

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Mapping Resilience: The Influence of Race, Class and Gender

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

Master of Education (Adult Education)

**At Massey University, Wellington Campus, Wellington,
New Zealand.**

Geoffrey Allan Lee

2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

...A lasting tribute to Jack would be for all of us to thank and acknowledge, quietly in private and thoughtfully in public, those who sustain us.

Ann Speirs

(Letter to the Otago Daily Daily Times, 20 July 2000).

I love this letter's sentiments. It says it all to me about the study of resilience and the people I have been involved with during my work. So, thank you Ann Speirs who I do not know, my supervisors Nick Zepke and Marg Gilling who I know rather well, the six case study participants who allowed me the privilege of working with you, my colleagues at the Dunedin College of Education, and all the others who I have talked at, about resilience. Thank you also to those of you who have assisted in the proof reading, editing and word processing process.

DEDICATION

To Beryl – the real sustainer.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	II
DEDICATION	II
TABLE OF CONTENTS	III
ABSTRACT.....	VI
CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION.....	1
Preface	1
Introduction.....	1
Thesis Outline	3
The Researcher: Context, Interests and Intellectual Influences.....	4
Research Question	6
Introduction to Resilience.....	6
Race, Class and Gender: How They Impact on Education.....	9
Adult Education: Definitions and Importance	11
CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW.....	14
Resilience.....	14
Introduction.....	14
The Role of the Family, School and Community	17
The Role of the Family	17
The Role of the School	20
The Role of the Community	23
Findings from Specific Case Studies	24
Race, Class and Gender: Their Links to Resilience or the Margins?	27
Introduction.....	27
Race	29
Gender.....	30
Class.....	30

Social Class in Aotearoa/New Zealand	33
Gender Relations and Māori Education in New Zealand	34
Summary.....	36
CHAPTER THREE - UNDERPINNINGS OF THE RESEARCH	39
Introduction.....	39
Conceptual Framework.....	39
The Research Methodology.....	40
Qualitative Research: The Issues for this Study.....	40
Case Studies as Data: The Issues.....	41
Data Collection	44
Autobiography as Data: Implications For This Study.....	46
The Interviews and the Documentary Evidence.....	47
Social Constructivism and Grounded Theory.....	48
Analysing the Evidence	50
Tracing the Methodology	51
The Subjects and Setting	52
CHAPTER FOUR - THE RESEARCHER'S STORY AND THE CASE STUDIES.	
.....	55
Some Critical Incidents in Childhood.....	59
Some Critical Incidents in Adolescence and the Tertiary Experience	62
The Case Study Findings.....	65
CASE STUDY ONE - Raymond: Including Both Worlds.....	65
CASE STUDY TWO - Abby: A Growing Confidence.....	72
CASE STUDY THREE - Eva: A Process of Discovery	77
CASE STUDY FOUR - Isobel: A Special Needs Emphasis.....	84
CASE STUDY FIVE - Mere: An Enthusiast	91
CASE STUDY SIX - Nora: A Study in Determination	95
CHAPTER FIVE - DISCUSSION	101
The Process of Discussion.....	101
Introduction.....	102
Race, Class and Gender - the Literature and the Data: Class	104

Race, Class and Gender – the Literature and the Data: Gender	105
Race, Class and Gender – the Literature and the Data: Race	107
The Themes	108
1. Whānau Support: The conflict between individual and group responsibility 108	
2. Children Providing Motivation for Study.....	110
3. Class Divisions Are Present in New Zealand.....	111
4. The Search for, and understanding of Māori Identity but also the acknowledgement of the Pakeha World	112
5. The Importance of Kohanga Reo.....	114
6. The need to help and repay others and provide a service	114
A Final Summary.....	116
CHAPTER SIX - THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH.....	118
Implications for Practice.....	118
The Workshops	119
Workshop One	119
Workshop Two	120
Workshop Three	121
Limitations of the Research.....	121
Implications for Further Research	121
REFERENCES	123
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1.....	133
Appendix 2.....	135
Appendix 3.....	136
Appendix 4.....	138

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the interpretations of resilience by a number of adult learners in a bilingual teaching programme. The adult learners were enrolled in a College of Education programme and were in their second or third year of training. The relationship of resilience with race, class and gender was explored.

The theoretical tradition of resilience is rooted in research that examines the way that children and adolescents survive in the face of sometimes, severe adversity. Resilience is infrequently used to describe the way that adults cope with challenging or unexpected life events. Less well explored, is the way in which adults themselves interpret resilience processes and consequently negotiate risks and have good outcomes.

This inquiry, designed as a qualitative case study of six participants in a bilingual teaching class and informed by a social constructivist/critical theory perspective, was guided by the following research question: How do race, class and gender impact upon the individual's resiliency?

The case study records include in-depth interviews, documentation records and informal conversation.

The study found that a number of factors impacted upon the individuals' resiliency. However, these factors could be said to be present among all of the population. Individual differences are just as likely to be present in the study of resilience as in any other sociological study. Specific factors included the impact of whānau, the strength the case study participants drew from their children, the assertiveness developed from 'classism' seen to be present within New Zealand society, the finding of one's heritage, the development of Kōhanga and the need to provide a service for others.

How society uses power (power over, or power with) was seen as an important societal factor in the development of resilience.