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# **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

## **Institutional Racism and the Role of the State in Building Culturally-Inclusive Societies**

**A Research Report  
submitted in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for the degree of  
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## **Unfinished business : institutional racism and the role of the state in building culturally-inclusive societies**

### ***Abstract***

This Research Report represents the findings from an exploratory, literature-based, comparative foundation study of institutional racism and its influence on the public policy process. The research identifies the causal links between colonisation, constitutional frameworks, present-day government policy and institutional racism.

In this Report I argue that institutional racism, as a case study of public policy failure, is caused by a lack of appreciation of the macro policy environment, by consequent deficiencies in policy problem analysis and specification and by a paucity of impact evaluation at all stages of the policy process.

Institutional racism is a product of the processes of colonisation and of organisational inability to respond to increasing cultural and ethnic diversity because of the controls and rigidity inherent in today's monocultural decision-making paradigms.

It causes public policy and service delivery to have discriminatory impacts on some ethnic or cultural groups in the community, so that their achievements and aspirations are impeded and they suffer social and economic disadvantage relative to the majority cultural group.

Its corrosive effects on social well-being and cohesion demand attention from public policy decision-makers, but it is not a priority on political agendas. It should be. It is 'unfinished business' in all three nations studied in this research, namely New Zealand, Australia and Britain.

Practical illustrations augment the two main themes of the research – namely the impact of colonisation and land alienation on indigenous societies, and the effects of immigration, settlement and integration policies and inadequate social services on new migrants.

The research indicates that institutional racism affects most social service domains in New Zealand, Australia and Britain. Several recurrent policy dilemmas are noted, the resolution of which is critical if institutional racism is to be tackled effectively. The long-term solution involves constitutional change.

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**Brenda Radford**  
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## *Abbreviations*

<b>ACORD</b>	Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination
<b>ATSIC</b>	Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islands Social Justice Commission
<b>CAT</b>	Convention Against Torture and Other Forms of Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
<b>CRE</b>	Commission for Racial Equality (Britain)
<b>CROC</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>CSR</b>	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees
<b>DIMIA</b>	Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Australia)
<b>DPMC</b>	Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (New Zealand)
<b>FRDC</b>	Federal Race Discrimination Commissioner (Australia)
<b>HRC</b>	Human Rights Commission (New Zealand)
<b>HREOC</b>	Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (Australia)
<b>ICCPR</b>	International Convention on Civil and Political Rights
<b>ICERD</b>	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
<b>ICESCR</b>	International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
<b>MPS</b>	Metropolitan Police Service (Britain)
<b>MSD</b>	Ministry of Social Development (New Zealand)
<b>NHRI</b>	National Human Rights Institution
<b>NZH</b>	New Zealand Herald
<b>NZIS</b>	New Zealand Immigration Service
<b>NZQA</b>	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
<b>RRC</b>	Race Relations Conciliator (New Zealand)
<b>SSC</b>	State Services Commission (New Zealand)
<b>TPK</b>	Te Puni Kokiri (the Ministry of Maori Development)
<b>UDHR</b>	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
<b>WARAG</b>	Women's Anti-Racism Action Group