneously. This results in a more *grounded* understanding of the research questions, providing a stronger framework for the challenging of hypotheses. This reasoning provided sound justification for conducting the research study through audience reception theory, thus enabling the research data to have greater depth in its analysis and understanding, not only surrounding *why* non-Māori view Māori Television but *how* non-Māori identity, both national and cultural, is perceived and understood in contemporary New Zealand society.

Such a technique will allow the study not only to understand *if* the channel is providing a counter hegemonic narrative to 'mainstream' New Zealand television, but also understand how the mainstream institutions and mechanisms may be positioned themselves for why non-Māori are viewing Māori Television. Thus, the research will strive for an understanding of whether Māori Television adds to; or paradoxically separate itself from the Pākehā New Zealand mediascape. Within the field of audience reception theory several studies emerged examining how audience consume and formulate meaning within texts. The most widely cited studies in the field come from David Morley's '*Nationwide*' (1980), Ien Ang's '*Watching Dallas*' (1985) and Lewis' '*Television News Audience*' (1991). Such texts provide a framework for conducting modern audience reception

research surrounding concepts of ideological and institutional determinance of texts and audience consumption (Ang, 1985; Fejes, 1984); perceptions of dominant hegemony and audience resistance (Abercrombie, Hill & Turner, 1980; Hall, 1989) and audience understanding and perceptions of cultural imperialism (Liebes and Katz, 1986). By taking these established approaches to audience reception, and building on their strengths and individual qualities, Livingstone (1998) posits that the various methods and research *canons* can be applied to wider areas of media and communication, asking, the 'why' questions, not just the 'how' questions in order to better understand modern audiences and their relationship to the media and texts.

As such, this research study will not simply provide an account of non-Māori viewing of Māori Television, but will attempt to derive understandings of attitudes to narrative, ideology, and hegemony and ultimately evaluate the position Māori Television occupies within the New Zealand mediasphere.

3.3 Qualitative Research Methods: Methodological Triangulation

The central questions for the research thesis can only be addressed by communicating with the non-Māori viewers of the Māori Television channel. It was decided that a qualitative analysis would be conducted through a series of in-depth interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions; a valid mixture of qualitative research methods according to Richie and Lewis (2003, chp 3). This method formed a '*triangulation*' of questioning methods and research gathering techniques, allowing for the research to become more *grounded* and *naturalistic* in its conclusions. Nevertheless, the focus group component of the study, as will be explained, was always intended to act as the *primary method* in the gathering of the research data, with the alternative questioning methods becoming available for those unable to attend a discussion.

The decision to use focus groups to conduct the qualitative research was straightforward. When compared to singular interviews or questionnaires focus groups research offers a multiplicity of opinions, knowledge and shared understandings, resulting in more *in-depth* participant data. Traditional methods of interviewing and questionnaires can be fraught with complications; such as pre-determined or leading questions which would introduce an element of bias into the study (Kreuger & Casey, 2000). However, the same can be argued for focus group discussions and the role of the moderator. Morgan, Kreuger & King (1998) argue the role of the moderator will inherently dictate the quality of the research data gathered. The moderator must allow participants to talk freely to each other, encouraging debate and the expression of opinion. There must also exist an awareness by the moderator of power relations within the focus groups participants (i.e. social and cultural status). The *triangulation* of the various questioning methods will hopefully eliminate potential methodological and research shortcomings.

During the initial stages of the research thesis, several texts were sourced concerning the conducting of focus group research all of which provided invaluable information on the design, implementation and analysis of the qualitative questioning method (Morgan, 1993, 1997; Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999; MacNaughten & Myers, 2004; Seale, 2004, Fern 2001). The texts argue that the freedom of expression engendered by focus groups allow the discussion and the resulting data to be 'naturalistic'. The method provides a forum for topics to be introduced into the group 'by' the participants which the researcher may not have anticipated in formulating the study. Participant 'spontaneity' is thus a key element of focus group discussions. The researcher should avoid simply 'questioning' the participants, but to gauge interaction 'between' the participants (Morgan, 1997, pp.11-13). The resulting interactions would lead to the focus groups becoming *synergistic* and the data would benefit from more 'shared understandings' between research participants (Stewart and Shamdasi, 1990).

However, focus groups can also be an unpredictable method for conducting research and can exhibit serious limitations and complications during implementation (Morgan, 1997). The best way to overcome potential obstacles is through the planning and moderation of the discussion, and the development of a 'fieldwork strategy' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003. ch.5).

The questions and discussions for the focus groups were implemented as a predetermined set of topical discussion points, introduced throughout the logical progression of the discussions. This is referred to as the 'questioning route' or 'interview guide' (appendix a). Steward and Shamdasani (1990, p.61) recommend that the questions be introduced in a generalised format, allowing the participants to assimilate and adjust into the focus group environment, with the more in-depth topics approached towards the end of the discussion.

Focus Group research is unique in its ability to "locate the observer within the participants world" offering a 'naturalistic' approach to ethnographic and sociological studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3). The researcher should not only listen to the content of the discussion (i.e. the words spoken) but also the emotiveness of the language used, the ironies, the attitudes, the reactions, and the narrative of the opinion to obtain not just the facts, but the 'meanings' behind the facts (Kreuger and Casey, 2000).

Non-Māori viewers unable to participate in a focus group discussion would be questioned through either an in-depth interview, or an open ended questionnaire (appendix b).

3.4 Participant Recruitment Process

One of the more significant challenges in conducting the research study came from recruiting the non-Māori participants. My initial estimate of participant recruitment was a total of twenty-four to thirty-six participants; consisting of 6 focus groups of four to six people with the remaining participants participating through interviews or questionnaire.

When formulating the study the intention was to conduct the research solely in the Auckland and North Shore City regions of the North Island; mainly due to financial and time constraints and the challenges posed in participant recruitment for such a study. Once recruitment was complete, the research study would be conducted over a six week period. Upon finalising the methodological approach to the research, the next stage was defining how I was going to obtain my research participants. The initial recruitment method was to contact the organisation who supply Māori Television their demographics; AGB Nielsen Research. Unfortunately, the company did not divulge information on the personal details of the channels non-Māori viewership and only provided an 'overview' of demographics. As a result, three additional recruitment processes were designed to recruit participants for the study.

3.4.1 Recruitment Process One: Cold Asking and 'Snowballing'

The first approach served as both an initial attempt at participant recruitment, and as a 'fall back' option if required at a later date. The method involved a process of 'cold asking' and 'snowballing' via the placement of notices in various locations around Auckland and the North Shore City area. This would have included bulletin boards, notice boards, newsletters etc, in an attempt to reach the target cohort of non-Māori viewers.

The next stage would involve 'snowballing'; i.e. asking responding participants if they knew other non-Māoris' who watched the channel, eventually ending up with participant numbers within my expected field.

However, there were serious issues arising from using this method:

- i. It is time consuming with no guarantee of any participant response;
- ii. It created a risk of pre-determining the participant demographic which could lead to bias within the sample; i.e. targeting specific locations (retirements homes, churches, schools, etc)

What was evident was the need for a more affirmative approach to obtaining my participant sample.

3.4.2 Recruitment Process Two: Māori Television

The second stage involved a more direct approach in participant recruitment by contacting Māori Television. An initial interview was arranged to explain and discuss the research with communications manager, Vanessa Horan. As a result of the meeting and the resulting discussions between myself and Māori Television, they agreed to contact their non-Māori viewers who had previously written to the station asking their permission if I could contact them regarding the study. Furthermore, Māori Television agreed to share their non-Māori viewer feedback correspondences once consent had been acquired. The correspondence ranged from a few sentences to detailed letters sent to Māori Television concerning their opinions of the channel, analysis of specific shows, and their perceptions of Māori Television.

MāoriTelevision's assistance allowed me to recruit several participants to the study. However as a national broadcaster many respondents resided outside of the Auckland region and it would have proved impractical to include them all in the focus group discussions. Nevertheless, I retained

contact with the potential participants and included several in the interview and questionnaire methods.

Several strong contacts provided by Māori Television allowed for an additional focus group to be added in the town of Rotorua. I was also successful in making additional contacts in the Wellington, Christchurch and Napier regions.

3.4.3 Recruitment Process Three: The Print Media

The final recruitment process was to utilise the New Zealand print media to advertise the research project and invite non-Māori viewers of Māori Television to participate in the study. This method would ultimately eliminate bias and the possibility of 'hand picking' the research participants.

After consultations with my tutors and the PR liaison Officer at Massey University, I was able to arrange for an article to be published in the local print media *The North Shore Times* and the *Albany and East Coast Bay News*. However, the article also ran in the *New Zealand Herald* (Binning, 2010), the most circulated newspaper in New Zealand (Press Audit Results, 2009). The articles explained the field of research and the nature of the study and invited the non-Māori community to contact me if they wanted to participate.

As the *New Zealand Herald* is a widely circulated regional newspaper (and available nationally through its online service) I received several dozen emails from non-Māori viewers expressing their opinions on the Māori Television channel with many offering to take further part in the research study. The large response to the study, as a result of the newspaper articles and the assistance from Māori Television created a larger pool of potential participants than originally anticipated. As such, it was deemed, as previously illustrated, that a form of methodological triangulation was necessary and justified to conduct the research component.

3.5 Implementing the Qualitative Research and Participant Demographics

The unexpected influx of offers from potential research participants created the need for further flexibility in the questioning methods. The 'in-depth' interviews were conducted in person, over the telephone, and through the online 'Skype' video conferencing service, while additional participants were sent an open-ended questionnaire (appendix b) by either a PDF email attachment, or via conventional post. However several participants were instead questioned over a lengthy process of email correspondence.

By utilising an '*in-between*' triangulation of method, I will be implementing what Denzin (1989) describes as a both a "justified" and "necessary" process for conducting social science research. He argues that

every data gathering class; interviews, questionnaires, observations, performance records, physical evidence etc, is potentially biased... [the researcher should] converge data from several data classes, as well as converge with multiple variants from within a single class

(Denzin, 1989, p.472).

From this, one can argue that the greater the triangulation, the greater the confidence, for both researcher and reader, in the observed findings. Triangulation makes research a holistic process, adding both dimension to the study and helping eliminate potential monocausal simplification, resulting in more pluralist research (Olsen, 2004).

The study's participant sample totalled 66 non-Māori viewers of Māori Television, although many of these providing only a singular (yet lengthy) email describing their viewing habits, while 44 participants participated in the focus groups, interviews and questionnaire process. All participants were at least 18 years of age, were of a self identified non-Māori ethnicity, and considered Māori Television part of the *regular viewing* of New Zealand television consumption. The participant

sample spanned both genders, ran across a wide range of age groups, and came from a range of professional backgrounds.

Due to the nature of the participant recruitment processes it was not my intention to systematically set out to obtain a cross-section of demographics to use in the research study. Nevertheless, the range of participant demographics and volunteers offering to take part in the study represents the diversity and variety of non-Māori who view Māori Television. They do not follow a singular gender, age group, or social grading category, and ranged from Doctors to business owners, administrators, students, retail workers and the unemployed; they spanned both the public and private sectors.

In order to provide information on the research participants, it was decided that a social grading system was required to efficiently categorise participants. There are several well established and widely used demographic classification systems used in market and social research, nevertheless, In the United Kingdom the most popular form of social grading is that of the *British National Readership Survey* classification (NRS). The system positions social grading of participants into six groups; A, B, C1, C2, D and E. (IPSOS, 2009; Monk, 1985; MRS, 2006). The system is designed to allow research participants to be classified according to their occupation with the following system:

- Category **A**: Upper Middle Class - High managerial, administrative or professional
- Category **B**: Middle Class - Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional,
- Category **C1**: Lower Middle Class - Supervisory, clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional
- Category **C2**: Skilled Working Class - Skilled manual workers
- Category **D**: Working Class - Semi and unskilled manual workers
- Category **E**: Unemployed with state benefits only State pensioners, casual or lowest grade workers

(IPSOS, 2009, p.5)

The system, although will not be referred to in the data analysis, will be used to outline that the study obtained a participant sample consisting of a wide range of socio economic backgrounds, and was not 'hand picked' from a single social demographic.

3.6 Conducting the Research: Organising the Focus Groups, Interviews and Questionnaires

One of the most demanding elements of the research study was the implementation of the focus group discussions. Although I had an encouraging response to the study from non-Māoriviewers, organisations, organising locations, dates, and times for the focus groups proved extremely challenging.

Based on Kreuger and Casey (2000) guide to conducting focus groups, I decided to offer my participants' compensation for transports costs involved, provided them with refreshments, and offered them a small *koha* for their participation *after* the group was concluded. The focus groups were recorded using both an audio recording Dictaphone device and a video camera for additional transcription assistance. Prior to the commencement of the focus groups, the participants were informed that the intended duration was to last about one hour, however I welcomed members of the group to stay beyond this time and continue the discussion if they desired.

As for the locations of the focus groups, Krueger and Casey (2000, p.76) suggest a neutral locations to avoid bias in the environment. However, as Massey University provided many facilities to conduct the discussions, it was decided that the four focus groups conducted on the North Shore would be held on the Universities Albany campus. The focus group at Rotorua was held in a function room at a local establishment, and likewise the Auckland focus group was held at a neutral location at a local community annex.

A breakdown of the focus groups can be seen in the following table.

Focus Group	Location	Date & Time	Length (Minutes)	Number of Participants	Male	Female
1	Rotorua	12-08-10	80	8	0	8
2	Albany (1)	22-08-10	90	4	2	2
3	Albany (2)	23-08-10	60	4	2	2
4	Albany (3)	23-08-10	135	3	0	3
5	Albany (4)	29-08-10	120	4	1	3
6	Auckland City	08-09-10	110	5	2	3

A breakdown of the Interviews can be seen in the following table.

Interview	Participant Location	Interview Method	Date	Length (Min)	Male	Female
1	Russell	Skype	13-08-10	70	1	0
2	Napier	Telephone	16-08-10	15	1	0
3	Wellington	Skype	27-08-10	25	1	0
4	Auckland	Telephone	02-09-10	5	1	0
5	Auckland	Telephone	09-09-10	25	0	1

A breakdown of the email questionnaires can be seen in the following table.

Total Questionnaire Participants	Male	Female
11	6	5

A breakdown of the total correspondence can be seen in the following table.

Total Participants	Male	Female
44	17	28

In total, the research study had accumulated 44 participants for the research study and data from an additional 22 non-Māori viewers.

The following table presents a total breakdown of the focus group, interview and questionnaire participants' age range and NRS social grade

Age	Number of Participants		Total NRS Grade	Number of Participants
18-30	5		A	5
31-39	7		B	9
40-55	9		C1 , C2	13
55-70	14		D	5
71+	7		E	8
Unknown	2		Unknown	4

3.7 Conclusion

The following chapters will present the data analysis and conclusions of the focus group discussions, interviews and questionnaires. The resulting participant data was fully transcribed and systematically analysed using an 'open coding' (Morgan, 1997) and 'scissor and sort' technique (Stewart, Shamdasani and Rook, 2007). Such a system presented a solid framework for the integration of the various questioning methods. The participant data will be presented from a position of *thematic analysis*, however, several elements of *content analysis* were utilised during the reporting of the findings. The codes were then split into specific sub-sections and ultimately formed the chapter structure for the data analysis. Research participants are referenced in the following chapters with appropriate pseudo-names; protecting their identities.

Chapter 4: Introduction to the Data Analysis.

4.1 Introduction and Direction of the Data Analysis

The data analysis of the thesis will outline the main themes surrounding why non-Māori view the Māori Television channel. The data analysis will be presented in accordance with the key themes and understandings outlined during the thematic analysis process, which were formulated during the transcription of the focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires transcripts and viewer correspondence emails. The analysis will be split into four chapters examining public service broadcasting, journalistic and operational ethics, and bicultural futures, counter narratives and Pākehā performance identity. On finalising the thematic coding processes of the research data, it became clear that almost all the research participant data could be classified under a single heading of 'public service broadcasting'. However, the decision was taken that the more common themes, expressed in chapters six and seven should be given independent chapters for discussion and analysis.

Due to the nature of the research question and the intended outcomes, it was decided that the research data would not be 'compared' to each other in the form of categorising participant demographics, but instead the 'collective' data was analysed and presented to the reader with unified and shared understandings for why non-Māori view Māori Television. As such, the data analysis is not divided into chapters or headings concerning such demographics as gender, age, socio-economic background etc. Nevertheless these statistics will prove extremely useful in gaining an understanding towards how (if at all) different demographics view Māori Television in varying ways than others.

Participants who took part in the focus groups, interviews and questionnaires will be given full demographic reference. Data gathered through Māori Television viewer feedback, and singular participant emails will not be demographically referenced, but have been included in the study in determining the themes and shared understandings of non-Māori viewers of Māori Television.

During the research gathering process an attempt was made to keep the study focused on the participants' perceptions of Māori Television. However, the nature of the research led many participants to 'compare' their Māori Television viewing habits with that of the other networks in New Zealand. Inevitably this resulted in the data analysis, in many respects, forming as a commentary on the broadcast systems of New Zealand, rather than being singularly focused on the Māori Television channel.

4.2 Outlining Terminology and Demographics

Throughout the data analysis chapters various terms are invoked by both myself and the research participants in order to both quantify and contextualise their Māori Television viewing habits. A commonly referenced term in the data analysis is that of the 'mainstream' media. Although this term can be used to quantify a wide variety of interpretations of meaning, the research participants understood that in the context of this particular research, the 'mainstream media' referred to the 'free to air' networks in New Zealand such as *TVOne*, *TV2*, *TV3*, *C4 (Now FOUR)*, and *Prime*.

4.3 Non-Māori Perceptions of Māori Television

During the first focus group discussion, after only several minutes of introductions and an explanation of the research thesis, participants were informed that I would be asking the question why non-Māori watch Māori Television. After a moment of thought the group collectively broke out in laughter due to the general feeling that such a question could not be answered in singular or such elementary terms.

The first participant to provide comment was Susan, a 72 year old retired teacher from Rotorua who argued

it's really difficult to put into words, it's for a whole multitude of opinions... there are such wonderful stories out there and Māori Television provides them.

Susan's position was one of wide consensus among the research participants. The Māori Television channel is positioned for many non-Māorians a space for content which is unavailable on other broadcast networks. Participants presented the position that the channel offered the audience a wide variety of programming, and are given the opportunity to be immersed by story and perspective which prior to the channel's launch non-Maori had little access too, but always sought after in their viewing habits.

One of the earlier questions directed towards the research participants was how and why they first tuned into Māori Television after its launch in 2004. Participants were engaged in discussion over whether their initial viewing was a conscious decision to immerse themselves in Māoritanga, or whether they were simply 'channel hopping. The response from the research participants was divided into two specific areas. First, many participants, like Christine, a 51 year old project manager west Auckland argued;

I was poised to tune in as soon as Māori Television hit the airwaves... I was very keen to access TV programmes made and presented from a Māori worldview.

This was a position expressed by many research participants who had been waiting several years for such a channel to be launched in order to access a Māori narrative. For example, Mark, a 44 year old business owner from North Shore City argued that he and his family "celebrated" the channels launch, arguing that it was "long overdue" in the nation's broadcasting system.

However, for a large number of participants, it was a singular event, such as a sports broadcast or international films which provided the means for the initial switch-over to Māori Television. For participants such as Carol, a 45 year old business analyst from Auckland, she and her family had initiated their viewing experience of Māori Television for the sports show *Hyundai Code* and the entertainment programme *Hunting Aotearoa* (the two shows proved very popular amongst many non-Māori viewers). Carol argued that after the initial interest in Māori Television's programming, she was surprised by the "quality" of the "range of broadcasts on offer". Like many other participants Carol began a process of diversifying and broadening her viewing habits to include shows focused more on te reo tikanga Māori. She argued that Māori Television presented her family them with an "opportunity"; an opportunity which is presented to all the Pākehā community to be receivers of an alternate 'Māori' message and perspective and unique programming format not available on other networks.

Meanwhile, for Leanne, a 44 year old teacher and her husband Dr. Parker, a 44 year old geopolitical analyst working for central government, their first experiences with Māori Television was the funeral of the Māori Queen in 2006. For Leanne, "it was a very moving experienced...brilliantly presented". She argues that the event was covered with "dignity" and was highly impressed with the channel's ability in utilising various production techniques in expressing "such emotion" during the broadcast. It is from this kind of experience that many individuals began to question their pre-conceived perceptions about Māori Television. Dr. Parker arguing that "we didn't think Māori Television...and its content was for us, being non-Māori." However, after their initial viewing of the Māori Queens funeral, coupled with some further viewing over the following weeks, their perceptions were changed. Dr Parker argued that "we were simply amazed at the 'quality' of the stories covered on Māori Television...the mainstream just doesn't cover them". He continued by stating,

..... with Māori Television you can learn where the people are coming from.... from across the other side of the fence...from alternate perspectives, not just Māori but from all over the world.

It is this 'multitude of perspectives' and the resulting diversity in narrative messages which has drawn many participants to Māori Television. As Mark argued; "it provides us with access to information we never thought we could receive", with other participant like Christine arguing, "we now find we prefer Māori Television over other stations when searching for 'real answers' to daily happenings in New Zealand and the world". Māori Television has become, for many Pākehā their medium for accessing 'factual', and 'balanced' information from both a domestic and international perspective. The channels perspective and narrative is one that is trusted for objectivity by its non-Māori audience.

One of the channel's seminal appeals for many non-Māori viewers was that Māori Television doesn't operate as a 'specialised channel'. For participants such as Simon, a 52 year old health care professional from Auckland, the success of the network is that "it caters for broad spectrum of the New Zealand public". As was explained in the literature review, the way the channel is structured allows it to operate in parallel to that of the mainstream networks. The appeal for many of the non-Māori participants therefore, is that the channel offers a more 'public service' to New Zealand audiences due to its diverse programming schedule. Unlike its mainstream counterparts, who were often argued to reserve single night viewing schedules for a specific genre, Māori Television was praised for having a prime time schedule which offered a wide range of programming, genres, narrative, and perspectives.

The research participants were similarly divided in their attitudes towards how they first approached Māori Television on an intellectual and ideological level. Many non-Maori viewers approached the channel with an open mind, not knowing what style of programming or narrative message they were going to encounter. However, several participants did express that they had pre-conceived perceptions of how the channel operated, with many of these being influenced by the negative media attention during the period leading up to the channel's launch. This led many participants to delay their initial viewing by several months and, in some instances, several years after the channels went to air. Nevertheless, due to good programming reviews in newspapers, magazines, and more importantly 'word of mouth', they were persuaded to engage with the channel's content. For non-Māori viewers such as Anne, a 32 year old food industry worker, and a self described "reluctant viewer", argued that after word of mouth reached her about the quality of the channel's broadcasts, she and her family were "hooked after our first viewing".

For many non-Māori participants, Māori Television has become far more than simply an 'additional' channel in the New Zealand mediasphere. Participants routinely commented that when the channel was first launched they only tuned in sporadically, using it to basically *supplement* their television viewing habits. However, in subsequent years, many non-Māori have increased their levels of viewing and for many it has become more than an 'alternative' channel in the broadcast system. For example, Michelle, a 32 year old small business owner from Auckland's North Shore, stated that Māori Television has now become part of her "main core viewing of New Zealand Television" using the other channels as the 'alternate' viewing. She presents the position that "when one turns on Māori Television, it's always good content".

This perception of 'good content' (discussed in more depth in a later chapter) comes from the notion that the channel acts as a source of knowledge, education, and as a 'public service' for its audience. The participants were active in their praise of the channels historical narrative, current affairs and

social, cultural and political content. In the words of Julie, a 67 year old shop assistant, “Māori TV educates me... the content broadcast is just mind stretching”. This was a perception shared by many of the research participants.

For Martha, a 76 year old retired school teacher from Hamilton, Māori Television’s seminal appeal is about ‘difference’. She argues that the real goal for New Zealand’s bicultural future is to strive for “an understanding that which is not my own...to understand and appreciate the difference among all peoples”. She continues by commenting that “the programmes provided [on Māori Television] are usually attractive, very well made and thoughtful”.

An additional shared understanding among non-Māori which received considerable attention and comment, was the condition of the mainstream media in New Zealand. Participants argued that it was failing to cater for the nation’s diverse demographic and produced little gratification for their needs. As will be explained in more detail in chapters four and five, participants were somewhat frustrated by the perceived deterioration of both ‘programming content’ and ‘ethical values’ on the mainstream networks. A frequent understanding, as expressed by Leanne was that,

*people are tired of flippant programmes and reality shows...mind wasting,
rude, commercialised repeats and the dumbing down of news reports.*

This negative perception of the mainstream media has caused several participants to either stop watching mainstream television altogether or seek alternate sources for ‘factual’, ‘intelligent’ productions and local content. For many participants, like Julie, Māori Television is a “breath of fresh air”, becoming more than simply another broadcaster in the New Zealand mediasphere. Participants argued that it was providing “quality” programming unmatched by any other network provider, and were attracted to the alternative ‘Māori perspective’ on a variety of social, cultural and political

issues. For participants like Christine, Māori Television's launch into the New Zealand market was a "celebration", arguing, like many, that it was "long overdue" in New Zealand broadcasting.

4.4 Popular Programming Among Non-Māori

The most popular programming with non-Māori viewers did not adhere to any specific genre of programming and due to the large number of participants involved in the study almost all genres were viewed by at least several participants. However, the programming genres of news, current affairs, films, and documentaries were watched by almost all respondents and received the most praise and comment by non-Māori audiences. Nevertheless, entertainment programming, sports, and dramas were enjoyed by many participants but were far from being universal viewing for non-Māori.

The following is a brief outline of the most popular programming among non-Māori viewers researched. These included, in no particular order; *Native Affairs*, *Hyundai Code*, *Hunting Aotearoa*, *DIY Marae*, *Homei te Paki Paki*, *Kaitangata Twitch*, *Te Kaea*, *Anzac Day* and *Waitangi Day* coverage, and a wide range of national and international films and documentaries. Furthermore, the debate show *Tautohetohe* was also enjoyed by non-Māori who had proficient levels of te reo to understand its content. Details of how many of these shows are viewed, why non-Māori are viewing them, and the messages derived from their viewing habits will be discussed in further detail over the following chapters.

4.5 The Te Reo debate

The high levels of attention the thesis research received due to media coverage (Binning, 2010) prompted several members of the public and sources related to the New Zealand broadcasting to argue that non-Māori were only viewing the English language shows Māori Television provided. With no justification for this hypothesis, the question was raised with the research participants as to the

te reo / English language preference on the Māori Television channel. The response from non-Māori viewers was that they had 'no preference' as to what language the programmes they viewed were broadcast; as long as subtitles were provided for the te reo broadcasts. An understandable position considering that only a small number of participants were proficient in te reo Māori.

Almost all participants expressed an understanding of the importance of te reo broadcasts on the New Zealand airwaves and 'expected' much of the channels domestic content to be produced in te reo. However, due to the channel's 'multitude of perspectives', a considerable amount of international programming was broadcast in the original language of the native country. This inevitability positions that many non-Māori viewers are *requiring* subtitles to access a wide range of programming content. For example, Charles, a retired public servant from Auckland, presents a quite common position among non-Māori viewers in arguing,

I actually find that te reo is very pleasing to listen too...although, as a non te reo speaker I do have to rely on subtitles for these broadcasts

Moreover, several participants argued that watching te reo broadcasts with English subtitles is a proficient way to further learn the Māori language. For example, Erin, a 48 year old managing director from the North Shore City argues "it is a great way to learn the language...it enables you to pick up words and pronounce [sic] them better." From a similar position, Leanne suggests that due to the subtitled content broadcast on the channel, "I am now picking up Māori words and using them more in everyday life." Thus, the channel undoubtedly has a great te reo education value among non-Māori Pākehā.

However a large number of research participants expressed a desire for *higher* levels of subtitles on the channels te reo broadcasts, arguing that sometimes they feel like they are "missing out" on a

Māori story, and although slightly digressing from the subject topic, many participants expressed that they would also prefer English subtitles on the 4.30pm broadcast of the *TV One* Māori news broadcast *Te Karere*, arguing that they would be interested in hearing the evening news from a ‘Māori perspective’. Nevertheless, participants understood the reasoning, and complexities in Māori Television not broadcasting the English Subtitles. They understood that such broadcasts are one of a very small number of shows *for* Māori, and shouldn’t necessarily cater for non-te reo. Commenting on the discussion, Laura, a 25 year old insurance representative, understood the Māori position, arguing

I don't think the English shows on New Zealand television have ever provided Māori subtitles so why should the Māori provide subtitles for the English...at the end of the day it is their own timeslot so they can do whatever they want with it.

As a result of the comments, a general consensus emerged within the focus group that non-Māori Pākehā should be grateful that Māori Television provided any subtitles at all, considering the history of te reo Māori being excluded from the mainstream Pākehā media. However, with the new availability of digital technologies many non-Māori would like the option of having more English subtitles, especially on the channels *Te Kaea* news broadcast.

4.6 Common Themes, Words and Phrases

Throughout the focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires, many common themes, words, and phrases were expressed by the research participants, all of which will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters. One of the most prominent themes was that Māori Television, due to its wide range of programming and content, was that it acted as an inclusive ‘public service broadcaster’ in the New Zealand mediasphere. ‘Local content’ was also a heavily featured topic for discussion, with not only praise for Māori Television’s high levels of local content, but several

discussions also emerged over how 'local content' was *framed* by the mainstream networks. Non-Māori viewers were attracted to shows which are 'about' New Zealand and its people, not simply 'situated' in New Zealand like many 'reality styled' 'local content' available on the mainstream, which many argued had little to do with their perceptions of *local content*. Mainstream shows such as *Police Ten 7*, *Motorway Patrol*, and the upcoming series *New Zealand's Hottest Home Baker*, although enjoyed by many, were argued to be a "pathetic attempt" to justify 'local content'. Other popular shows such as *New Zealand's Next Top Model* and the *New Zealand Apprentice* were argued as being simply "carbon copies" of foreign programming and had little 'Kiwi' about them.

There existed a strong emphasis and desire from the research participants for 'factual' local content about New Zealand life and New Zealand stories, in past, present and future contexts. As will be explained in chapter five, the mainstream offerings of local programming such as *Police Ten7*, *Motorway Patrol*, *Piha Rescue*, and *Road Cops*, were moving away from the participants notions of 'traditional' local content. Elizabeth, a 50 year old Nurse from South Auckland argued like many that "because of Māori Television, I am getting to see more of New Zealand than before". Māori Television stories are about New Zealand people, their stories, their struggle, this represents, as Carol argues "the very best of New Zealand television".

An additional theme presented by the non-Māori participants was a high praise for the channel being a "professional organisation", exhibiting a "respectful attitude" when broadcasting a wide variety of in-house and imported programming. It is seen by non-Māorians providing "intelligent", "thought provoking" and "mind stretching" content, challenging many participants previously held perceptions of both domestic New Zealand and international affairs. These perceptions were in direct opposition to understanding expressed concerning the mainstream networks. Non-Māori participants voiced a strong "dissatisfaction" with the programming content and operations of the

mainstream networks. As will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters, Katherine, a 54 year old office administrator commented on the discussion by arguing,

I just don't watch much Television anymore...the mainstream has really gone downhill... but when I do I watch, it's Māori Television, simply because it's the best thing going.

Māori Television provides the non-Māori audience with programming covering a wide range of social demographics that the mainstream has neglected for a considerable periods of time. Participants frequently discussed on the role of Māori Television acting as a public service broadcaster on the New Zealand airwaves. For example, Leanne presented the position, like many others, that Māori Television acts as a public service broadcaster due to the mainstreams failures. She argued,

there are so many good stories out there, stories covered on Māori TV that the mainstream simply won't touch due to its commercial responsibilities.

The Māori Television channel was routinely praised for its 'diversity' and 'inclusiveness' and participants expressed much gratitude for the opportunity to be immersed by programming and to hear stories previously unavailable in their television diet. However, one of the more prominent discussions to accompany this was an appreciation for narrative expressed from a 'Māori perspective'. For many participants, like Charles it is the

Mainstream's failure to represent the Māori perspective is why I believe so many non-Māori are tuning in....Māori Television gives the Māori perspective and current affairs in New Zealand more in-depth analysis.

A common understanding amongst the non-Māori participants was that the mainstream media in New Zealand are basically intransigent when it comes to Māori issues and notions of biculturalism.

A prominent theme presented by almost all Non-Māori participants was that the appeal of Māori Television is that it is driven by Māori ethics and philosophies (kaupapa) which separate it from mainstream ideologies. This 'alternate perspective' driven by a social self understanding; the Whānua and notions of 'community', is providing a narrative many non-Māori are seeking in their viewing of New Zealand television. There exists a split among the research participants over non-Māori are exhibiting a new 'curiosity' from te ao Māori, and those who argued this has always existed but very few spaces were available for them to access such a narrative. As the following chapters will outline, Māori Television is going beyond traditional understanding of the role of a television broadcaster in New Zealand, with participants expressing a multitude of opinion as to why the channel is becoming increasingly popular amongst non-Māori audiences.

Chapter 5: A Post Reithian Broadcaster? Māori Television as New Zealand's Public Service Broadcaster

5.1 Introductions:

As discussed in the literature review, Māori Television is a non-commercially funded organisation which occupies a space outside that of the market oriented mainstream media. This allows it more freedoms to provide services for the 'New Zealand public' rather than a 'public of commercialised demographics'. This chapter will outline the recurring themes pertaining to the argument that Māori Television provides 'public service broadcasting' in New Zealand.

Throughout the research element of the study, participants were asked to respond to the Māori Television tagline, *'for them, for us, for you, for everyone'*. The response from the channels non-Māori viewers was a unanimous agreement that Māori Television was indeed for *'all peoples of New Zealand'*. One of the most prominent shared understandings from the research participants was that the mediascape in New Zealand had become *too "Americanised"* over recent years. This did not represent an outright rejection of all foreign content as many participants expressed appreciation for international programming, arguing that it has a firm place in the nation's broadcasting schedule. However, current broadcasting legislation has caused the airwaves to be, as Erin argues, *"overrun"* by this form of content, and as Carol argued, *"too occupied with imported reality TV and bland formulaic programming"*.

Responding via e-mail, Jennifer, a 32 year old teacher, from California came to New Zealand several years before the launch of Māori Television. She was *"amazed"* at how much content from her own country existed on the New Zealand airwaves, arguing that she *"struggled"* to find *"programming that provided an insight of New Zealand culture and society"*. However, when the Māori Television channel was launched in 2004, Jennifer found *"the quality of the shows blew me away...and I am still*

rarely disappointed". For this self described "outsider", Māori Television is "fresh, new, and exciting television which gives me insight into New Zealand life past and present." This was an understanding replicated by a considerable proportion of research participants, that Māori Television was more about 'New Zealand' identity than the mainstream networks.

A significant number of participants argued that the mainstream channels simply cater for the "commercially viable under 30s", with Katherine, a 54 year old office administrator arguing that New Zealand television is only focused on the "MTV (Music Television) generation". Likewise, during the first focus group, comprised of mainly higher age demographics, Susan, argued that the television networks in New Zealand had "ditched the grey power" and were "out of touch" with a lot of the more *senior* New Zealand public, a position with which the group (and many additional participants) unanimously agreed. Judith, a 65 year old semi-retired business owner from Rotorua, responded to Susan's comments arguing "there is no programming for the average intelligent person anymore...where are the documentaries which educate you...they are just gone from the airwaves", with another participant Linda, a 62 year old South African woman humorously commenting "we may be older, but we are not totally stupid".

The majority of participants argued that there wasn't much attempt at 'intellectualism' on the mainstream channels anymore, especially in the news and current affairs broadcasts, with Simon arguing that the mainstream media is guilty of "dumbing [*sic*] down its on-air content". Also present was a notion of *displeasure* with the mainstreams media's separation of peak and off-peak programming, something which doesn't exist to the same extent on Māori Television. Like many other participants Simon finds much gratification in the mainstreams broadcasts concerning 'informative' and 'educational' content, but like the literature suggests they are "tucked away on Sunday mornings". Mainstream shows such as *Q + A*, *Marae*, and *Attitude* were routinely praised by the non-Māori participants; however, many were unable to access them due to their obscure

timeslots. “Where are the educational shows in prime time?” Simon asks, adding “this is why I switched to Māori Television.”

The research participants were also dissatisfied with the *similarity* of shows broadcast on the mainstream during prime time and praised Māori Television for its *diversity* of programming during the evening schedule. Sarah, a 52 year old tourist industry worker from Auckland then commented on the issue by suggesting that “the mainstream ‘appears’ to offer choice but it’s the same ‘type’ of shows but with different names.” The focus group then continued by citing such shows as *CSI*, *CSI Miami*, *CSI New York*, *The Law and Order* series, *NCIS*, *Bones*, *Criminal Minds* etc, - programmes of the same genre that are shown repeatedly over the prime time schedule. Sarah argued that with the mainstreams content “you can fall asleep during one and wake up in another and not notice the difference”. The mainstream was routinely criticised for removing public service programming during the prime time schedule.

However, participants also stated the opinion that it was not simply the programming being *foreign* which was resulting in the perceived deterioration of the mainstream; it was the content *of* the foreign programming that was “polluting” the airwaves and causing many non-Māori to shift towards Māori Television. For example, Simon, argues that

imported content is not a problem...many foreign shows are good and of good quality but the mainstream picks the worst of British and American TV...where are the British investigative doco’s [sic] and American independent cinema.

Several participants gave high praise to international programming, such as the BBC’s *Horizon* and *Panorama* series, and many expressed a desire for more Australian SBS, and American PBA ‘styled’ content, debating why it was absent from the airwaves. However, a common conclusion to such

debates came from Elsa, a 66 year old tour guide operator who argued that due to the mainstreams commercial imperatives and a reliance on advertising revenue it would “always strive for the lowest denominator”. Mark also provided a commonly held opinion on the issue by stating, “what do you expect...the mainstream and TVNZ are now a ‘business’ ...they’re profit driven...not audience driven.”

The overwhelming perception of the mainstream media by the research participants was that it was “abandoning” many of the diverse social demographics of New Zealand society and risked alienating a significant and growing number of the New Zealand public. Each focus group and individual research participants was asked the question; ‘do you think the mainstream have lost perspective on who New Zealanders are?’ This drew a unanimous response of ‘yes’ with participants arguing that in fact Māori Television provides more of an understanding of New Zealand identity than the mainstream.

This can be attributed, as will be explained in a later chapter, to a form of non-Māori ‘nostalgia’ with programming on New Zealand Television. However, participants of a younger aged demographic argued that because they have grown up within the globalised mainstream paradigm, they have little understanding of what television in New Zealand ‘used to be like. For example, Claire, a 24 year old health care worker from East Auckland, argued,

all I remember watching when I was younger was American, English, and Australian shows...there must have been some Kiwi shows I watched but I have forgotten what they were...they must not have made a lasting impact on me.

The majority of participants of younger demographics, including Tony, a 25 year of insurance consultant and Dallas, 22 year old store worker both from central Auckland argued that their

understandings of 'local New Zealand content' on the airwaves come from shows such as *Shortland Street*, *Police Ten 7*, and *Piha Rescue*. For them, the 'local' was simply programming situated in New Zealand, regardless of its content. However, this produced a disparity between the older and younger demographics over both the perceptions of such shows and the terminology 'local content'. For example Tony, argued that her generation has grown up with reality television and as such can identify with its informative and educative values. She continued by stating that, "shows like Police Ten7 makes people aware of things going on in their community... for me it's a local show." For the younger participants it was evident that as long as a show was situated in New Zealand, it should constitute local content. Likewise Dallas, a 22 year old store worker, stated that shows such as *Police Ten 7* educates viewers on crime in the area, and that *Piha Rescue* educates viewers on water safety. However, Erin responded "but it's cheap TV, how can you see the educational content in those programmes?"

The focus groups discussed, at length, what constituted 'local' content. The division existed between programming simply being *situated* in New Zealand and shows *about* New Zealanders and New Zealand life; with Vince arguing that "reality television shows aren't New Zealand stories". The focus group failed to find common ground in their understandings of both local content and how educational values were derived from programming. For many participants of an older age demographic, the mainstream media has witnessed a substantial drop in 'quality' over recent years. Even after the deregulation of the media industry and the scrapping of the licence fee, television was largely regarded by the participants as being "respectable" and of "good quality." However, there was a perception that over the last five to ten years, the notions of 'good quality programming' are, as Jean McCormack argues "few and far between."

Pam, a 75 year old retired primary school teacher from Auckland, states that over her lifetime "the quality on the mainstream networks has clearly deteriorated" and she argues that the mainstream

networks have “clearly lost sight on what constitutes local content” on New Zealand television. Simply ‘framing’ reality TV as local content was creating dissatisfaction amongst many non-Māori. In effect therefore, it can be argued that many participants are tuning into Māori Television to be removed from this ‘Americanisation’ of programming content.

This perspective correlates with another strand of discussion that during the last twenty years, television in New Zealand has transitioned from one of ‘local’ to one of ‘foreign’, both in programming content and ideology. In the 1970s and 1980s, and in many respects the 1990s, television was still very ‘locally oriented’, with shows such as *Country Calendar* routinely being referenced as being the most locally produced show on New Zealand television. These types of programmes, as argued by Melanie, a 66 year old retired housewife, have “eroded from the airwaves” and she argued that the show *Country Calendar* was a “sole survivor” of true local content on air. This perceived non-local content, combined with the influx of foreign imported programming, has apparently created a void in the New Zealand mediasphere. The mainstream networks, by focusing on the commercially viable majority, are unable to fulfil the viewing requirement of the diverse demographics of the New Zealand public.

Participants were questioned if they were aware of the two new services provided by Television New Zealand; *TVNZ 6* and *TVNZ 7* and unfortunately for the purposes of the study, only a few participants indicated that they were. For those who were aware however, there was a perception (underpinned by available literature) that Television New Zealand is “shifting” its public service responsibilities away from its core channels, leaving *TV One*, and *TV2free* to be “consumed” by imported entertainment programming. Stephen, a 52 year old opto-mechanical engineer, stated that there are “many good shows being aired on these channels” and, “they do go a long way to fulfilling public service commitments”. However, as the existing research again suggests, the channels’ futures are in doubt, and Stephen argues that if this happens “public service broadcasting

could be completely gone from the mainstream networks". When asked about public service broadcasting on New Zealand television in general, many participants like Carol argued "I've watched a lot about public service television abroad, and for me, Māori Television is a good example of public service broadcasting".

The research participants were also asked to comment on their understandings of the Māori Television role in the New Zealand broadcast system. The channel was frequently praised for its educational value, screening content unavailable on other New Zealand 'free to air' networks. The channel was also often cited as screening "quality" broadcasts, which were both "intellectual" and "enlightening". In the words of Julie, "you don't learn anything anymore from watching the mainstream, but you do from watching Māori Television...Māori Television educates me."

Furthermore, commenting on the differences between Māori Television and the mainstream, Elizabeth argued that "Māori Television treats us like people...whereas TVNZ see us as consumers, targets, ratings, profits, and don't seem to care about New Zealand culture anymore." This was a position widely shared by many of the research participants and aside from the early Sunday morning broadcasts, the research participants agreed that the mainstream programming was 'severely lacking in educational value'. Māori Television however is seen to excel in this respect is by offering its audience "compelling", "thought provoking" programming, which as Simon argued; "gets right to the heart of the social issue."

One particular programme which was the recipient of much comment was the Māori Television screening of *Tamariki Ora: A New Beginning*. Broadcast over consecutive days, this 'in-depth' feature looked the effects of child abuse, examining its impact on both the victim and wider society. The show featured a wide variety of mini-documentaries, interviews, panel discussions and stories told from the perspective of the people involved. Māori Television was seen as a broadcaster that was able to screen a serious and sensitive social issue in a respectful and positive manner.

However, the perception of the mainstream was, like Julie argued, that they would always aim for the “lowest common denominator”, with the example given that the mainstream would generally import a sensationalised American programme ‘*My Half Ton Son*’ which focuses on elements of the “spectacle” and voyeurism despite being said to carry a serious and constructive message. Māori Television, on the other hand, produced in-depth analysis on the condition and its impact on the victim, the family and the community.

This is the perceived difference between the two networks, both in content and format. For example, like many participants, Simon argued, “the mainstream considers what’s happening to some family in America is more important than what’s happening to a family in New Zealand.” Māori Television on the other hand, gives high levels of attention towards ‘New Zealand’ stories, an area extremely attractive to the research participants. The question asked in many of the discussions was ‘why does the mainstream choose to import such low-brow content?’ The general consensus was that it was not the cost issue, as it was suggested that importing content of Australian (*SBS*) or British (*BBC*) origin should be cheaper than content from an American cable network, such as *CBS*, *FOX*, *NBC*, *HBO* etc. The perception was therefore, that it must be the revenue the network receives from its commercial sponsors and advertisers, many of which originate from American organisations. This, in Stephen’s opinion is why the mainstream is deteriorating; it is “too driven by the advertising dollar.”

Programming is thus determined by commercialism; not by either public demand or public service. On an elementary level, mainstream programming, including news, current affairs and investigative documentaries (as suggested by Baker, 2007) revolves around entertainment and theatrical themes and not on one of benefit to the public sphere. Māori Television on the other hand was judged to be more ‘socially’ and ‘community’ oriented, ‘in-depth’, and ‘thought provoking’.

However, the research participants were similarly aware that the mainstreams 'style' of programming does appeal to many audiences in New Zealand and the content does have its place on the airwaves. Nevertheless, the main criticism from the focus groups was that there was no *variation* on the mainstream networks. Instead of broadcasting programming from a range of perspectives and thematic styles, they choose to continuously repeat the same format and perspectives. The groups called for the return of 'intelligent' and 'thought provoking' programming to the mainstream to both respect and counter balance its commitment in catering for the diversity of the New Zealand public.

It would appear therefore that many non-Māori are tuning in to Māori Television to obtain a 'counter-balance' both on programming content and perspective. Non-Māori participants find great pleasure in viewing programming outside that of 'western hegemonic ideology' presented by the mainstream networks. A position, shared by many, can be seen in comments by Susan who agrees;

I enjoy viewing content [on Māori Television] from a different political stance... with Māori Television you get to see and be immersed by something you may not have knowledge about, coming from an alternative perspective...the mainstream only offers a one-sided opinion.

Māori Television has become, in many participants' opinions, 'the' public service broadcaster of the New Zealand airwaves, offering both public service content in its diversity of its schedule and intellectual and educative content.

5.2 Non-Māori Attitudes to Films and Documentaries

One of the more frequently discussed topics during the research study was non-Māori attitudes to Māori Television's films and documentary programming. Research participants were unanimous in their high praise for the channels domestic and international content, with many participants like Mark, arguing that Māori Television "shows us how it should be done" when it comes broadcasting films and documentaries. Like many other participants, Sarah argues that the films and documentaries on Māori Television are more "mentally challenging" than their mainstream counterparts. The general perspective among non-Māori viewers, as stated by Elizabeth, was that "with Māori Television, you're always 'guaranteed' a good film or documentary."

The research participants widely commented that the appeal of Māori Television films and documentaries were their 'underlying themes and messages' rather than, as one participant put it, "the moronic Hollywood blockbusters we see on the mainstream". However, as before, this was not a total *rejection* of imported content, as many non-Māori participants often spoke of the channel's success in 'hand picking' foreign content rather than programming simply to satisfy ratings. The Māori channel was seen to screen more *poignant* stories, told from a multitude of perspectives, regarding a wide range of social, cultural, religious, and political issues, both domestically and internationally. On Māori Television, foreign content is embraced.

The underlying themes of the channel's programming were also a point of attraction for non-Māori audiences. As Stephen points out "Māori Television movies and documentaries all have an underlying theme...that of values and ethics". Non-Māori participants regularly view films and documentaries on the channel which challenge Western beliefs and present alternative perspectives on domestic and global stories. Participants expressed that they have long desired this *format* of programming but that this has been unavailable on 'free to air' networks in New Zealand. The

perception was that Māori Television broadcasts content that can usually only be viewed at either film festivals, independent cinemas, or on subscriptions channels such as *Rialto* or the *Arts Channel*. Examples given included the channel screening a mixture of Bollywood, French Language, African and Asian films which leave the viewer, as Leanne suggests, “satisfied with the plot”. For Charles, the appeal of the films broadcast on Māori Television was that they predominantly centre round an imperative message; that of “colonialist oppression, alienated rights, and the voice of the minority”.

A seminal appeal for non-Māori viewers was the multitude of ‘perspectives’ that the channel broadcasts, giving the channel its unique position in New Zealand broadcasting sphere.

In an apparent conscious and selective decision, Māori Television broadcasts content which depicts the narrative story being told from the perspective of the people themselves; in line with concepts of Māori ‘talking in’ and ‘talking out’ and the Māori struggle for an independent ‘voice’ on the airwaves. For example, Elizabeth argues that

Māori Television will show a documentary about the aboriginal people from an aboriginal perspective, not a Pākehā one, or even a Māori one, but they let the story of the aboriginals be told from their point of view and allow them to control the message.

Likewise Dr. Parker and Leanne both appreciated the opportunity to view content from an international perspective. They argue, in line with hegemonic theory, that the Pākehā centric media in New Zealand shows a “distorted image” of both national and international affairs. On Māori Television, viewers are able to watch a story regarding, for example, Islam and the Middle East conflicts told from a “pro-Muslim” perspective, away from western filtering and mediation. For many participants, the appeal is that “Māori Television shows you the world...and allows you to decide what or what not to believe.”

Without Māori Television many New Zealanders would not have the opportunity to be immersed in both a Māori and a global perspective on current and historical affairs. Almost all participants enjoyed viewing programming from a Māori perspective that featured content of indigenous and minority issues and found great pleasure in being 'educated' on the struggle of both the Māori people and the global indigenous movement and the impact of colonialism. For many, Māori Television films and documentaries are 'mental stimulation' not afraid to face and discuss a cultural, ethnic, or racially sensitive topic. The broadcasts are argued to have "substance" and were counter to the "nonsensical" Hollywood blockbusters broadcast on the mainstream. Māori Television's films and documentaries are generally perceived to be "fair" and "balanced", with those participants who disagree with the story still actually appreciating the channel providing them with the opportunity to have access to such story from an alternative perspective.

Overall, the appeal of Māori Television films and documentaries was a mixture of local 'New Zealand' stories, minority and indigenous issues, and content from an international perspective. The main appeal of the channels broadcasts are, as Christine argues, that they "tend to be thoughtful, thought-provoking and presented from diverse worldviews", with one participant, Dianne, a 55 year old case manager, arguing that "not only is the content very thought provoking, but the story lines are imaginative and are purely delightful....Māori Television enlightens viewers rather than simply entertains them".

5.3 Kai Time.

Commenting on the channel's commitment to public service broadcasting, several participants argued that the mainstream networks and their imported content are simply not 'practical enough' for the average New Zealander viewer. Participants argued that the mainstream networks exhibit signs of not concerning themselves with how the New Zealand public interacts with shows on their network.

For example, one of the more prominent genres discussed was that of cooking shows. The argument presented was that the mainstream, due to its high levels of imported content broadcast shows that featured ingredients either unavailable to the New Zealand public, or that were just too expensive to replicate. They were just not 'practical' as cooking show, and in the participants opinions they acted as purely 'entertainment' programming.

However, Māori Television offers the New Zealand public something different. A popular show among non-Māori participants is *Kai Time: On the Road*, which many argued was a 'breath of fresh air' from the 'celebrity' styled cooking shows of the mainstream. Where *Kai Time* gains its popularity is that it "caters for the New Zealand palate". For Elsa "it's New Zealand food made by New Zealand people". The 'local' nature of the show was something of immense appeal to non-Māori viewers. It was argued to be a New Zealand show, hosted by New Zealand people, using New Zealand ingredients, creating traditional and contemporary New Zealand dishes. Likewise for Brittany, a 21 year old student from Hamilton, argued that for her the appeal of the *Kai Time* show is how it successfully integrates Māori and 'Kiwi' styles of cooking to make dishes "inherent to New Zealand". Participants argued that the mainstream shows seemed to be less interested in the foods history, how it was sourced, prepared, and cooked but, instead, instead focused on the reality TV format and the interaction and confrontation between contestants. A good example of this is the *Hell's Kitchen*,

and *Ramsey's Nightmares* series' where there was much criticism over such shows "presenter oriented" style which, in many respects, denies the production from focusing on the cooking process. Michelle presented the argument that too many mainstream cooking shows, especially in prime time, are not "family oriented", a "bizarre thing for a cooking show". She commented that the "vulgar language" broadcast on such shows has allowed "rudeness to become normalised". They are seen to be less about cooking than they are about controversy.

Cooking shows on Māori Television gained their viewership and appeal by operating as both 'local' and 'practical' programming focusing more on the food preparation and cooking process and acts as an educative resource for many participants.

5.4. Non-Māori Attitudes to Sport

This attraction towards 'local content' was also replicated for Māori Television's broadcasts of sports programming. Many non-Māori participants were initially drawn to the channel's sports coverage for its "grass roots" broadcasts, covering a wide variety of boxing, basketball and rugby matches: with the channel's coverage of the *Fox Memorial Shield* receiving the most positive comments from non-Māori viewers. However, the channel was also praised for its screening of large sports events; usually only available on pay television and subscription services.

Māori Television provides the viewer with a variety of professional and amateur sport in New Zealand, which unlike the mainstream, isn't solely focused on the 'populist' and international sports coverage. There existed a general consensus among many participants that Māori Television's 'grass root' sports were representing a vital part of New Zealand culture and identity, which over the years the mainstream has ignored. For example, Tony argues that "grass roots sports are at the heart of New Zealandness", with Stephen presenting the perspective that New Zealanders are "just as interested in local school-boy football than we are with the highest paid professional leagues".

The most popular sporting shows among the non-Māori participants were the live entertainment shows *Hyundai Code* and *Boil Up*. The main praise of these shows was for their “casual” approach and “personal touch” to sporting events in New Zealand. For Mark, the appeal of the shows is that

it doesn't appear to be scripted...you can tell the presenters are really enjoying what they are talking about and have great interaction with the guests.

Moreover, as with many of the other viewer ‘understandings’ of shows on Māori Television, it wasn’t simply the content of the broadcasts that appealed to non-Māori. It was also the ‘style’ in which the content was presented. A recurring theme from the research participants was that of ‘honesty’ and ‘respect’ and the interaction between presenters and guests on the show. Laura, argues that for her “*Code* is presented as just as much an information show than entertainment...it’s [a] more a relaxed concept and a relaxed atmosphere. You get more of an honest opinion [from the guests].” Likewise, Erin commented that Māori Television sports coverage gives the viewer a more “personal” opinion and thus the viewer gets a more “true response” to the question being asked. For example, commenting on the *Sky Television* show *Deeker on Sports*, Mark argues that the presenters “direction is too narrow, and it is more about his opinions than that of the sports issues.”

Participants argued that his style of interviewing was “rude” and “disrespectful” when talking to New Zealand sports personalities competing for their club or country. In many cases, as Stephen argues “the sports star hasn’t done anything wrong but still gets taken to pieces by the host”.

Alternatively, Māori Television was praised for mutual discourse and its unique use of humour in its broadcasts; this includes both commentary on live events and the after show analysis. Participants were tired of the ‘confrontational’ manner of sports interviews, and interviews in general on the mainstream networks; with many participants citing the infamous Paul Holmes and Dennis Conner interview as precedence. For Erin, an avid viewer of Māori Television’s sports coverage,

with Māori TV it looks like there are having more fun with the interview, both the host and the guests....the appeal to me is the more in-depth discussions, rather than non-sensical [sic] questions about their personal lives....they treat the guest with respect and it's humorous at the same time, the jokes aren't confrontational....they treat them [the guests] as people rather than celebrities

Mark, like many participants, accepts that the Māori Television shows “aren’t as polished [as the mainstream], but they are very funny and you get the sense that it’s genuine.” The relaxed atmosphere on Māori Television sports broadcasts allows the viewers to have a more inviting and personal experience with the programme. High praise was also attributed to the presenters of the Māori channels sports shows. For Carol and her husband, it is presenters like Jenny May Coffin who “encapsulate the essence of sports broadcasting on Māori Television” She is an “excellent presenter, intelligent, and clear minded” and as Leanne argues offers a “more relaxed show with typical Māori humorous banter”. Jenny May, and many other presenters on Māori Television are able to ‘mediate’ a “good balance of humour and respect, without the ‘hype’ or one-upsmanship [sic] you see on the other sports shows”.

5.5 The Appeal of Māori Television

The research participants were unanimous in their agreement that Māori Television is positioned for ‘all peoples of New Zealand’ providing a wide range of programming from a multitude of perspectives for a multitude of demographics. The argument can be made that the channel’s limited budget doesn’t allow it to operate within ‘traditional’ Reithian principles, catering for ‘all’ demographics’ of the nation however, due to the current state of the New Zealand mediasphere, Māori Television was argued by many participants as being New Zealand’s closest thing to a ‘public service broadcaster’.

Māori Television in effect captures the demographics that the mainstream has neglected over time, while simultaneously providing the New Zealand public ‘intelligent’, ‘educational’, and ‘stimulating’

programming. It has carved a large following among the nation's non-Māori audience, eager to be immersed by programming from a Māori perspective and one of more public service orientation. Where Māori Television is successful, in many participants' understanding, was in it providing a coherent balance between the three Reithian concepts of educating, informing and entertaining. The mainstream however, was argued to be more favourable to the latter, neglecting to generally inform and educate its viewers.

The mainstream media was also regularly criticised for ignoring New Zealand stories and for its America-centric focus. For example Michelle argues that the mainstreams news and current affairs programming needs to realise "there is a lot more going on in the world than just in North America." Mainstream content such as *20/20* were heavily criticised for failing to source New Zealand stories and as will be explained in the following chapter, the shows *Campbell Live* and *Close Up* were often criticised for their "trivial" approach to news and current affairs in New Zealand.

A large number of participants, including Arthur, a 78 year old pensioner from South Auckland appreciate the "high standards of production" on the Māori Television channel, focusing on "entertaining and informative programming about the Māori culture". Alternatively, for Martha, she "enjoy[s] local shows on Māori Television because they capture an element of New Zealandness not seen on the other channels." This perceived notion of 'New Zealandness', although hard to sometimes define can be best be described by Leanne, who argues;

The reason Māori TV is so successful is that it uses real people...show like It's in the bag, goes out to the little towns and asks questions the average kiwi can answer... the presenters are humorous, caring and down to earth....They are generous of heart, generous of spirit and full of mana.

5.6 Futures of Public Service Broadcasting and Conclusions

Māori Television occupies a space previously unoccupied in New Zealand broadcasting. New Zealand's Television history has for many years been torn between public broadcasting and commercial interests, and this dichotomy has led those like Charles, to have "little good to say about public service television in New Zealand", arguing that "for me, Māori Television is a refuge from those other channels with programmes that contain some substance".

Public service broadcasting on New Zealand television has either ceased to exist, or now lies in the hands of Māori Television, TVNZ 6 and TVNZ 7 and the Triangle Network. Gauging the opinions and comments from the research participants, one can summarise that the channel is acting as a 'post-Reithian' public service broadcaster; unable to conform and fulfil the duties in the traditional sense, but providing a public service which is both unique and fitting for New Zealand broadcasting.

The mainstream media, as expressed by Leanne, has "lost touch with the real people of New Zealand" arguing that the older or commercially unviable demographics are simply being ignored.

Māori Television offers a 'public service' to New Zealand by providing 'balance' within its content and perspectives all broadcast on a singular channel. The fragmentation on the mainstream networks has caused many non-Māori such as Mervin, a 64 year old retired teacher from Wellington to argue that the mainstream has "given up on providing any programming which might educate, enlighten, challenge, or broaden ones interest" while simultaneously Māori Television has excelled in this position by providing "thoughtful programming, and introducing a variety of excellent programming". For participants such as Carol, "Māori Television definitely provides a public service in my opinion, and it's amazing how good it is given the level of funding they receive." Like the perceptions of many of the research participants, she argues;

We started watching Māori TV simply for the content which was consistently better in our view; more interesting, related to real NZ without the silly reality TV show format, more real people presenting and represented, more documentaries, social histories, more world movies. Then the lack of advertising drew us back time and again.

As Larry Parr, former General Manager of Māori Television suggested, the channel's 'minimal advertising' was a seminal reason for some non-Māori to switch to Māori Television. However, when this question was put to the research participants, the response wasn't one of overwhelming support of Mr Parr's hypothesis. While some participants did comment on the 'over commercialisation' of the mainstream networks (in terms of advertising 'breaks' in programming) many argued that this was not a 'key factor' in why they have shifted their viewing to Māori Television. However, the commercialisation of the networks in the form of content it imports and broadcasts has become a key factor in non-Māori attitudes towards the mainstream networks.

What did emerge from the non-Māori research participants was an unprecedented attraction to Māori Television 'news and current affairs' programming. The following chapter will discuss how this form of programming is received by non-Māori and the perceptions messages they gain from their viewing.

Chapter 6: Operational and Journalistic Ethics: Setting Standards in New Zealand Broadcasting

6.1 Introduction

The following chapter will focus on the non-Māori perceptions of the Māori Television channel's operational and journalistic ethics, and the channel's news and current affairs content. As previously discussed, Māori Television was widely praised by the research participants for presenting high levels of 'factual' and 'intellectual' content with recurring themes including that of 'professionalism' on Māori Television. However, a further perspective was provided that the channel had a staunch universal value and ethical position which the channel employs throughout its wide variety of broadcasts.

The recurring theme of 'respect' echoes through many of the research participants comments regarding the operational values of the channel. It was applied to programming content, journalistic methods, interview techniques and a respect for the issue being discussed. Moreover the perception existed that the mainstream media, through Americanisation and cultural imperialism, had in many respects, lost sight on what participants understood as 'traditional' notions of New Zealand and Kiwi ethics, values, and cultural philosophies.

Additionally, as the literature review research suggests, the mainstream is constantly criticised as operating a Pākehā-centric, monocultural positional towards news and current affairs and for presenting bias and sensationalised programming in an *exclusive* atmosphere. Māori Television on the other hand was often described as a friendly, informative and *inclusive* broadcaster. Participants argued that the operational standards of New Zealand mainstream media had eroded significantly over recent years. This has grown to such a position that several participants expressed grave concern over the sustainability of New Zealand television in years to come.

A topic of routine discussion was that of the ideological approach of the broadcast system. Research participants were aware that New Zealand was a liberal society, adopting one of the most liberal attitudes towards a television industry compared to many western countries. However, several participants presented the argument that the liberal attitude towards the media has gone beyond what they considered to be 'core New Zealand cultural values'. The mainstream is argued to be routinely occupied with content surrounding "questionable" adult themes, and a lax attitude towards restricted content. Commenting on this issue, Michelle stated

I turned on the TV one day, it was only about 7pm so the kids were still awake and what I saw shocked and disgusted me... it was almost pornographic, and to be aired at such a time was totally unacceptable

Michelle was referring to the American programme, *Two and a Half Men*, which predominantly revolves around adult sexual themes and innuendo humour. The show is broadcast on CBS in America, and Comedy Central in the UK at a 9pm (post watershed) timeslot (CBS Primetime Schedule, 2010; Comedy Central Shows, 2010). In New Zealand however, the programme receives a 7.30pm airtime (TVNZ, 2010). The research participants routinely commented on various examples of the nation's liberal attitude towards the media and the apparent removal of watersheds on the mainstream channels. Participants commented on themes of sex and profanity being, as Julie argued, "rampant" on the airwaves. The more seminal concerns related to the unacceptable language (often many times sexual innuendo language) and scenes of a sexual nature being broadcast on daytime or early evening timeslots with many relating the content to failing 'standards' and a lack of 'ethical values' on the mainstream networks.

Māori Television, on the other hand, was consistently praised for its professional and ethical approach to these themes. There was no perceived desire for the channel to fill its airwaves with sex, violence and profanity simply to draw in prime time audiences. When the channel did find it appropriate to air such content, it did so at what was deemed an appropriate time slot for New Zealand public.

As previously explained, non-Māori are drawn to Māori Television due to its 'factual' and 'intelligent' programming, whereas the mainstream was criticised, as Simon argues, for "positioning these shows where hardly anyone can access them...the intellectual, factual shows on the mainstream are just pushed to the outskirts...Sunday mornings and late nights". Many of these shows don't just carry an intellectual perspective but a Māori perspective on historical and current affairs effecting New Zealand culture and society.

As a public service broadcaster, Māori Television provides the New Zealand public with access to programming not available from any other 'free to air' networks: offering content from both an international and a Māori perspective, a factor which greatly enhances the channels reach to the New Zealand public. The Māori perspective is a vision on New Zealand life which the non-Māori participants researched have a profound curiosity. The vast majority of research participants believed there should be more 'Māori perspective' programming on mainstream television, especially in the prime time schedule. However, several participants were gravely concerned that what little Māori programming which existed on the airwaves was itself under threat. The restructuring of TVNZ's flagship Māori show, 'Marae', coupled with extensive budget cuts and the resignation of several high profile presenters has caused the future of the show to come into question (Tahana, 2010).

Māori Television is providing non-Māori audiences with a much sought after Māori perspective towards television broadcasting. A commonly expressed understanding by research participants was that the channel operated a 'professional attitude' towards news and current affairs and programming concerning a historical narrative and that the channel offers its viewers "objective", "balanced", and "rounded" debates and perspectives on a multitude of issues.

The research participants gave the channel equal praise on its operational ethics and how it conducts its programming. They argued that Māori Television was far from being a monocultural broadcaster (unlike perceptions of the mainstream), but was instead positioned as a bi, or omni-cultural broadcaster. Research participants appreciated how the channel's professional standards allow even the Pākehā perspective to be included in news and current affairs coverage. Instead of simply ignoring the Pākehā perspective, the Māori channel will explain the Pākehā position, and then proceed to discuss differences of viewpoint and how the Māori perspective differs from that of the Pākehā perspective. Participants were grateful for the omni-cultural education that the channel offers allowing many non-Māori to gain a much more rounded understanding of the channel's message.

The perceived professional attitude and ethic exhibited by Māori Television is also present in the way the channel conducts its journalistic operations, and its exploration of social, cultural and political issues. As will be explained in further detail, Māori Television presents the viewer with an alternate format when conducting discussions on the channel. Instead of employing a singular discussion format (interviewer and interviewee), Māori television on many occasions employs more panel discussion formats which, as will be explained, provide a more yielding and less subjective discourse. To summarise the non-Māori perspective on Māori Television's operational standards, Michelle, argues the following;

It seems to me in this corrupt, greed based and cynical civilisation we call post modern western [society] there are no ethics or respects anymore. Māori TV seems to be one of the very few examples of integrity and intelligence in broadcasting

6.2 Ethics and Professionalism: News and Current Affairs: Māori Television Setting industry Standards

Many of the non-Māori participants were frequent viewers of the Māori channels news and current affairs programming, with the show *Native Affairs* receiving the most discussion and high levels of praise. Several participants also enjoyed viewing the Māori news broadcast *Te Kaea*, however, most participants relied on the online broadcasts or the channels late night repeat for the availability of English subtitles.

The channels news and current affairs programming as Dr. Parker describes was “generally superior on information and news levels compared to the other channels...which are frivolous and banal in comparison.” In a similar comment, Christine argued that “like many, I very much enjoy Māori Television’s political coverage...it is a refreshing change from the ‘narrow approach’ of the other networks”. It is evident that the ‘tabloidisation’ (Atkinson, 2001) of the mainstream networks has caused mainstream perspectives on news and current affairs to focus more on the *entertainment sphere* than the *public spheres* of New Zealand. The Americanised news practices employed by the mainstream media, in Sarah’s opinion, “barely graze the surface” when it comes to reporting historical or current affairs. Māori Television is perceived to be superior to the mainstream on a wide variety of issues. It provides its audience more “serious” and “in-depth” debate than its counterparts, often attempting to analyse the root causes of social, cultural and political issues, rather than simply providing a present day ‘overview’ of the issue being discussed.

The western 'spin' on news and current affairs has caused many non-Māori to 'distrust' the mainstream news media and seek alternate sources provided by Māori Television. As Christine argues, she and her family "watch Māori Television to find out what's really going on in New Zealand". There exists a heightened notion of non-Māori 'trust' in their viewing of the Māori Television channel, which is argued to present a more factual and more balanced ideological approach to news and current affairs, albeit positioned more towards the 'Māori' perspective.

The research participants voiced a profound distrust in the mainstream media, its journalistic ethics, and how it formulates and presentation of the news story. The 'alternate' perspective of Māori Television is thus appealing on a multitude of levels. For example, an opinion expressed by many research participants can be seen in comments by Charles who argued;

For me, this [news and current affairs] is the best viewing on Māori Television, the coverage is in-depth, politely and factually presented without the usual emphasis on conflict and controversy....this gives me, as a Pākehā, some appreciation of Māori perspectives that I would not otherwise receive

Unlike its mainstream counterparts, there exists serious attention to information, analysis and a real appreciation for diverse perspectives in Māori Television coverage. It provides the viewer with a greater understanding on the issue and story being presented. This compares, and contrasts with, the "superficial", "cliché ridden", and as one participant described it "circus styled" news and current affairs on the mainstream, which in many participants' opinion focus too much on "sound bites", "gotcha moments" and "controversy".

One of the more frequently expressed understandings of the demise of journalistic ethics on the mainstream media was that of the *Americanised presenter*. The perception existed that mainstream

journalists “inject opinion” and meaningless “controversy” into the news story. Alternatively, MāoriTelevision’s journalism offers its viewers as Charles argued, “Intelligent investigation”, tackling issues of “relevance” to modern, past, and future New Zealand society, rather than the mainstreams regular focus on “trivial information”

Participants routinely commented that MāoriTelevision’s journalism and news and current affairs discourse was about “conversation” rather than “conflict”. For many non-Māori viewers, the attraction of MāoriTelevision’s programming for many is it employs a ‘dialogue’ in its interviews and news and current affairs coverage. It allows, and encourages comment and discourse from its guests rather than the “gladiatorial” approach of the mainstream media. Participants argued that they prefer the ‘panel discussion’ format offered on Māori Television, rather than the singular interview techniques utilised by the mainstreams. The mainstream operational and journalistic ethic (derived from Americanised technique) provides little attempt to find *common ground* within the varying discourses and presents an essential *binary* in the interview process; usually concerning who is ‘right’ and ‘wrong’. As Mark explains,

Māori TV is not confrontation as in the ‘I’m right your wrong’ but will engage with the fact the ‘we appreciate your point but here is where I disagree’...that’s the Māori style and that’s why we watch.

MāoriTelevision’s coverage of news and current affairs is what, in many respects, allows it to stand out as a broadcaster in the New Zealand mediasphere. It is widely understood, as Katherine argued, to “respect the intelligence” of its viewers by providing both “thought provoking” content and coverage story of a more “serious” nature across a wide range of current and historical affairs. Moreover, as Leanne argues;

the topics covered [on Māori Television] are more contentious issues...both sides are given more opportunity to delve into the history of the problem. Guests are treated with honour and not talked over when answering...the presenters are investigative journalists, digging into the roots of the problem, a far cry from what we see on the mainstream.

These notions of ‘respect’ and ‘professionalism’ featured heavily when discussing journalistic practices on Māori Television. The term refers to all aspects of the channel’s coverage; from the way the journalism (interviews and discussions) are conducted, to the theme and issues discussed, and the treatment of the varying perspectives on the topic.

6.3 Standards of Journalism: Presenters and Interviews

The general consensus voiced by the research participants was that the Americanisation of the New Zealand airwaves had a profound impact on journalistic ethics on mainstream television.

Mainstream journalism in New Zealand was argued as being “superficial”, “mind numbing” and “disrespectful”. Many participants were avid viewers of the Māori Television current affairs show *Native Affairs*. Commenting on the shows style, Julie argued that

when you’re watching a discussion [on Native Affairs], people are allowed to talk and are shown respect compared to a mainstream debate...where everybody is basically shouting at each other.

It is this *confrontation* and *aggressive* journalistic style which detracts many non-Māori away from the mainstream networks. Participants presented the perspective that too much “hostility” present on mainstream interviewing techniques, citing personalities such as Paul Holmes, and John Campbell as those who are at the forefront of this “disrespectful industry”. For example, Stephen argues

part of the reason why I enjoy watching [Māori Television] is I find the respect and the lack of confrontation...creates a more balanced program, and it's the balance that I like rather than the fact that it's a Māori programme

The position was argued that on the mainstream, a dichotomy was created surrounding the interviewer and interviewee discussion. Comment was made that guests were routinely interrupted, with an aggressive line of questioning routes being utilised. The mainstream emphasis was more about who would dominate and prevail in the argument, rather than an academic discussion of the issues. This creates the notion that it is less about interviewer and interviewee finding answers and debating the issue, but rather of being for entertainment purposes.

Participants such as Anne argued that this was an “inherently flawed exercise”. The mainstream technique (based on the American method) creates a position where the more *aggressive* an interviewer becomes in the questioning, the more a *defensive* posture is adopted by the interviewee in resisting such attacks. The end result is that little factual, practical or in-depth information emerges from the interview. Like many participants Susan argues, “when you watch interviews on the mainstream you finish thinking ‘what have I just learned from that...the usual answer is ‘nothing.’”

However, where Māori Television gains much of its appeal amongst non-Māori audiences is that, on a fundamental and ideological level, it doesn't seek this ‘confrontational’ style. Guests appearing on Māori Television are treated with “respect”, and are given sufficient time to fully articulate and present their opinions on the issue being discussed. For many participants it is the ‘inclusive’ ideology the channel presents the New Zealand mediascape which gives it its unique attraction. Non-Māori participants, like Charles, present the position that, “I have never seen rudeness or

hostility towards those interviewed on Māori TV". Guests are allowed to present their argument from a multitude of ideological perspectives, to which Christine argues,

I enjoy the inclusive style, the way guests are encouraged to explore issues and perspectives...the use of humour as a tool for exploration and challenge...and above all the opportunity to experience a shift in the framing and delivery of news and current affairs in New Zealand.

Nevertheless, participants were just as aware that debate on Māori Television, although presented from a multitude of perspectives, is ultimately framed from within a 'Māori perspective': a 'perspective', or an ideology that is becoming increasingly sought after by non-Māori viewers. The Māori perspective offered by the channel allows it to challenge many Pākehā ideological views on a variety of national and international issues. It is often described as "enlightening" and welcomed in that of public sphere debate. Pākehā viewers expressed gratitude in being presented with an opportunity to be introduced to hearing social, cultural, and political issues from a Māori perspective. They find pleasure in being educated on the differences existing between Māoritanga and Pākehātanga.

However, the fact that Māori Television doesn't position itself as a monocultural Māori broadcaster is well received among non-Māori viewers. Instead of following the mainstream direction, and presenting a singular cultural perspective, Māori Television offers its viewers a multitude of perspectives. Participants were also grateful for the 'respect' given to the Pākehā perspective on the channel which isn't simply ignored or misrepresented (like the Māori perspective on the mainstream). In presenting viewers with the Pākehā perspective, it allows them to explain where the Māori perspective is in disagreement. It thus, allows Pākehā viewers a deeper understanding of the ideology of Māoritanga and taha Māori.

For many participants, the appeal of the 'discussions' on Māori Television is embedded in an appreciation of Māori ideology, Kaupapa and values. For Sarah, much of the discussion aired on Māori Television reminds her of experiences encountered at a MāoriHui and the customs present in the Marae and that of the Rakau Korero (talking stick). She argues;

when you have the stick (Rakau Korero) you have the speaking floor, you can say what you like about that person, you can praise them, you can berate them... but while you are holding the stick, it is your time to speak, and when you pass the stick along it is their time to speak and your time to be silent... and that comes across to me in a lot of the Māori interviews...even if the presenter doesn't agree with the guest, they aren't 'chopping them down. They allow them [guests] to express their opinion.

Unlike perceptions of the mainstream, participants often attributed high praise towards the Māori Television presenters. They are attributed as to having "great personalities" without, as Mark argues, "trying to 'steal the show' like they do on the mainstream", adding, "on Māori Television the presenters 'enhance' the show". The participants' understandings were that the Māori Television presenter was one of the key factors in the channel portraying respectful, intelligent, and balanced discourse in its news and current affairs programming, For several participants, like Elizabeth, there is much appreciation expressed for the Māori Television presenter Julian Wilcox. Wilcox was argued to "add dimension" to the topics being discussed and that his "professional attitude" was one that separates MāoriTelevision's coverage from that of the mainstream. The research participants generally attributed this professional attitude to that of the Māori people's oral history; which has allowed them to excel in spoken word debates. Many argue that this gives them an 'edge' over Pākehā presenters who lack ability to conduct mutual discourse, frequently resorting to 'sound bites' and 'confrontation' due to a lack of an appropriate intellectual response. For participants like

Charles, it is the “command of the spoken word” which gives Māori Television its appeal.

Furthermore, another widely debated perception was that of the Māori presenters ability to defuse controversial topics with the ‘Māori sense of humour’. Michelle presents the position that what makes Julian Wilcox a successful presenter isn’t just his professional attitude,” it is his [Māori] sense of humour that allows him to excel at his position”. This *trait* was also attributed to Māori Television presenter Willie Jackson, who in his show *Newsbytes*, uses humour and satire to deconstruct sometime contentious social, cultural and political issues.

The perceived ‘ethic’ of Māori television is one of surround concepts of *balance*, *reciprocity* and *inclusiveness*; whether this is an ethic confined solely to space of Māoritanga is an issue which should be explored in more detail. The concept of ‘balance’ was at the forefront of many of the discussion surrounding Māori ethic and values. There exists an appreciation on Māori Television for opposing interests and ideals and an understanding of mutual discourses, with research participants favourable in finding ‘common ground’ surrounding bi-cultural discourses, rather than pursuing an opposition rhetoric which have constructed and sustained New Zealand’s race relations paradigm for long periods of time. The mainstream meanwhile was perceived to have witnessed a values shift, from the *ethical*, to the *economic*.

Non-Māori participants are attracted to the channel’s programming which highlights the importance of ‘redress’ for past injustice and a ‘resolution’ for the nation’s future social, cultural and political issues. One Māori ethic which was evident in a vast majority of the channels news and current affairs coverage was that of ‘reciprocity; finding balance between concepts of *Kino* and *Pai*, while simultaneously affirming the Māori self determination. Speaking on this issue, Barry, a 45 year old artist from the Bay of Islands argued,

the channel validates the autonomy of the Māori people. It allows them to be in 'control' of their own cultural aspirations and destiny... The concepts of 'respect' 'accuracy' 'balance' 'fairness' all play vital roles in the channel and for the future of New Zealand society.

6.4 Operational Values

The Māori 'ethic', professional standards, and operational values however, are not concepts solely contained within the channels news and current affairs programming, or shows with an 'intellectual' premise. Several entertainment shows, such as *Ask Auntie* and *Hunting Aotearoa*, received high praise for following these core values and tradition. However, the programme which gained the most comment from the research participants was the entertainment programme *Homai Te Pakipaki*.

Homai Te Pakipaki is a karaoke styled show, filmed at the Māori Television's Newmarket studios in Auckland. Participants argued that the show differs from its mainstream counterparts, such as the Australian and American *Idol* series, due to it being situated primarily around *achievement* not *competition*. While the mainstreams imported programming did feature aspects of achievement (in the eventual winner of the competition), it simultaneously focused on aspect of "belittlement" "humiliation" and "degradation". For example Michelle argued that the imported content on the mainstream features

people who stand in front of millions of people and try and sing and get laughed at...where is the kiwi spirit of 'having a go' in these shows? The mainstream just doesn't reflect this...on the other hand, Māori TV does.

Homai Te Pakipaki was widely praised for being a local show, featuring the ‘average New Zealander having a go’ at something they enjoy, without the ridicule that accompanies most singing oriented reality shows. Leanne who is a self described “regular viewer” argues

the show cases mum’s and dad’s, brothers and sisters, ordinary people...the mainstream would have you eliminated for your size or the clothes you wear... Māori TV ‘keeps it real’.

Likewise, in a similar position, Elizabeth argues that *Homai Te Pakipaki* is

good clean fun...anyone can have a go...there are no restrictions on who can enter; it’s very entertaining.

Māori Television’s policy clearly centres around a different ideological ethic than its mainstream counterparts. Several participants argued that the channel doesn’t conform to the ‘body image’ required and represented in foreign media. On Māori Television, people can be whoever they are, tall, thin, short, large, without being objectified for their appearance, or even their vocal talent. On Māori Television, *Homai Te Pakipaki*’s participants are actually ‘encouraged’ to participate, something which embodies the real ‘Kiwi’ spirit of ‘giving it a go’. Laura argues that the show is “very relaxing to watch... you get to see our people... real Kiwis on screen doing what they love doing”. For Erin, the main reason she watches is that Māori Television “don’t belittle people like the mainstream”.

Homai Te Pakipaki is based on ideals of “inclusiveness”, “fairness”, “respect”, and “achievement”, whereas the mainstream shows of a similar genre were based on “humiliation”, “embarrassment” and “degradation”, ethical values which were not considered by any of the focus

group members to be an identifiable 'Kiwi' traits. The widely held notion of New Zealanders 'giving it a go' was argued to have been "eroded" from the national social imaginary as a direct consequence of the Americanisation of the mainstream networks. Māori Television, too many participants, represented a more *New Zealand identity* on air.

6.5 Conclusions

Non-Māori viewers share an understanding that Māori Television operates under clearly formed ethical guidelines surrounding fairness, balance, respect and inclusiveness. The channel presents narrative from both a Māori and an Omni-cultural perspective reporting a diverse narrative of factual and intellectual content.

Their mainstream media's exclusive and hegemonic monocultural approach to news and current affairs has caused many participants to actively seek their news sources from an alternate perspective. The mainstream was often argued, as the available literature suggests, to be deeply embedded with Pākehā intolerance towards concepts of both Indigeneity, and constructed te ao Māori as 'otherness'. Pākehā was the 'cultural standard' to which all other ethnic groups were defined.

A recent example of mainstream *hegemonic 'Pākehā' perspective* arose during the research gathering process of the thesis. In the spring of 2010, Television New Zealand was embroiled in a controversy surrounding its *Breakfast* programme and comments voiced by host *Paul Henry*. Henry ignited controversy by asserting to the nation's Prime Minister that the New Zealand government should assign a Governor General who "looks more" and "sounds more" like a New Zealander. This apparently was Henry making comment over the Governor General, Sir Anand Satyanand being of Indian and Fijian ethnicity (Neville and Harper, 2010).

In the following days, several research participants contacted me regarding the matter, in order to highlight what Mark argued was evidence of the “racism” on TVNZ and the New Zealand’s media in general. Participants argued that Henry’s comment can only be related to the fact that the Governor General doesn’t ‘comply’, in Henry’s opinion, to what constitutes a ‘New Zealander’. Although one can only hypothesise over Henry’s comments, it can be suggested that Henry was commenting that a ‘New Zealander’ should be someone of European / Pākehā ethnicity, or at least someone who *isn’t* of Indian or Fijian ethnicity.

However, what concerned many respondents was the more *institutionalised racism* embedded within the story. Only hours after Henry’s comments, Television New Zealand officially came out in defence of Paul Henry by arguing “[Henry] is prepared to say the things we *quietly think* but are scared to say out loud” (Neville and Tait, 2010). This presents that notion that the collective ‘we’, as in viewers of TVNZ and *Breakfast* (and perhaps wider New Zealand society) have such embedded racist attitudes over the perceived ethnicity of non-Pākehā in a high profile role in the New Zealand government. Not only were Henry’s comments unjust for a person employed in a ‘news and current affairs role’ but highlighted what Simon argued was a “glaring statement into the racial politics of many in charge on the mainstream networks”.

This attitude, combined with the failing professional standards and the lack of serious, intelligent attention to social, cultural, and political issues has forced many non-Māori to seek their information elsewhere. For participants like Leanne, “the message [on Māori Television] for me is ‘come and learn with us’, come and learn about our history in word and song...whether it be cooking, fishing, growing food, health, politics, or education”. The Māori Television channel ultimately stands for *professionalism* in the New Zealand mediasphere.

However, what is also evident, as the following Chapter illustrates, is that Māori Television has become a 'cultural bridge' for many non-Māori Pākehā in accessing Māori culture, and in many respects is re-writing New Zealand / Aotearoa narratives shifting notions of Pākehā performance identities and constructions of the national imaginary.

Chapter 7: Reconnecting Pākehā with Aotearoa: Futures of Biculturalism, the National Imaginary, and Pākehā Performance Identity.

7.1 Introduction: The Māori Perspective

This chapter will analyse and discuss the role of Māori Television in terms of perspective and the broadcasting of current and historical narratives of New Zealand society. A common theme presented by the research participants was that Māori Television was allowing non-Māori Pākehā the opportunity for a *reconnection* with Aotearoa, and thus was shifting hegemonic notions of non-Māori Pākehā identity and constructs of New Zealand *nationhood*. Māori Television operates, in many respects, to reconstruct and renegotiate non-Māori identity.

Māori Television was regularly described by participants as a ‘welcome window into the Māori world’, allowing them to access te ao and taha Māori culture and as the following chapter illustrates is performing far beyond simply ‘*filling the gap*’ left absent by the mainstream media in New Zealand. For example, Charles, argues

as a European, I learn much about Māori customs, language, tikanga, and attitudes towards the land and nature...focusing on the rights and mana of the Māori people.

There existed a genuine interest from the non-Māori research participants to gain access to the Māori world and a Māori way of thinking about domestic and international affairs. Participants were well versed in their awareness of negative representation positioned towards Māori by the mainstream media. Discussions ranged from a heightened distrust for the mainstream media; in its reporting of both Māori issues and those concerning national affairs, and the promulgation of

skewed social imaginary of New Zealand 'Kiwi' culture and Identity. For example, participants like Carol argue that,

like many others, I'm sick of the vacuous, materialistic messages promoted by much of my own culture and its treatment of the Māori people.

The non-Māori respondents presented an understanding that the English speaking media in New Zealand had for long periods of time promoted a "sanitised" version of ethnic relations, embedded in constructs and representations of *nationhood*. Participants argued that for the mainstream media, notions of bi-culturalism were to talk 'about' Māori, not 'with' Māori.

Participants consistently presented displeasure in the 'framing' of Māori issue on the networks. These predominantly focused on the representation of Māori as a 'cultural binary', one which is not viewers as either an indigenous or coalesced people of New Zealand. For example, Susan, argued; "I have never once heard the mainstream media say, 'the' Pākehā, like they do with Māori...it presents a position the Māori are not equal to the rest of New Zealanders". Māori are essentially denied access to constructs of New Zealand nationhood by the mainstream media.

In many instances, the discussions reverted back to debating Māori rights and the Treaty of Waitangi. Participants argued that although the mainstream media, in many respects, has increased its Māori presence over recent years, the 'framing' of the issues has remained constant. Several participants, like Barry, argued that Pākehā society is still "misinformed" over what the Treaty actually envisioned for New Zealand society. For Barry, "the Treaty was an opportunity to walk towards each other", instead, what we have witnessed is Māori culture being perceived as "oppositional" to the ideology of the mainstream. The mainstream media was argued to be failing to do *ao and taha* Māori and thus failing New Zealand's bicultural futures. Barry ended the discussion by arguing;

The Pākehā side of the media seems not even to register at times that there is a Māori world, a Māori way to think, feel, act etc.

However, in contrary to this position, non-Māori exhibited extremely high praise for the role Māori Television plays in both re-redressing the past and envisioning a future for all the peoples of New Zealand. By providing non-Māori with taha Māori, which until recently had been largely inaccessible, it was allowing a re-negotiation for constructs of New Zealand nationhood. For those critical of the hegemonic colonial history presented by both the state system and the media, participants such as Sarah are being provided with a new Aotearoan narrative. She argues;

the mainstream media presents us with only a one sided view of history, Māori TV offers the alternate perspective...it has given me an insight into other ways of thinking and understanding...it has broadened my mind on all things New Zealand.

Non-Māori viewers shared the understanding that Māori Television was an important 'cultural force' in the future of New Zealand society.

7.2 Māori Television: An Aotearoan Counter Narrative

The Māori Language Survey (2010) presented the argument that Māori Television had become the main source for non-Māori education on issues of Māoritanga. What was clear from the research participants was just how much of an impact the channel has had on its non-Māori audience. Māori Television has become more than simply a 'television channel' in the New Zealand mediascape, instead it acts it is a tool and a resource for changing attitudes and narratives of nationhood.

A common perception held by non-Māori participants, as expressed by Betty, a 66 year old caterer from Auckland was that "we were not taught much Māori history when we were in school...it was a very one-sided version of colonial history". This was a perspective shared by almost all the research participants involved in the study. History in the New Zealand education system, and on the

mainstream media, is seen to be lacking in bicultural perspectives and did not encompass an understanding of issues surrounding colonialism, the Māori land wars, the Treaty of Waitangi, and more recently, the Foreshore and Seabed debates. Participants were very much seeking a Māori understanding.

Following on from the literature reviews discussions, the research participants were engaged in discussions over forms of *Pākehā amnesia* regarding historical narratives of New Zealand society. Prior to the launch of Māori Television, many participants argued they were indeed ignorant of both issues of Māoritanga and those of the nation's colonial history. Participants, like Simon, argue that "Māori Television 'redresses' the inaccuracies that were taught to us as history at school", whereas Christine, presented the position that Māori Television "educated me on the *real history* of this country". Giving Pākehā this counter narrative of history will undoubtedly have an impact on those viewers' perceptions of both Pākehā and New Zealand identity.

Māori Television is now acting as a resource for the re-education of Aotearoan historical narratives, which until recently have been unavailable to a significant portion of New Zealand society.

Commenting on a Māori Television documentary regarding the events at Takaparawhau (Bastion Point) in 1977 (presumably the documentary *Bastion Point Day 507*), Susan stated that she was "dismayed" when viewing the broadcast, arguing that

*we live though this, and did we see it like that? I don't think we did...I wish we'd
[sic] had seen it like that at the time.*

This was a perspective echoed throughout the focus group discussions, that the Pākehā-centric media consistently presents not only the negative side of Māori protest, but as Jennifer argued a "warped view" on race relation and historical events. Only through Māori Television have many

Pākehā been re-educated on historical events in the nation's history and, in many respects, are more trusting and favourable to the 'Māori perspective' than they are the 'Pākehā perspective'. For example, Sarah states,

I've learnt more about New Zealand and New Zealanders through Māori Television...Māori Television is more about 'who' we are, not 'what' we are, and 'where' we have come from, both Māori and non-Māori.

Likewise, Carol presents the perspective;

As a direct result of watching Māori TV I am far more interested in the Māori perspective, the impact colonisation had on their society and their journey to re-establish their identities and language.

Māori Television gives Pākehā an alternative 'space' for a renegotiation of their identity. It is an understanding of what it means to be an Aotearoan/New Zealander which is attracting many non-Māori viewers. For example, Leanne argues that

we [as Pākehā] are searching for an understanding of the Māori half of our heritage...his understanding... it will help us grow.

Māori Television has given many non-Māori the opportunity to address their hegemonically constructed identities and re-negotiate new ones. The 'Pākehā' identity which, through hegemony, has been 'forced' upon many Pākehā is slowly being unravelled by the Māori Television narrative. Participants admitted they (as Pākehā) had been 'ignorant' about Māori issues and true notions of biculturalism, with several even arguing they held many incorrect pre-conceptions which were only

challenged due to watching content on Māori Television. Furthermore, for participants such as Carol argue;

I found I was learning or relearning NZ political and social history by watching fascinating documentaries about early NZ life based on footage from the National Archives, or from current day interviews with Māori kaumatua. Much of this history was specific to the Māori experience, but some of it was my story too, or that of my grandparents and great-grandparents. It was really interesting and I had never learned it at school

Non-Māori appreciation was widespread for having access to taha Māori and a re-education of historical narrative. As Stephen argues “the mainstream media, and Pākehā society need to realise that ‘Māori issues’ are ‘New Zealand’s issues’. Likewise, Simon, presents the position that “there are so many stories in New Zealand which would not be told with about Māori Television.”

For many non-Māori, the appeal of Māori Television is its ability to act as both a bilingual and bicultural broadcaster. A general understanding present among the research participants was that prior to the launch of Māori Television, there was an almost ‘purist’ approach when it came to Māori and the media. For example, Barry argued, these “somewhat elitist ‘Māori only’ programming’, focusing primarily on te reo Māori left almost all non-Māori “(and the vast majority of Māori) “unable to access the information”, or as Mark argued the “hidden jewels” Māoritanga had to offer the New Zealand nation. The Māorichannel’s approach towards a dual role of te reo and tikanga Māori has successfully allowed it to become New Zealand’s bilingual, bicultural, and public service broadcaster; an area of much appreciation and cultural benefit to non-Māori audiences.

7.3 Māori Television: Anzac Day Coverage

According to a number of sources (Smith, 2005; Smith and Abel, 2008), one of the more established reasons non-Māori view Māori Television was for its Anzac Day coverage. The subject of the channel's Anzac coverage was one of lengthy discussion and comment from the research participants. To summarise the non-Māori Pākehā understandings of the channel's coverage, ANZAC Day coverage encapsulates the whole ethos of the Māori Television channel and why it attracts so many non-Māori viewers.

Participants argued that it was the 'encompassing schedule' provided by Māori Television which gives ANZAC Day coverage its seminal appeal. High praise went to the Māori ability to be great story-tellers, which, like Elizabeth argued, is one of the reasons she, and her family, view the coverage year after year, arguing "Māori are great story-tellers and they have such great stories to tell...they are real stories...personal stories about New Zealanders". For Claire, it is the

wide variety of content present on their Anzac Day coverage...from interviews, to short pieces, long documentaries...you feel like you're getting the 'whole story'.

The continuation of perceptions of 'professionalism' and 'respect' run throughout comments on Māori Television's ANZAC Day coverage. For example, Katherine argues that "the whole day is respected...the story is respected, the people are respected, the *Whānau* are respected...there is 'heart' in the Māori broadcast".

The perception exists that Māori Television, unlike the mainstream, doesn't view Anzac day as simply 'another television event' in the broadcast schedule but instead, what comes across, is a *passion* for broadcasting what the day represents to New Zealand. Sarah described this as

“honouring the memory of the day”. The channel’s presentational format is able to symbolise what ANZAC Day represents in the nation’s social imaginary.

Non-Māori argue that the reason the channel’s coverage is so successful is that it doesn’t focus on a ‘specific story’ of Anzac, (in the sense of re-telling the seminal, well established stories on an annual basis) but instead focuses on the *personal* and the *un-told* stories of many of those involved. The coverage differs from that of the mainstream in several areas with Mark arguing that the Māori Television broadcast is a “totally different experience”. The mainstream broadcasts were widely argued as being too ‘fragmented’, with coverage routinely interrupted by advertisements and commercial breaks leading many to argue they were unable to ‘immerse themselves in the story’, whereas on Māori Television, the whole day’s coverage was seen as fluidic.

Participants such as Dianne, argued that “Māori television doesn’t ‘over dramatise’ the production like the mainstream”, and although the many features on Māori Television don’t have the “gloss” (referring to cosmetic production values) of the mainstream, the content is always better. Several participants, like Elizabeth argued that Māori Television “has the ‘spiritual’ aspect that TVNZ lacks... and could never understand”. This is what Arthur described as Māori Television “treating our history with dignity”, a time to both “celebrate and remember our shared history as New Zealanders”.

Participants often argued that Māori Television coverage reflects the “brotherhood” between Māori and Pākehā, celebrating their accomplishments as a ‘unified force’. The channel’s Anzac Day coverage, in the words of Dorothy, a 77 year old retired lady from Rotorua, was a chance to celebrate Pākehās “shared experiences with Māori” which for Dorothy it is about “mutual respect for each other, rather than the usual Māori vs. Pākehā conflict we usually see on the TV”.

The channel’s coverage offers an effective *interweaving* of the past and the present which makes Māori Television’s Anzac Day coverage so compelling and valued. It leaves the viewer better informed and gives them a greater appreciation for what the day represents in the history of New

Zealand society. Joanne, a 44 year old administrator from Point Chevalier, refers to this as Māori Television's "broad canvas" when approaching the days broadcast. The mixing of contemporary and archived footage allows audience to be immersed with how Anzac Day plays a vital role in constructs of nationhood in New Zealand. Ultimately, for Susan, Māori Television's ANZAC Day coverage is "craving for a sense of national unity".

7.4 Conclusions

The Māori channels unique counter narrative and its re-telling of narrative history in Aotearoa has allowed it to occupy an alternative space within the New Zealand mediasphere. Non-Māori expressed great appreciation for the opportunities Māori Television presents them in a re-education of their colonial history. Participants see Māori Television as a tool for positive social change in New Zealand, with Carol presenting the position that

Māori TV has helped me visualise a future New Zealand where Māori can take the lead in many areas...the channel allows you to see everyday people, both Māori and Pākehā, discuss what life in New Zealand is like for them...I accept, and embrace the fact that my five year old daughter is growing up in a country where one day she will need to speak Māori, and have a deep understanding of a Māori Perspective.

Research participants generally agreed that Māori Television was for anyone who shared Māori principles; that of ethics, values and Kaupapa. Non-Māori view these Māori values as being an essential and a welcomed part in the future of New Zealand society and television broadcasting. Māori Television is quite clearly a *space for the continuing production of Pākehā Identity* and can be attributed to a new notion of Pākehā bi-culturalism or perhaps Pākehā hybridity with the Māori world. Participants recognised that Māori culture is New Zealand first culture, and thus should be

more present in day-to-day life in New Zealand; including social, cultural, political, and economical realms. In many participants opinions, cultural assimilation should work in both direction, and there has been little attempt, on a national level, in Pākehā assimilating and embracing Māori culture. As Christine suggests, Māori Television has a “vital role to play in the future of the nation’s biculturalism”, arguing that the channel is an “extraordinary” resource allowing “New Zealanders too really see ourselves and who we really are”. Likewise, Betty argues that watching content on Māori Television has made her “more connected” with the Māori world than before. She argues that watching Māori Television, and its historical narratives of Aotearoa "makes me feel extremely patriotic...it feels like you are carrying the Māori spirit inside of you”.

In providing a ‘counter hegemonic narrative’, the Māori Television channel is providing growing numbers of non-Māori the opportunity to challenge pre-conceptions of Pākehā ideology and constructs of New Zealand nationhood. What was resounding notion throughout all the research participants was the comment ‘I wish we had been taught this version of history in school, or by the mainstream networks’. The perception was the if Māori Television had existed several decades prior, it may have been a force which could have helped New Zealand through its transitional phases of history, challenging the Pākehā perspective before it became too deeply embedded in society. Māori Television is thus giving New Zealand Pākehā a space to renegotiate their histories and their identities, while at the same time allowing for an understanding and immersion of Māoritanga. For Chris, a 51 year old photographer from Wellington agrees,

as mainstream television sends us deeper into despair with every passing week,

Māori Television continues to inspire, stimulate, entertain and inform us. As

Pākehā, it’s a welcome window into the culture and times of the Māori people

Chapter 8: Conclusions

The study's research participants shared an understanding that Māori Television's appeal as an established broadcaster was growing among non-Māori in New Zealand. Its position of inclusiveness, coupled with an enlightening Māori perspective has created a space for non-Māori to access a narrative previously unavailable to New Zealand audiences. The channel is routinely described as 'professional', 'respectful', and as Joanne, a 41 year old district health manager from North Shore City argues, it is "a last bastion of education and culture, portrayed by a thinking and caring people".

The understanding exists that Māori Television lives up to its operations slogan '*For them, for us, for you, for everyone*' due to its inclusive style of public service broadcasting. The channel was not only welcomed by non-Māori, but was argued to be an 'essential broadcaster' in the nation's mediasphere, not only for Pākehā, but for what it is understood to be contributing Māori culture and identity and perceptions of New Zealand nationhood.

A point which was argued by several participants who had close association with Māori culture (i.e. due to marriage, friendship, ancestry etc) was that the channel acts as a "positive force" for the Māori peoples of New Zealand, representing their "achievement" and "contribution" to New Zealand society, rather than the negative stereotypical representations which predominantly occupy spaces in the mediaspheres. The seminal position for many non-Māori is the broadcasting of 'positive' Māori news stories. Several research participants present the position that the channel has become an 'integral part of their family life'. For example, Michelle, who has several fostered Māori children argues, "It's great for them to see Māori achievement on screen...for them to see role models for who they can be in New Zealand". She strongly argued that the channel has a "positive impact" on both her children and for the family in that it has re-affirmed their sense of pride, arguing,

the achievement side of the channel is very good...there was a show where there was two Māori boys and one was a champion weightlifter, and one was a champion hurdler and they were going to the youth Olympics... and they were just doing so well; and one of my boys, who is sports minded; for him to sit down, look, and see, the Māoris' on TV; who many came from dreadful backgrounds; but to see those positive images kind of lifts them up, it gives them a sense of 'these are kids just like me'... the channel has contributed to their sense of pride... It's great for myself and for them to see the sheer professionalism and all the people who are doing really well... It really has contributed to their development.

This position was echoed by additional participants such as Julie and Elizabeth who argue that the channel's appeal among many non-Māori is the broadcasting of the *positive aspects* of Māori culture and identity. Elizabeth presented the position that Māori Television succeeds in not playing "the blame game" when it comes to bicultural issues. She argued that as a viewer, you get to see more "root understandings" of the issues facing Māori society instead of just blaming it on them for "being Māori, a rhetoric which exists on mainstream discourses. And for Elizabeth, "it important to see the causes of the issues [facing the Māori world], rather than simply pointing out their consequences". For Julie, it is the channel's potential impact on Māori society which appeals to her the most, she argues

it's nice to see these kids are going somewhere...you can see their potential and achievements...compared to the mainstream who just present images of Māori going nowhere or backwards.

Māori Television, for many, represents the nation's future and how biculturalism should be approached and implemented. However, there is much further research required concerning Māori attitudes to Māori Television. Questions which still need to be addressed in this area of enquiry include the following: How is the channel affirming or shifting Māori identity? Does Māori Television truly represent the diversity of Māori voices in Aotearoa? Does the channel represent a balanced and accurate narrative of te ao and taha Māori? And furthermore, considering the political and cultural struggle to establish indigenous broadcasting in New Zealand, does having such a large non-Māori viewership distract the channel from the core audience it was established for? Further research is required on the channel's impact on levels of te reo Māori in New Zealand society and on the quality of te reo, te ao and taha Māori broadcast to such a diverse audience.

Having such a large non-Māori viewership presents an opportunity for research in the areas of Māori 'talking in' and 'talking out' and whether it is possible to do both simultaneously or whether it is creating a dichotomy. However, questions need to be raised over whether 'talking out' is an acceptable approach when both the message and narrative is Māori controlled and when Kaupapa Māori principles are observed. All these areas of research are required to present an overall picture on how New Zealand audiences view the Māori Television channel and its impact on both Māori and Pākehā historical narratives and modern identities.

Throughout the research process participants expressed a strong dissatisfaction with the mainstream media in New Zealand and the continuation of its 'commercial orientation'. This dissatisfaction predominantly focused on what Dunleavy (2009) argues as the disparity over the mainstream broadcasters 'financial dividend' outweighing its 'cultural dividend'. The non-Māori research participants were unanimous in their assessment of what constitutes 'quality' in network broadcasting, with Māori Television excelling in an area in which the mainstream was deteriorating. Participants also expressed understandings similar to those found in Comrie and Fountaine (2005) in

that the mainstream media in New Zealand, especially state broadcaster TVNZ was witnessing a “rising tide” over criticisms of program quality and network standards. The prevailing perception was that in the globalised world of mass media consumption, ‘ratings’ do not necessarily equal programme ‘quality’. Māori Television is providing its non-Māori audience with ‘factual’ and ‘local’ programming not available on the mainstream networks, especially in prime time, largely due to the tabloidisation (Atkinson 2001) of news and current affairs.

Paradoxically, what has emerged is a Māori Television channel succeeding in meeting guidelines outlined for the TVNZ Charter 2003. The Charter stipulates for “intellectual”, “scientific”, and “impartial”, “In-depth” approaches to news and current affairs promoting “many-sided debate” (TVNZ Act 2003, pp.406). However these operational guidelines are the qualities non-Māori research participants understood to be in operation at Māori Television and lacking on TVNZ and other mainstream broadcasters. Both research participants and scholars such as Thompson (2009) argue that the state broadcaster TVNZ have failed in its duty to uphold its operational principles.

The Māori Television channel exists to fundamentally challenge Pākehā constructs of Eurocentric and ethnocentric meta-narratives. It has simultaneously achieved linguistic and cultural heterogeneity surrounding the concepts of te reo and tikanga Māori creating an *inclusive* national public service broadcaster. By offering viewers a new form of pluralism, it has fostered both a modern and historical narrative which runs parallel to the predominantly monocultural doctrine of the mainstream networks, offering Pākehā a re-connection with both Aotearoa and understandings of nationhood. Research participants were striving for a feeling of ‘belonging’ with much of the programming on Māori Television, searching for a common history, a common narrative, and a common identity with Māori, while simultaneously recognizing Māori indigeneity.

Smith and Abel (2008) argue that Māori Television acts as a 'decolonization of the mind' for Māori audiences. I propose that the channel has the potential to act in a similar way for its Pākehā audience, not in the sense of returning to pre-colonial customs and ideology, but to reverse the effects of the emergent post-colonial ideology in its positioning of te ao Māori as 'oppositional' to that of the settler identity. Māori Television is allowing Pākehā a re-negotiation of nationhood and Pākehā identity, and their social imaginary.

Paul's (2005) position of an 'Aotearoan public sphere' seems to be flourishing with the presence of Māori Television. To achieve its goals of 'disseminating Māori culture and tikanga to a wide audience' it is essential that the channel continues to avoid monocultural rhetoric. The channel provides considerable contribution to the Māori, New Zealand, and Aotearoan public spheres in offering a Māori perspective and counter narrative against that of the dominant culture. The network significantly large non-Māori audience allows the channel to potentially transform social, cultural and political discourses for New Zealand / Aotearoan society, encouraging debate in the nation's public spheres.

The channel is uniquely positioned to transit a message of 'true' forms of biculturalism and bilingualism in New Zealand society. Colonial settler society and cultural assimilation forced Māori to become Pākehā, with more modern forms of nationhood excluding Māori from these constructs, forcing Māori to be Māori, and thus Pākehā to be Pākehā, creating binary oppositions of identity and cultures within the nation. In many areas this has created more 'bifurcated' society (Bell, 2006), rather than a bicultural society, and created a juxtaposition of two *contesting* imagined communities in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Until now, little space has existed for narratives of 'true biculturalism' or 'cultural hybridity' in the New Zealand media. What is evident from the discussions with the non-Māori audience of Māori Television is that the channel is acting as more than just a 'cultural bridge'. It has become a space for the repositioning of nationhood and Pākehā identity.

What can be concluded from the research data is that non-Māori view the Māori Television channel for a wide variety of reasons. However, there does exist several recurring shared understandings which explain the channel's appeal. First, for many non-Māori the channel acts as a form of nostalgic media, allowing them access to perceived ideals of 'local' and 'New Zealand' content, before the domination of commercial mass communications and globalised media. Non-Māori also wish to be re-educated on New Zealand colonial narratives, post-modern narratives, and that of the Māori journey and the nation's bicultural futures. They are seeking access to a variety of discourses presented from a taha Māori perspective, focusing on te ao Māori and other global indigenous and minority affairs. And finally, they perceive Māori Television as a post-Reithian public service broadcaster, which has core ethical and ideological values with which they feel a deep affinity. This, combined with outstanding Kaikorero and journalistic standards, has essentially created a before unseen style of broadcaster in the New Zealand mediasphere.

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APPENDIX A

Non-Māori Viewing of Māori Television: Focus Group Questioning Guide:

Norming Phase

General Introductions of myself and focus group participants:

T. What type of shows do you watch of Māori Television?

Shows, genres, peak / off peak - (accumulate list of shows)

Q. When and why did participants first starting watching Māori Television (general discussion)

T. Begin Debate over Te Reo / English Language / Subtitles

- what language do they predominantly view programming

Q. can any participant speak te reo

Q. has the channel helped anyone learn te reo

D. More In-depth discussion about specific Māori Television Programming

- Why does it appeal (generally) to non-Māoriviewers

- Messages, narratives, perspectives, points of view

- see separate page on discussion points

Performing Phase 1.

T. Discuss the Māori Television slogan 'for them, for us, for you, for everybody'

- Is Māori Television for all New Zealanders

- Initiate discussion on public service broadcasting – link to...

T. Participant perspectives of the mainstream media

- How does Māori TV separate itself from mainstream New Zealand
- What is different between the two in terms of
 - content, message, approach

D. What are participants perceptions of 'local content'

- on Māori Television
- and on Mainstream Television

D. Initiate discussion on Māori Television's representation of Māori voice, Māori Identity, New Zealand history, and Nationhood

D. What do participants learn from watching Māori Television?

- message, narrative, story, identity

Performing Phase 2:

Specific Questions for Genre's / Programming

For Viewers of News and Current Affairs

- *Discuss Specific Shows Viewed (Native Affairs, Newsbytes, Indigenous Affairs)*
- *Discuss opinions and understandings over the following topics*
 - o *The issue covered*
 - o *How they are approached*
 - o *Standards of Journalism*
 - *The role of the presenter*
 - *Discussions formats (interviews, panel discussions, debates)*
 - *Arguments / debates / topics discussed*
 - *Guests - how are they treated*
 - o *Perspectives covered*

For Viewers of Documentaries

- *What documentaries do participants watch? Domestic / international / Both*
- *What is it about the documentaries that appeal to participants*
 - o *Message, availability, perspective*

- *What are they about? What is the narrative / message being presented*
- *Initiate discussion on why participants think Māori Television broadcasts such documentaries. Conscious decision?*
- *Is there any educational value in them?*
- *Initiate discussion on:*
 - o *Domestic – stories / perspective / messages / purpose*
 - o *International – stories / reasons for broadcasting / message perspectives*

For Viewers of Sports

- *What sports shows do participants watch (live and pre-recorded)*
- *What is it that appeals to viewers about the shows*
- *Type of sport broadcast*
- *Content of sports shows*
- *Conducting of interviews*

For Viewers of Entertainment

- *Types of programmes watched*
- *How are they presented*
- *How do they differ from other networks*

APPENDIX B

(Note: document has been modified to conserve space – participant reply boxes have been removed)

Non-Māori Viewing of Māori Television: Questionnaire:

Richard Turner, Massey University

Participant Name: _____.

Year of Birth: _____.

Town/City of Residence: _____.

Occupation: _____.

Ethnicity: _____.

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O’Neill, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 06 350 5249, emailhumanethics@massey.ac.nz”.

Non-Māori Viewing of Māori Television Questionnaire

Section One:

Q.1. When and why did you start watching Māori TV? Was it a conscious decision to watch a specific programme or engage with the channel, or was it a case of simply 'channel hopping'.

Q.2. What style of shows or programmes do you watch on Māori TV? (eg. News and Current Affairs, Entertainment, Documentary, Sports, Leisure etc) Please name specific shows if possible.

Q.3. In general terms, what is it about the shows you watch on Māori TV that appeals to you? Do you watch them simply for its content or is there a deeper meaning to why Māori TV appeals to you. How does the content on Māori TV differ from that on the mainstream?

Section Two

Please answer the following only if relevant to your viewing habits.

Please mention the shows you watch in the relevant field.

Q.4. For viewers of 'News and Current Affairs'. What is it about this style of show that appeals to you? What is to be said about the topics/issues they cover, the way it is presented, the interaction with the guests etc.

Q.5. For viewers of 'Sports'. Does the way Māori TV present sports shows differ to your viewing of other sports shows on New Zealand Television? Why do these particular sports shows appeal to you? Please comment on the type of sports which are broadcast and your opinion on the reason why Māori TV may choose to broadcast them.

Q.6. For viewers of 'Films'. What specifically appeals to you about the films broadcast on Māori Television? What is your opinion on why Māori Television broadcast the films they do? Do you see any messages in the film being shown?

Q.7. For viewers of 'Documentary'. What appeals to you about the documentaries you watch on Māori Television? Please comment on the messages they present and your thoughts on why Māori TV broadcast them. Do they differ from other documentaries on other networks in New Zealand?

Q.8. For viewers of 'Entertainment'. What appeals to you about the Entertainment you watch on Māori Television? What is noticeable about specific shows you watch?

Section Three

Q.10. What 'messages' (as in overall meanings) do you derive from Māori Television. What do you 'learn' from watching the channel? Is there an education value to the channel?

Q.11. Please comment on the state of Public Service Broadcasting in New Zealand and your opinions on how (or if) Māori Television contributes to this. Do you believe Māori Television is offering New Zealand a 'public service?'

Q.12 Why do you think Māori Television has become so successful with Non-Māori audiences in New Zealand? Please express your opinions on why the channel has such a large non-Māori or Pākehā viewership.

Q.13 Please use the next section for any other comments you wish to share about your Māori Television experience and viewing habits which you may think will benefit the study.