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Interrogating Antipodean Angst:  
New Zealand's non-Muslim majority talk about Muslims

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

Master of Arts  
in  
Psychology

At Massey University, New Zealand

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2019

### **Abstract**

This study sought to address Douglas Pratt's (2010) claim that New Zealand's non-Muslim majority are experiencing "angst" in relation to a growing Muslim population. To explore this, a discourse analysis was conducted using 12 interviews with non-Muslim New Zealanders to identify how participants construct and maintain ideas surrounding Muslims. Results indicated two discourses, namely, constructing New Zealand society and constructing Muslims. Within constructions of New Zealand society, patterns of talk highlighted that New Zealand was established as a "safe haven", as well as being tolerant and accepting of different religions and cultures. Tolerance and acceptance were conditional on whether Muslims assimilated, and on participants' own security and safety. Within constructions of Muslims, gender-based oppression was created as a problematic difference compared with non-Muslims. Further, Muslims were constructed as "not terrorists, mostly" which suggests that there is a default link between Islam and terrorism. Media was also significant in talk, constructed as intentionally presenting a distorted view of Muslims. Also, in relation to media, participants constructed themselves as ignorant. Overall, the major finding of this research was a lack of angst in talk relating to Muslims. Rather, what was found were minor concerns relating to Muslim dress and some concern about safety, as well as conditional acceptance and a desire to retain social and cultural norms of what is considered "Kiwi". The concept of national identity was used to maintain power relations between those considered New Zealanders, largely Pākehā or New Zealand European, and Muslims. Covert racism, as part of a much broader pattern of talk and not specific to Muslims, was identified in this study.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to give my thanks to those who helped, guided, and enabled me to complete this thesis.

I thank my supervisors Dr. Ella Kahu and Dr. Keith Tuffin who provided intellectual guidance, support, and encouragement during the planning and development of this research work. Your willingness to give your time generously via online meetings, in the reviewing and editing of the work, and your availability for communication has been greatly appreciated.

My gratitude also goes to the participants who shared their thoughts, and for their time and effort. Without this, my thesis would neither have been possible nor completed.

I am thankful for the valuable contributions of friends and family who offered helpful ideas and assistance. In particular, to Mum who offered ongoing intellectual (and emotional!) support.

Finally, I express gratitude to my partner Sanjesh, who has continuously encouraged me to see the end goal, and remember why I wanted to complete this.

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## **CHAPTER 1: Introduction and Literature Review**

The early years of the twenty first century have seen the development of historically unique and challenging contexts which influence the everyday experience of Muslims living in Western countries. This is the era of the so-called “war on terror”, a perspective sparked by the historically defining event that has become known as “9/11” (Sheehi, 2011). 9/11 was a series of Islamic attacks on the New York City World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in September 2001, generating a lasting globally shocked reaction, intensified since by multiple smaller scale Islamic attacks in the West.

The impact of 9/11 has been significant. Western countries abound with messages which reflect fear of Islamic terrorism (Green, 2015). A normalised lens has developed which colours current and emergent Muslim and Islamic events, across a range of countries and societies, in a largely consistent fashion. The war on terror has manifested itself as a range of political, media, and popular culture sources creating a dichotomy of us and them, namely the West versus Islamic terrorists. It is a damaging description for the Muslim diaspora in Western countries, many of whom are new immigrants attempting to adjust peacefully to host countries, at times reportedly subject to discrimination and prejudice on the grounds of guilt by association (Barkdull et al., 2011).

Discussion of viewpoints of Muslims in the Western world is part of a much wider and historic discourse (Bankoff, 2003). Influential work in this area emerged in the 1970s and in particular Said’s (1978; 1997) orientalism construct, which will be explained in depth later, is significant in terms of the development of academic thinking in this area. Muslims are created as the “other” by drawing a line between a supposed rational, peaceful West, and barbaric, warring Muslims: an absolutist position with no overlap between the two.

The background of troubled relations between Western countries and Islam has multiple implications for the ways in which Western citizens co-exist with Muslims living in Western countries. Specific to New Zealand, the work of Douglas Pratt (2010) is relevant. Pratt argues that Muslims in New Zealand are affected by

global responses to Islam, and by prejudiced attitudes towards Muslims living in the West. Further, Pratt introduces the concept of antipodean angst, or uneasiness, to describe what he believes is a gradual but discernible shift in the way New Zealand's non-Muslim majority relates to Muslims on a day to day local basis. This offers a valuable grounding point for this study.

The present study explores talk of the New Zealand majority non-Muslim population co-existing with a growing minority Muslim population. To gather data for this research, one-hour, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 non-Muslim New Zealanders. A discourse analytical approach was used to explore the interview data, and to investigate how subject participants constructed and maintained understandings and perspectives regarding Muslims living in New Zealand.

The following section provides a comprehensive review of the literature to give the context for the research question. Prior to review of the literature, the background study is explained. Following this, a framework of understandings relevant to the research topic is created, which incorporates both the international Western context and the New Zealand local setting. Within the former, key areas of exploration are demographics of Muslims in the West, prejudice and discrimination towards Muslims, international responses of non-Muslims to Muslims living in the West, and the influence of Western socio-cultural and political discourse. In the New Zealand section, the review covers the country's social profile, Muslims in New Zealand, and responses of non-Muslims to Muslims in New Zealand.

### **1.1. Pratt's Work Antipodean Angst**

The grounding study for this work is "Antipodean Angst: Encountering Islam in New Zealand" (Pratt, 2010). Pratt speculates that there is an increasing uneasiness or angst of non-Muslim New Zealanders towards increasing numbers of Muslims within the New Zealand population. While Pratt rejects the notion that New Zealanders are outright afraid of Muslims, he states that New Zealand society is experiencing a "diffuse anxiety" (p. 397) closely linked to international, rather than specifically local, issues with Islam and Muslims in the West. He believes information regarding Muslims is gathered via the "virtually constant daily media barrage that



assails local consciousness” (p. 401) which does not reflect the New Zealand context. In support of his claim, Pratt highlights increasing national concern around security, and cites an increase in negativity of attitude towards Muslims. Pratt believes Muslims living in New Zealand are being affected by global responses to Islam and prejudiced viewpoints towards Muslims attempting to make their homes in the West.

Pratt’s (2010) claims remain questionable for two reasons. Firstly, he does not refer to research-based evidence of angst amongst New Zealanders. Rather, Pratt refers to potential sources of angst such as the 2002 Bali bombings where some New Zealanders were killed, or the country’s proximity to Bali in Indonesia, a majority Muslim nation. He does relate this to a local reaction to such overseas events including increased acts of verbal insult, citing Kolig’s (2010) work. However, the statement assumes initial and continued angst since the event until the writing of the paper in 2010. Secondly, while there is no doubt that New Zealand is influenced to some degree by other Western countries, Pratt’s statement that Muslims in New Zealand are caught up in the Western phenomenon of prejudiced views about Islam is questionable. New Zealand is unique in relation to other Western countries, in such ways as being known internationally for its liberalism and progressiveness (Dann, 2015; Henrickson, 2010), and it may be the case that attitudes are not similar.

## **1.2. Key Definitions**

Clarity regarding key constructs is required around commonly used descriptors integral to this study. Specifically, these descriptors are angst, Muslims and Islam, the West, integration and assimilation, and Islamophobia. Racism, and how it relates to Islamophobia, is also clarified.

### **1.2.1. Angst.**

Angst has both individual and collective meanings. It is defined at the individual level as a “feeling of deep anxiety or dread, typically an unfocused one about the human condition or the state of the world in general” (Angst, 2015, para. 1). A wider explanation of angst is found in its collective form, defined as a “group-based emotion that stems from concern for the future vitality of one’s social group” (Wohl, Squires, & Caouette, 2012, p. 379). Research on collective angst of majority

group members indicates that angst is most commonly experienced when minority members are perceived to be undermining majority group characteristics (Wohl et al., 2012).

### **1.2.2. Muslims and Islam.**

Definition points to Muslims as the actual people of the Islamic faith, while Islam constitutes the practices and beliefs of the religion itself (Cheng, 2015). Popular discourse presents a somewhat confused distinction between Muslim and Islam, with Western media failing to provide conceptual clarity between the two terms (Cheng, 2015). It is critical to keep an accurate distinction in mind, given the potential for a range of consequences to emerge from interchangeable use of the two, such as lack of clarity as to the source of so-called problems, with Muslims and Islam being blamed for various issues including misogyny and violence. Further, the interchangeable use of Muslim and Islam raises questions as to the ways in which understandings are reached about the Muslim population, and the possibility of confusion as to the way in which perspectives are organised and ordered in national mindsets.

### **1.2.3. The West.**

The West or Western countries can present as a homogeneous and cohesive set of locations. However, these terms refer to a range of far-flung heterogeneous geographical areas. While countries included in the West often have much in common and share a modern interconnectedness, the term also incorporates countries which are distinct, separate, and culturally unique (Rane, Ewart, & Martinkus, 2014). It is important to recognise that New Zealand as a Western nation is characterised by much that is distinct politically and culturally from other Western countries as will be explored in detail after considering the international context.

### **1.2.4. Integration and assimilation.**

Definitions of integration and assimilation are significant, particularly in relation to talk regarding minority groups, as the overlap of the two terms has implications in talk (Bowskill, Lyons, & Coyle, 2007). Support for the concept of

integration is the view that cultural groups need to maintain their own beliefs and practices, while also engaging in inter-cultural contact within society. Support for the concept of assimilation is a negative view of cultural groups maintaining their own beliefs and practices, rather than conforming to the dominant group. Within the definitions, integration is an idealised response to a multicultural society, and assimilation is negative for minority groups, who are faced with the expectation of behaving in the way of the dominant culture. However, talk of integration often conceals implicit assimilationism. The weight with which the term is imbued with being a positive and moral ideal makes disagreement with it difficult, but rather than supporting minorities, it has been found to perpetuate power imbalances between the dominant group and minorities in talk (Bowskill et al., 2007; Lyons, Madden, Chamberlain, & Carr, 2011).

#### **1.2.5. Islamophobia.**

Discussion of non-Muslims' viewpoints about Muslims in the West includes the much-researched concept of Islamophobia (Abdel-Fattah, 2017; Ciftci, 2012; Nebhan Aydin, 2017). There is limited agreement about the meaning of the construct (Ciftci, 2012). However, a thorough and much-cited definition is provided by the Runnymede Trust (2017), a British organisation focussed on race equality. In its comprehensive report Islamophobia is defined as "any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life" (Runnymede Trust, 2017, p. 6). As highlighted by this definition, Islamophobia refers to discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, and does not relate to fear as implied by "phobia" in the term (Runnymede Trust, 2017). This is important to clarify, particularly considering that fear relates to the researched construct of angst. The semantics can be compared to the way in which homophobia is used to describe discrimination, not fear, towards lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

It is not only the "phobia" element of Islamophobia that is subject to debate. The "Islam" component of the term is also problematic in that it is often used to refer

to anti-Muslim discrimination, but the factual definition of the term relates to discrimination towards Islam (Runnymede Trust, 2017). This is problematic as it has been argued that any follower of Islam can be subject to criticism due to Islam being a system of beliefs (Runnymede Trust, 2017). While the Runnymede Trust does not dispute this, it notes the effects that this criticism has on Muslims, and that the focus should be on people not belief structures. Furthermore, religion cannot be minimised to a simple choice, as the majority of Muslims are born into Muslim families and are likely to feel normal as followers of Islamic beliefs and practices (Meer & Modood, 2009). A second term “Muslimophobia” has been suggested for use in discussion of discrimination (Erdenir, 2010; Modood, 1997). This term describes fear and hostility towards characteristics of Muslims. However, discrimination against Muslims is arguably inseparable from discrimination against Islam, as this is part of Muslim identity (Cheng, 2015).

#### ***1.2.5.1. Islamophobia and racism – one and the same?***

The connection between Islamophobia and racism is significant in exploration of responses of non-Muslims to Muslims in the West. Islamophobia is described as a “contemporary form of racism and xenophobia” (Nebhan Aydin, 2017, p. 245). The Runnymede Trust (2017), in addition to the aforementioned, lengthier definition of Islamophobia, described it as “anti-Muslim racism” (p. 6). Within these definitions, it is clear that Islamophobia and racism are closely interlinked. However, a study by Hussain & Bagguley (2012) identified that the two concepts can also be analytically distinct. In a discourse analysis in Great Britain, they found Islamophobic sentiment across various ethnic groups, and it manifested as racism among majority-group members.

#### ***1.2.5.2. Racism.***

Western reactions to Muslims provide a fitting example of what is referred to as new racism (Cheng, 2015). There are important differences between old and new racism. Old racism is characterised by cultural intolerance and inequality between types or races of humans. It is also referred to as overt racism, involving “direct, explicit opposition to racial equality and blatant advocacy of white supremacy” (Tuffin, 2008, p. 592). On the other hand, new racism is not about inequality, but

rather differences between groups of humans, and involves “othering” of groups. New racism is also referred to as covert or subtle racism and is socially acceptable, involves denial of personal racism, and “is less about biological weakness and increasingly about beliefs in cultural superiority” (Tuffin, 2008, p. 592). Cheng (2015) states that Muslims are being culturally “othered” and viewed as different in an unchanging way. Debates such as whether discrimination towards Muslims is racism or not, since being Muslim arguably is a choice, provide an example of the sinuous and defensible nature of subtle racism.

### **1.3. Western Context**

#### **1.3.1. Background.**

##### ***1.3.1.1. 9/11 and the war on terror.***

Having established the parameters of this research, this thesis outlines the relevant international backdrop. On September 11, 2001, four American airliners were hijacked by members of al-Qaeda, a militant Islamist group. Two intentionally crashed into the New York City World Trade Centre, one struck the Pentagon building in Washington D.C. and a fourth crashed in Pennsylvania (Green, 2015). The death toll was immense with almost three thousand people losing their lives and thousands injured (Pritchard, 2013). In response to 9/11, the Republican Bush administration, in power in the United States of America (USA) at the time, initiated a multi-faceted and no-holds-barred response, which became known as the war on terror. The war’s main expression was military action in Islamic military strongholds of Afghanistan and Iraq, with the stated aim of eradicating al-Qaeda and any support for the organisation globally. As stated by Bonino (2013), although it has been more than ten years since 9/11, “its symbolic cry still resonates in the Western world” (p. 395). It has been a highly influential event for Muslims in Western countries, as is made clear in a literature review below.

##### ***1.3.1.2. Terrorism.***

Interconnected with the topic of responses of non-Muslims to Muslims in the West is the construct of terrorism. Terrorism is the “actual or threatened use of

violence, directed by groups or individuals against non-combatants, to achieve political ends through intimidation” (Terrorism, 2017, pr. 1). The phenomenon of terrorism has been recognised throughout history in contexts of social and political upheaval. Since the mid-1960s however, technological advances have contributed to a general tenor of international terrorism which has a greater scope for fatality and disruption of day to day life than previous terrorism (Terrorism, 2017). Progressive technological advances such as rapid communication for co-ordination and information of targets have created the capacity to generate greater destruction through more mobile weaponry.

### ***1.3.1.3. Islam and Terrorism.***

Identified as the most active perpetrators of destructive attacks in the Western world are al-Qaeda and their derivative, the Salafi organisation, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) (Westphal, 2018). Al-Qaeda was established by Osama bin Laden, who was a Saudi businessman killed by US forces in 2011 as he was the prime suspect in co-ordinating 9/11 (Terrorism, 2017).

Whether there is a link between terrorism and Islam is a contentious issue as researchers continue to debunk implicit and widely held assumptions of Islam’s connection to terrorism, both within public debate and other academic work (Riley, 2018). Despite the research findings, counter-terrorism operations often target Muslims in an effort to contain Islam, with law-makers often armed with assumptions about the causes of terrorism (Malreddy, 2015).

Despite the fear generated by 9/11 and subsequent ISIS attacks, the recent research base is unsupportive of direct causal links between the Islamic religion and terrorism (Conrad & Milton, 2013; Meftah, 2018; Riley, 2018). Conrad and Milton (2013) used decomposition analysis to explore whether Islam is a contributing factor to terrorism by comparing majority Muslim countries and countries whose majority population is of another religion. While initially they found evidence of Muslim majority states producing higher levels of terrorism, this behavioural difference became insignificant when the researchers accounted for the state’s domestic policies. Crucially, government behaviour towards citizens such as human rights

abuses and discrimination against minorities was found to be more a defining factor in the production of terrorism than religious and cultural factors.

### **1.3.2. Demographics.**

Islam has the second-greatest following of all religions worldwide, exceeded only by Christianity (Barkdull et al., 2011). Muslims are the majority religious group in 49 countries. Almost two-thirds of Muslims live in the Asia-Pacific, and the country with the largest number of Muslims is Indonesia. Approximately 20 per cent of Muslims worldwide live in countries where another faith has a greater following (Pew Research Center, 2009). To illustrate the spread of the Muslim population in Western countries, Muslims make up 5 per cent of Europe (Hackett, 2017), 1.1 per cent of the USA (Lipka, 2017), 2.6 per cent of Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017), and 1 per cent of New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2014). Muslims are culturally, ethnically, and even religiously diverse, as well as geographically widespread (Desilver & Masci, 2017). An understanding of this diversity highlights the complexities of discussions that group together Muslims in the Western world.

### **1.3.3. Responses by non-Muslims to Muslims in the West.**

The various ways in which non-Muslims respond to Muslims in Western countries is encompassed in studies of prejudice and discrimination towards Muslims, the concept of Islamophobia, a limited number of discourse analyses, as well as more simplified but generalisable survey research findings. As well as this, constructs associated with angst, including unease, apprehension, fear, and concern, arise often in discussions within international literature (e.g. Ciftci, 2012; Fish, 2011; Hussain & Bagguley, 2012). This review also considers studies which have focused on variables involved in influencing non-Muslim responses to Muslims in the West. Responses of non-Muslims towards Muslims in New Zealand will be explored in depth later.

#### ***1.3.3.1. Prejudice and discrimination towards Muslims.***

Every study retrieved for this literature review regarding the treatment of Muslims in the West has described some form of discrimination and stigmatisation,

including discriminatory legislation or hostile confrontation in various contexts towards Muslims since 9/11. Since 9/11 the human rights of Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslim) have been threatened by anti-Muslim public discourse, hate crimes, airport screenings and deportations (Kaplan, 2006). Multiple studies document racial prejudice towards Muslims in the USA, Canada, Europe, Great Britain, and Australia (Barkdull et al., 2011; Bonino, 2013; Wilkins-Laflamme, 2018).

To begin, one qualitative study using data from interviews with 34 Muslims, provided an overview of experiences of prejudice and discrimination after 9/11 in Argentina, Australia, Canada, and the USA (Barkdull et al., 2011). Barkdull et al.'s multi-nation approach highlighted issues that encapsulated country and cultural differences, and found strong evidence of stigmatisation and discrimination against Muslims. Muslim communities have experienced many losses since 9/11 such as negative shifts in social standing, and assault on various aspects of their lives based on being Muslim, for example, being on the receiving end of racial slurs, and being called a terrorist in public settings.

The research illustrates the many ways in which Muslims have become something of a "suspect community" (Cherney & Murphy, 2016, p. 480). Bonino (2013) discusses the context of a "culture of control and security" (p. 395) with Muslims being suspects within the British counter-terrorism approach. He states Muslims that exhibit signifiers of Muslim identity such as their skin colour, beard, or hijab are an easy target for discrimination and prejudice at both state-level and community level. Cherney and Murphy (2016) explored the effects on Muslims of being treated as a suspect community in Australia using responses in focus groups. Participants expressed a sense of being highly visible constantly and always under suspicion. Nine out of the 104 participants reported contact with security and police agencies in some way, and all were male and youth or middle-aged. Experiences included having passports seized and being questioned about associations with those under police surveillance. As noted by researchers, these numbers may seem low compared to comments that Muslims are overpoliced. However, they note, a sense of being surveyed and policed is reproduced through what they observe and experience, not necessarily direct contact with authorities.



Beginning with discrimination in specific locations at the highest level of power, in Europe, discriminatory legislation regarding Muslims' expression of their religion has also been implemented. In 2004, France banned the wearing of the hijab within the public-school system (Scott, 2007). Such ethnocentric legislation is also imposed in Belgium, Bulgaria and Holland (Bilsky, 2009). Not only is this intolerant and prejudiced in itself, but these regulations contribute to discriminatory experiences of veiled Muslim women (Fredette, 2015). Overt discrimination towards this group was recorded from non-Muslims as well as other Muslims in France (Mirza, 2013). In Switzerland in 2009, legislation was implemented based on a referendum banning new minarets, the tower part of a mosque (Scalvini, 2016). The reasoning behind it was to retain Switzerland's cultural order, and the campaign exploited anti-immigrant sentiment in the country. Both examples of discriminatory legislation sparked debate surrounding immigration, retaining of national identity, and safety and security.

Day to day discrimination has been reported in Great Britain and Europe. In the European Union (EU), the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (2017) created a report based on the second EU Minorities and Discrimination Survey with approximately 26,000 individuals from different immigrant or ethnic minority groups. They found the respondents were faced with discrimination across multiple settings including accessing public services or at work. Discrimination was in various forms including hate crimes and harassment, and was triggered by characteristics such as the person's name, skin colour, or visible religious clothing.

Further, a German study used focus groups of German Muslims to analyse discourse pertaining to their experience of discrimination and national/religious attachment (Holtz, Dahinden, & Wagner, 2013). They found that only a few participants talked about individual discrimination by non-Muslims, but all participants spoke about collective discrimination and rejection; that is, a group perception of widespread negative stereotyping of Muslims. It was this individual perception of group discrimination that triggered participants to reinforce their own Islamic affiliation, and strengthen their own boundaries around their identity.

In Canada, Wilkins-Laflamme (2018) used data from the 2014 General Social Survey and the 2011 Canadian Election Study and found that in four areas of Canada,

between 18 to 35 per cent of Muslims reported having experienced either religious, ethnic, or cultural discrimination, or religious discrimination only. They also found there was a slight spike in Muslims experiencing religious, ethnic, or cultural discrimination in 2009, in comparison with 2004, as well as a reduction in this form of discrimination in 2014. Interestingly, they found that Muslims who were born outside Canada or North America were less likely to experience discrimination. The researcher hypothesised that this was due to immigrant Muslims being less likely to interact with the majority in everyday settings.

The research base of one of New Zealand's closest neighbours, Australia, is revealing. The Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) conducted public consultations and found vilification towards Muslim Australians was consistently reported by Muslims, with many stating discriminations occurred daily or regularly. The report also stated that a number of participants indicated they experienced a strong sense of us versus them after Sydney raised an official terror alert in August 2014. Such treatment intensified following a siege at the Sydney Lindt Café in December 2014, in which a lone gunman held eight employees and ten customers hostage for 16 hours resulting in three deaths, including the gunman (Michael, Zaw, & Richard, 2014). While it was later confirmed not to be an act of terrorism, the perpetrator had links to Islam. There were heightened public concerns about national safety, and this affected how Muslims were treated, in such ways as being asked, "Are you a terrorist?" Regular discrimination and vilification were also reported to the Australian Human Rights Commission by representatives of Muslim organisations, including verbal discrimination and prejudice in the form of offensive letters. Muslim women who wore religious clothing said they were fearful of abuse on Australian public transport.

Furthermore, veiled Muslim women are particularly vulnerable to discrimination due to being distinctively Muslim. Studies from the USA, Great Britain, and Australia document discrimination towards hijabi women from strangers in public such as menacing looks, angry shouting, to serious acts of violence (Everett et al., 2015; Hyder, Parrington, & Hussain, 2015; Sayed & Pio, 2010). Hijabi women face barriers to career development due to slower acknowledgement of potential in comparison with colleagues, low expectations of job offers, and greater structural

discrimination due to high visibility in mainstream culture (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; Hyder et al., 2015; Robinson, 2016).

This review of literature considering treatment of Muslims in the West by non-Muslims is disheartening. Studies across multiple continents and countries describe acts of discrimination, from the highest levels of power (legislative action) down to encounters at street-level on an everyday basis. This discrimination encompasses overt acts such as hate crimes and verbal assault, and covert actions, which are often argued to be acceptable, such as reduced likelihood of job offers, or increased likelihood of being treated as suspects by those in authority.

#### ***1.3.3.2. Islamophobia.***

How Islamophobia can thrive in colonised Western societies is explored in a study by Muslim author Abdel-Fattah (2017). She utilises William Du Bois' (1903) classic work on racial conceptions of African Americans in the US, and the psychiatrist Fanon's (2008) explanations of race and dehumanisation to explain what Abdel-Fattah (2017) cites as deeply-entrenched Islamophobia in Australian society. This flourishes within the historical racial context in Australia, and a modern society within which the dominant non-Muslim groups create precepts. She identifies strongly nationalistic sentiments which are quick to cite difference as "un-Australian." An example of Islamophobia is when Muslims are expected to express dissent against violent events by Islamic extremist groups. As Abdel-Fattah (2017) notes, Muslims being expected to express dissent in reaction to acts of terror by Islamist groups only adds to the widely held view that Muslims support Islamic terrorism with the default option only negated by active voicing of opposition to Islamic violence.

#### ***1.3.3.3. Discourse analyses of non-Muslims in the West.***

There are few discourse analyses of the talk of non-Muslims in the West. Generally, analyses focus on discourse analysis of media, or analyses of Muslim discourse. However, two pertinent studies have been identified.

Firstly, a study from Great Britain analysed discourse in interviews with both Muslims and non-Muslims about experiences following the London bombings (an Islamic terrorist attack in 2005) (Hussain & Bagguley, 2012). Although the study found

evidence for divergent views from dominant political rhetoric, for example, concern for civilians being harmed in Iraq as a result of the war on terror, it also found that non-Muslims from all ethnicities had views of Islam that were negative. This aspect aligned with dominant political discourses within Great Britain regarding securitisation. Securitisation is the marking of particular groups as a threat to society through language and social relations (Van Rythoven, 2015). While anti-Muslim sentiment aligned across non-Muslim participants of all ethnicities, it manifested as racism and white nationalistic identification among majority-group non-Muslims (Hussain & Bagguley, 2012). This, researchers noted, supports the idea that racism is analytically distinctive from Islamophobia, as the two frameworks are disjoined in this example. It also highlighted how political rhetoric on securitisation against Islam cuts through ethnic social divisions, creating a popular Islamophobic narrative that works to legitimise the political agenda.

Secondly, Abdel-Fattah (2016) interviewed locals of a white-Australian majority coastal town about their experience of encounters with the many Lebanese Muslims that visit during holiday periods. She draws upon Hage's (1998) framework of "Whiteness" to analyse interview data and explore Islamophobia within a culture in which being white has the highest cultural capital. What Abdel-Fattah (2016) found was that this framework allowed her to identify and analyse the deployment of Islamophobia by local white Australians as it is expressed in everyday encounters. Research findings indicated that locals perceived visiting Lebanese Muslims as threatening, out of place, and using areas in the town in inferior ways as to how they would use this space themselves. Specifically, participants objected to the presence of large groups of Lebanese Muslims exhibiting what was perceived as lower class, loud, and rude behaviour.

The focus in both of these discourse analyses was Islamophobic and racist talk of non-Muslims about Muslims in the West. It is clear from these two analyses that discourse in this area cuts across multiple political, historical, and current issues of immigration, ethnicity, and how non-Muslims in the West deal with difference. Such discourse studies provide in-depth analysis of small groups as opposed to poll and survey research which will be discussed next.

#### ***1.3.3.4. Survey research.***

Findings from international surveys reflect strongly held attitudes towards Muslims living in Western countries and underline the fact that significant numbers of respondents in USA, Canada, and Australia are critical towards Muslims (Ciftci, 2012). To give an overview, a study by Ciftci (2012) analysed individual level data from Pew Global Attitudes Surveys of respondents from the USA, Great Britain, France, Germany and Spain. They found evidence of Islamophobic attitudes ranging from general dislike of Muslims to the idea that Muslims support terrorist organisations. Further, they found respondents' orientations varied widely across the nations, and were most negative in Spain and Germany. Respondents from the USA were more likely to perceive Muslims as terrorists than those in Germany, France, and Great Britain. Interestingly, Ciftci (2012) found respondents perceived the Islamic religion in a less negative way than Muslims as individuals, with a lower proportion connecting Islamic identification with violence, than with Muslims as violent.

In another overview study, Pew Research Center, a social science centre based in the USA, surveyed individuals from 12 countries including Canada and Great Britain (Poushter, 2017). Research findings indicated pervasive concern about the threat of Islamic extremism from Muslims living in Western countries. Seventy-nine per cent of survey responders from Great Britain stated they were either somewhat or very concerned. In Spain and Germany, approximately half the respondents were very concerned. Research questions were framed around the construct of concern, which is not an informative term, but findings pointed to the value of exploring what was being expressed in a more clear-cut way.

Specifically in relation to the USA, two studies provide indications of negativity towards Muslims in the West. Pew Research Center (2017) found Americans rated Muslims lowest on a warmth scale of various religious groups. On a scale of zero to 100 with the lowest being cold, sentiment towards Muslims was rated 48. Glazier and Miller (2016) compared reasons for negative attitudes of non-Muslim Americans towards Muslims and Muslims outside the USA, towards non-Muslim Americans, using data from Pew Research surveys in 2008 and 2011. They found that domestic politics was a determinant for both groups. That is, when citizens were

unhappy with the politics occurring in their country, they may seek to place blame on the other. Negative attitudes may stem from out-group bias, and not based on irreconcilable factors. Interestingly, Glazier and Miller also found that American respondents with stronger religious belief were not more likely to have anti-Muslim viewpoints.

In Canada, Wilkins-Laflamme (2018) used data from the 2014 General Social Survey and the 2011 Canadian Election Study to measure the presence of negative feelings towards Muslims among the general adult population. They looked at four areas of Canada and found that on average, when compared with Aboriginal people, racial minorities, whites and Catholics, Muslims were liked the least on a scale of really dislike starting at zero to really like at 100. Muslims were rated at between 56 to 77 on this scale, dependent on area. Wilkins-Laflamme also found that negative attitudes towards Muslims were greater in the lower educated, conservative, and older respondent populations.

Closer to home, there is significant survey research underlining negativity towards Muslims in Australia. Sentiment towards Muslims was measured in the Scanlon Foundation's 2014 Mapping Social Cohesion report (Markus, 2014). The report indicated that 25 per cent of respondents had somewhat negative or very negative attitudes towards Muslims. Also, the Essential Report (2016a; 2016b) provided survey results for whether Australians are concerned about the number of Muslim people in Australia before and after advising them of the fact that 2.2 per cent of the Australian population is Muslim. Initially 53 per cent were very or somewhat concerned, which reduced after 2011. Also, the rate of concern was higher in people over 55 years old, with 60 per cent being very or somewhat concerned. After being advised of the demographics, 53 per cent reduced to 47 per cent, indicating a minor lack of demographic awareness amongst Australians. Lastly, participants were questioned as to whether they agreed with current US President Donald Trump's controversial, temporary ban on people from seven Muslim countries entering the USA (Essential Report, 2017). While this is arguably an extreme and unwarranted policy, more than a third of Australian respondents agreed with it. Unfortunately, as this is an isolated survey response, it does not allow for any meaningful understanding as to what led respondents to agree.

Considering the negativity of responses to surveys of non-Muslims regarding Muslims in various Western countries, it is clear that Muslims are under scrutiny amongst non-Muslim groups. While polls and surveys do not provide in-depth understandings of why or how such attitudes are being recorded, they do provide large-scale generalised understandings which are helpful for providing indications of attitudes. It would have been helpful in the aforementioned surveys to break-down variables affecting responses regarding Muslims, and studies exploring this are discussed next.

#### ***1.3.3.5. Variables influencing non-Muslim viewpoints towards Muslims.***

Identifying variables that influence non-Muslim viewpoints towards Muslims presents a complex picture as multiple factors have a role to play. A significant factor that arose from the literature review (second to media influence, which will be explored in depth later), is personal religiosity. This factor provides some insight to the present study as participants will also be asked about their personal religious affiliation. As well as religiosity, other less researched influences on attitudes towards Muslims were considered. These include perceived threat, cognitive ability and perceptions of deviant behaviour of Muslims.

Several studies identify that non-Muslims' own religiosity serves as a defining influence on attitudes towards Muslims. There is a complex interplay between religious affiliation and attitudes towards other religious groups. In Denmark, analyses provided evidence of Christians having more negative implicit attitudes towards immigrants than Muslims, and atheists demonstrating more negative attitudes towards Muslims than immigrants (Anderson & Antalikova, 2014). Another study looked at non-Muslim college studies in the USA and found that people with atheist or Unitarian Universalist worldviews had more positive attitudes towards Muslims than people with evangelical Christian or Eastern Orthodox views (Rockenbach et al., 2017).

Additionally, in Europe, Ribberink, Achterberg, and Houtman (2017) used secularisation theories to explore why anti-Muslim sentiment is high in secular Western European countries. They used data from a 2008 European Values Study in a multi-level analysis to test two theories of secularisation. These are that firstly,

there is religious competition between orthodox Protestants in Western Europe and Muslims, and secondly, there are value conflicts between the non-religious majority and Muslims. The study found that orthodox Protestants with higher religiosity were more tolerant of Muslims, suggesting solidarity between those of any religion in a secular context, making the first theory questionable in this instance. Regarding the second theory, researchers stated that while more investigation was necessary they could not endorse the idea that the non-religious are more likely to have anti-Muslim sentiment. Findings indicated that more secular countries are more tolerant of Muslims. Indeed, some of the strongest anti-Muslim sentiment was identified among the non-religious. Additionally, Ciftci (2012) did not find any correlation between anti-Muslim attitudes and Christian identity across various Western countries, including the USA, Great Britain, and France.

Considering different variables, the same researcher, using data from Pew Global Attitudes Surveys, investigated determinants of Western anti-Muslim sentiment (Ciftci, 2012). The researcher tested connections between perceived threat, cognitive ability, and social identity with attitudes linking Muslims to violence. It was found that perceived threat was the strongest link with anti-Muslim attitudes, and higher education reduced negative sentiment. Importantly, a strong link was that respondents were more likely to link Muslims and terrorism if they felt physically threatened, or believed their culture was at threat. For instance, a respondent was more likely to hold an anti-Muslim attitude or connect Muslims to acts of violence if they believed Muslims were not integrated into society.

Perceptions of deviant behaviour of Muslims may also be a determinant in negative perceptions of Muslims. A set of German studies considered the variable of German non-immigrant perceptions of deviant behaviour by Muslims and subsequent discriminatory intentions (Kauff, Asbrock, Issmer, Thörner, & Wagner, 2015). In these longitudinal and cross-sectional studies, the perceived behaviours by Muslims that were found to increase perceived threat, and in turn discrimination, were Muslims not being willing to integrate, and hostility to the majority group. Researchers found this correlation was particularly strong for those described as right-wing, which is a social attitude motivated by security and conformity (Duckitt, 2001).



In summary, there is much to be considered when researching indications of angst in non-Muslim talk about Muslims living in New Zealand. The three broad areas of discourse analyses, polls/survey research, and studies considering variables involved in response to Muslims by non-Muslims indicated many emotions associated with angst such as concern, unease, and general negativity. This negativity and anxiety reflects in the review of discrimination and prejudice towards Muslims in the West, highlighting that Muslims are not psychologically treated safely or respectfully. Another significant area of influence is the media's role in non-Muslims' response to Muslims, and it is to this area that I now turn.

#### **1.3.4. Western socio-cultural and political discourse.**

A wealth of literature considers public and media discourse of Muslims in the Western world. Scholars as far back as a century ago have observed that individuals' knowledge of the world is often less a reflection of personal experience than of second-hand sources of knowledge (Rane et al., 2014). A substantial body of work explores public discourse and the role of the media in influencing how individuals in the West respond to Muslims. This is a historical issue, long-documented. The following section draws upon Said's (1978; 1997) foundational work on Western depictions of Islam. Further, the literature will be reviewed relating to Western media, how this affects society members' views of Muslims, how Muslims perceive depictions in media, the place of social media in public perspectives of Muslims and Islam, and political discourse.

##### **1.3.4.1. *Orientalism.***

It is important to locate discussion of viewpoints of Muslims in the Western world as part of a longstanding historic discourse (Bankoff, 2003). Said's influential (1978; 1997) works on orientalism are significant to understanding Western media and popular culture approaches to Islam and Muslims. Orientalism is the way the West patronisingly represents and organises discourse regarding the "East" as innately different, uncivilised, and in opposition to the West (Said, 1978). Two sides are created between the rational and peaceful West, and the irrational and barbaric Islamic world. It is also argued that Arabs in particular are constructed as one

ethnicity and demonised under the ideology of orientalism (Sheehi, 2011). This distinction may have developed as an ideological consequence of the colonialist backdrop of Western countries, which historically served to justify the takeover and exploitation of indigenous people (Sensoy, 2016).

Said's (1978) work on orientalism remains highly relevant today, revived via each new media format as time passes (Green, 2015). Consistent with other scholars, Said ascertained in the 2003 preface to his book "Orientalism" (1978) that there has been a fear-based regression of orientalist ideas apparent across media sources and popular culture since 9/11. In illustration of this, political discourse relating to the war on terror in the USA was based on an us versus them divide (Green, 2015). Within this political discourse in the aftermath of 9/11, Muslim terrorists were described as malevolent and anti-freedom, while Americans and the Western world were described as benevolent and in need of protection from removal of freedoms of religion, speech, and democracy. Another problematic dichotomy created in public discourse in the aftermath of 9/11 and continuing today, is a bad Muslim versus good Muslim narrative. Seemingly positive actions such as politicians (for example, George Bush, the President of the USA at the time, after 9/11), vocally rejecting the generalisation of Muslims as violent, unfortunately resulted in a reductive distinction. That is, if a Muslim outwardly does not align themselves with Western ideologies, they simply become a violent and hate-filled other.

The orientalist dichotomy separating Islam and the West can be viewed in television news coverage, newspapers, magazines, cinema, television shows, and mainstream news websites. This dichotomy is created in two ways. Firstly, the binary is created through building on stereotypical Muslim characters (Sensoy, 2016). An image is constructed through visual sources and discourse of the Muslim man as angry, barbaric, and oppressive, while the Muslim woman is lacking agenda, oppressed, and victimised. The characterisation in public discourse creates a fallacy accepted as truth because of the frequency by which it is presented, creating familiarity, as well as by the parallel nature of the characterisation across many formats. Another mode by which such discourse becomes believable is that elements of reality are intertwined with stereotypes (Sensoy, 2016), for example, the use of

certain weapons on a television show that are culturally accurate to certain Arab Muslim cultures.

Secondly, us and them is accentuated by maintaining a narrative of a singular West. Kabir and Hamid (2015) suggest that media coverage after the 2006 terror plot at Heathrow airport coloured the incident as though it was an attack on the whole West. It is this type of distortion that illustrates the presence of an imagined line between Islam and the West, and highlights the ways in which localised attacks become generalised to all Western countries (Kabir & Hamid, 2015).

There has been much debate about the concept of orientalism and Said's (1978; 1997) writings (Malreddy, 2015). Such criticisms include the idea that Said did not accurately apply the grounding frameworks he claimed to apply, that of philosopher Foucault, who developed forms of critical analysis (Clifford, 1988). Clifford argued orientalism should not have been reduced to text representations of oriental work, and rather expanded the concept to what the texts said about themselves as well. A more recent critique of Said's work highlighted that it depends too much on a fictional European stereotype, created to oppose the oriental stereotype (Warraq, 2007).

#### ***1.3.4.2 Media coverage of Muslims.***

Media play a defining role in Muslim and non-Muslim relations in the West. The grounding study for this research, "Antipodean Angst" (Pratt, 2010) highlights the "constant daily media barrage that assails local consciousness" (p. 401) in regard to beliefs about Muslims in New Zealand. The social construction of problems as defined in media, and the political influence of this, are salient when considering responses of non-Muslims to Muslims and to Islam. The world has moved into a radically evolving information age with the influence of the internet and social media. The effect of social media will also be reviewed in the literature.

##### ***1.3.4.2.1. Theory.***

Media framing of information and images, and the selective inclusion and exclusion of these, influence society's perspectives on these issues (Entman, 1993). Certain facets of reality are selected and given prominence through that piece of

information being made more memorable and meaningful. There is a focus on the “exceptional over the ordinary” (McQueeney, 2014, p. 298). By framing in this way, the media defines the problem, provides one specific moral evaluation, and whether implicitly or explicitly, recommends a problem resolution. It is important to note that focus on a particular social problem as more important than other social problems is a form of interpretation (Best, 2012). Media is arguably not a direct cause of Islamophobia or discrimination, but rather a reinforcer of damaging assumptions about Muslims (McQueeney, 2014).

In terms of terrorism being constructed as a significant social issue, a simplified view is offered (McQueeney, 2014). The influential media profile of such events as 9/11 and the London bombings, together with politicised social media forums such as Facebook and Twitter, have seen conventional Western thought develop which strongly links Islam, Muslims, and the perpetration of terror. Media content since 9/11 regarding Muslims is dominated by negative political discourse regarding securitisation, creating concerns regarding everyday public safety in such contexts as airports and sporting grounds (Rane et al., 2014). A risk to national values is also a thinly veiled media offering, for example, the framing of Islamic dress as problematic and even dangerous. As well as this, it is made to seem as though terrorists can simply be caught and killed.

The sheer volume of information coming our way means that conclusions are being reached in a heuristic fashion (Rane et al., 2014). Rather than process and critically consider large amounts of information about Muslims, individuals may instead use prototypical characteristics of all Muslims to reach conclusions about an individual, or only consider the obvious and readily available information about Islam and Muslims in the media. Interestingly, Nebhan Aydin (2017) states that such connections between Islam and terrorism are encouraged by Islamic terrorist organisations in order to claim more ground and increase recruits. Notably, there is no evidence to suggest media or formats in popular culture seek to create negative stereotyping or indoctrination of Islam versus the West (Rane et al., 2014). Rather, there is an unintentional complicity in power imbalances in ways such as building on historically built stereotypes, or utilising images of fear as they are often exciting and more popular to watch.

#### *1.3.4.2.2. Research studies.*

It is clear from the research that influential media sources in the Western world are complicit in inaccurate and simplified explanations of Muslims (Sharifi, Ansari, & Asadollahzadeh, 2017; Silva, 2017). To begin, studies regarding the USA will be considered. Sharifi et al. (2017) critically analysed discourse on CNN, a mainstream media provider, to highlight the orientation of CNN in stories relating to Muslims. They found evidence for bias and stereotyping that align with Islamophobic attitudes. Any discussion of Muslims was generally accompanied by concepts such as terrorism and backwardness. In another study, Silva (2017) discursively analysed 607 New York Times articles published between 1969 to 2014. Grounded in Said's (1978) work, he looked at how the articles construct radicalisation, and illustrated the ways in which Muslims are constructed as outsiders to Western culture. The broad range of media articles analysed meant Silva (2017) was able to account for historical developments, and gain a greater perspective of the effect of a single crisis on media coverage. The researcher demonstrated how discourses regarding radicalisation provide simplistic and generalised versions of political violence. It is highlighted how the media contributes to popularly held views of radicalisation being synonymous with Islamic fundamentalism. The East versus West distinction is identified in media discourse, contributing to widely held negative perceptions of Islam. Silva (2017) suggested that greater scrutiny and discernment are required when considering how influential institutions define and construct understandings of radicalisation and terrorism.

Media colouring of information is also a significant problem in Great Britain and Europe. Scalvini (2016) analysed discourse of news coverage in the aftermath of the Swiss referendum to ban minarets in France, Germany, Italy and Great Britain in 2009 and 2010. He found three common discourses. The first was liberal-pluralist, which emphasised morality and the national need to include other religions. The second was nationalist, emphasising in-group superiority and aiming to preserve national social representations. The third was exclusionist, positing that Islam is incompatible with Western values. Unfounded assumptions were also identified, for instance, that Muslims are not an inclusive part of the national communities in question, and that they can be considered citizens only if they renounce their religious and cultural identity (Scalvini, 2016).

Much research documents that media coverage of Muslims and Islam relating to terrorism influences the perspective of the media consumer (Das, Bushman, Bezemer, Kerkhof, & Vermeulen, 2009; Saleem, Prot, Anderson, & Lemieux, 2015; Von Sikorski, Schmuck, Matthes, & Binder, 2017). Das et al. (2009) tested predictions on Muslim and non-Muslim participants in Europe. Their work was based on terror management theory regarding the effects of terrorism news on prejudice. Their findings indicated that media stories regarding terrorism increased death-related thoughts, specifically themes related to one's own mortality, and unsurprisingly, this increased prejudice towards members of outgroups. Death-related thoughts were further increased when terrorism was psychologically close, meaning the threat was in a familiar area, and when the consumer of the news had low self-esteem.

Also in Europe, Von Sikorski et al. (2017) conducted a controlled experiment to test whether news coverage linking terrorism to Islam triggers fear in non-Muslims. They found that such coverage increased fears and hostile viewpoints towards Muslims, but only when the individual had prior experiences with Muslims that were negative and/or moderately positive. The viewpoints of individuals that had had very positive experiences with Muslims were not affected after watching coverage of Islamic terrorism. Furthermore, Saleem et al. (2015) used data from experimental and correlational studies to explore the extent to which exposure to Muslims in the media increased support for policies that harmed Muslims living day to day life in the US. Their studies revealed that connections made by the media between terrorism and Muslims was strongly associated with support for military action in majority Muslims countries, as well as greater support for policies such as civil restrictions that harmed Muslims within the US and internationally. Saleem et al. (2015) found that associating Muslims with terrorism in the media also increased support for restriction of Muslim liberties such as religious dress.

#### *1.3.4.2.3. Muslim perspectives on media coverage of Muslims and Islam.*

Review of the literature regarding Muslim perspectives of media coverage of Muslims and Islam, overwhelmingly highlights that Muslims believe the media misrepresents Muslims by focussing on negativity. In the Australian Human Rights Commission (2015) report, it was documented that this was strongly the case with

Muslims and views on media coverage of Muslims, terrorism, and national security. It was frequently stated that various media formats overwhelmingly and selectively focussed on negatives. The report found that in discussion across all minority groups, they made a consistent connection between racism and media.

Another Australian study by Ewart, Cherney and Murphy (2017) explored Muslim attitudes to news coverage of Islam and Muslims in Australia. The researchers used data from focus groups and found Australian Muslims expressed concern for the divisiveness created by media portrayal, such as an ongoing connection between Islam and Muslims, and terrorism. Not all findings were negative, however. Positive outcomes about news coverage of Islam and Muslims were also noted such as increased interest and curiosity about Islam, suggesting media consumers are not always passive absorbers of information.

In addition, a British study used interviews with 18 international Muslim students to explore perspectives on British media portrayal of Islam (Brown & Richardson, 2016). Research findings indicated that the students considered representation of Islam to be negative, and associated with terrorism, poverty and conservatism. Media was also viewed as tending towards homogenisation of Muslims. This misrepresentation of Islam saddened, and at times angered, participants. Interviewees stated that no effort was being made by media to balance the negative portrayal of Islam, and strongly believed media should be more responsible in reporting.

To summarise, it is well-documented that influential Western media sources are complicit in overgeneralised explanations of Muslims (Sharifi et al., 2017; Silva, 2017). This is further confirmed by research highlighting that Muslims consider Western media coverage of Muslims and Islam to misrepresent them and their religion, and overwhelmingly focus on negatives (Brown & Richardson, 2016; Ewart et al., 2017). To further complicate matters, the nature of the media has been changing at a drastic rate, and social media is explored next.

#### *1.3.4.2.4. Social media.*

The speed and degree to which information is now dispatched is on a new level from even a decade ago, with the advent of internet access and 24/7

international news websites (Rane et al., 2014). Interactivity has also been introduced through social media, facilitating and encouraging the airing of individual opinion, and providing the ability to agree or disagree with the click of a button (Fuchs, 2013). The internet has permeated societies globally, and importantly, is often the first source of information for younger generations. Social media nowadays functions differently from traditional media in that society members are not always passive consumers but also active participants in creating content.

The use of social media in the landscape of Muslim and non-Muslim relations in Western countries is both constructive and unhelpful (Rane et al., 2014). One example of the former was the wildfire response on Twitter, a social media platform, to the video of a suspected Islamic terrorist knife attack at a London train station in 2015 ("Man who said 'You ain't no Muslim, bruv'", 2015). A non-Muslim bystander, and poster of the video, is heard shouting at the perpetrator, "you ain't no Muslim bruv". This became a coined phrase in Great Britain, understood and adopted by many levels of British society. David Cameron, Prime Minister at the time, commented that it was a succinct way to express his agreed sentiment that being Muslim does not mean one supports violence, a constructive observation.

It is not difficult to find examples of destructive content regarding Muslims on social media. For instance, Ekman (2015) used a combination critical discourse analysis with social network analysis, to find that a continuum of viewpoints exists. The analysis explores the discursive strategies employed by three influential Islamophobic far-right websites and blogs. One of these was US-based, one European, and one Swedish. This study found that online Islamophobic rhetoric is fortified by prejudiced ideas in mainstream media, that the principle of freedom of speech is used to validate racist statements, and that racist viewpoints are offered and defended as positive Western values. The researchers note that far-right Islamophobic narratives should not be considered isolated, but rather as a trend that has developed and been maintained by long-standing racist media portrayals and by political discourse relating to Muslims. Another study by Törnberg and Törnberg (2016) utilised critical discourse analysis and topic modelling to identify patterns of representation in a Swedish internet forum regarding the words Muslim and Islam. Findings included the portrayal of Muslims as homogeneous and inevitably involved



with violence and conflict. The researchers also found that this format amplified and reinforced that which was currently stated in traditional forms of media. Studies considering social media in the role of Muslim perceptions is a relatively recent area of research which can provide some insight into the ways in which media contribute to negativity and misunderstandings of Muslims in the West. Due to the intertwined nature of political discourse and media, this will be explored next.

#### ***1.3.4.3. Political discourse.***

Political discourse and media discourse are intertwined and incorporate a complex interplay of factors that are clarified by the literature. It is well-documented that the media focuses on exceptional, or more memorable, over the mundane (McQueeney, 2014). Public perceptions are strongly influenced by media selectivity and misrepresentations by media bias can be instrumental in pushing particular political agendas (McQueeney, 2014). For example, political decisions such as the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 were made easier by citizen perceptions of Arabs and Muslims as dangerous, based on media and historical constructions of Muslims in the West (Shaheen, 2001). Politicians also make use of public polls to focus on certain policies (McQueeney, 2014).

Islamophobic discourse has been found in parliamentary discussions in the Western world. A discursive study considered trends in representation of Islam in the US congress before and after 9/11 (Coen, 2017). Persistent themes were found relating to Islam, including ideological divisions between Islam and the West, a moderate-fundamental categorisation of all Muslims, and securitisation (Van Rythoven, 2015). Another study examining political debate surrounding the minaret construction ban in Switzerland (Cheng, 2015) concluded that the defining argument was a “slippery slope fallacy” (p. 582), which is the flawed argument that a minor issue relates to major consequences. Multiple issues were mentioned that simply did not relate to building minarets, such as forced marriages and halal food. Discussion overlooked that there were no problems caused by actual minarets in the country.

A range of political influences are at play in representations of Muslims and Islam within Western countries. In the Netherlands, one study analysed how Geert Wilders, a far-right political leader in the Netherlands, justified discrimination

towards Muslims (Verkuyten, 2013). Through examination of parliamentary discourse and newspaper articles, it was found that Wilders consistently distinguished between Islam as a religion and Muslims as people. This averted accusations of discrimination or prejudice towards Muslims. By defending Western values against Islam, rather than against Muslims, he framed his arguments as self-defence and therefore legitimate and necessary. Patterns of discourse such as this tend to categorise people on the grounds of religion. This dehumanises individuals and offers justification for negative everyday discrimination.

Political agendas and the discourse associated with these are closely intertwined with media influences. Complexity is heightened in relation to how each separate Western country is affected by media, and what perspectives the media discourse about Muslims generates. Overall, it is clear Islamophobia is a significant problem in political discourse and both influences the public, and is influenced by the public.

In summary, this study's focus on non-Muslim talk in regard to Muslims in New Zealand has been situated within a broad Western context. A background of trouble relations between the West and Islam has been explored, as well as considering how non-Muslims have been reacting to Muslims within Western countries. Importantly, media is a dominant defining factor regarding responses to Muslims in the West. The literature regarding media coverage of Muslims highlighted the media practice of negative stereotyping, framing of Muslims as dangerous, and racism across various formats, including social media. Further, the review was situated within its historical context through exploration of orientalism. The local New Zealand context will be explored next.

#### **1.4. The New Zealand Context**

##### **1.4.1. Social profile.**

New Zealand is a small country of 4.9 million people (Stats NZ, 2013b). It is a multi-cultural and multi-religious, secular country. Unique to New Zealand is that it has declared itself bicultural since the mid-1970s, with partnership being between Māori (the indigenous people) and the Crown, embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi (Mein Smith, 2012).

The Treaty is the underpinning foundation to Māori and Pākehā relations in New Zealand (Mein Smith, 2012). Pākehā are New Zealanders of European descent (Macalister, 2005). The Treaty was signed in 1840, and laid down principles of equality between Māori and Pākehā, or New Zealand European, on shared land. Throughout history, Treaty promises of equal rights and self-governance of both Māori and Pākehā have been undermined or ignored by policies of the Crown. This has meant that in practice, New Zealand culture is dominated by the majority Pākehā group. The repercussions of this are seen in indicators of social and economic wellbeing of Māori compared to Pākehā (Sibley & Barlow, 2009). For example, Māori make up 14.9 per cent of the population (Stats NZ, 2013a), but make up 50 per cent of the prison population (Department of Corrections, 2018). In the current day, the New Zealand government and public discourse make efforts to create a national narrative that is both Māori and Pākehā. To attempt repair for cultural damage, government policies include compensatory features such as redressing land loss in monetary terms (Mein Smith, 2012).

To illustrate New Zealand's demographic makeup, in the 2013 census, 74 per cent identified as of European descent, 14.9 per cent as Māori, 11.8 per cent as Asian, 7.4 per cent as Pacific Islander, and 1.2 per cent as Middle Eastern, Latin American, or African (Stats NZ, 2014). Immigration has been a major factor in the development of New Zealand's ethnic make-up. By 2013, 25 per cent of the NZ population was born overseas (Stats NZ, 2014).

New Zealand is a country in which immigration has been a topic of contention and polarised viewpoints in recent decades (Johnston, Gendall, Trlin & Spoonley, 2010). Historically, streams of migrants to New Zealand were generally European. In the last three decades, changes to policies have meant that there has been a rapid rise in migrants from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, in particular Asia and the Pacific Islands. Survey research considering attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism found that the general feeling was that too many migrants had entered New Zealand from these countries (Johnston et al., 2010). This sentiment was not held for migrants from South Africa, Great Britain, Ireland, and the rest of Europe. Interestingly, survey respondents also acknowledged positive points to this newfound diversity such as exposure to new ways of living. The data indicated there

was a perceived lack of integration by new immigrants and a belief that they were using up limited resources such as social welfare. This survey research also found, perhaps unsurprisingly, that respondents from areas with greater numbers of migrants were more likely to be welcoming of immigration.

A further research study pertaining to immigration (Lyons et al., 2011) used a discursive approach to explore how young adults in New Zealand discussed immigrants, immigration, and diversity. Lyons et al. found participants constructed New Zealand as one society, comprised those who look and speak English. This oneness was created by legitimising subtle racism through appeals to notions of common sense, reasonableness, and their own strong sense of morality. The researchers found that talk about immigration consistently moved into race issues in predictable ways including denial of racism. Nationalistic discourses were often used by participants to affirm and reinforce the notion of New Zealanders being white and English-speaking. Assimilation was viewed as positive even in the face of possible diminishing the rights of the other.

In the context of increased immigration from non-Western countries, non-Muslim New Zealanders are being forced to confront the extent to which New Zealand is an accepting and tolerant society in ways that we have not been necessary before (Johnston et al., 2010). As stated by Pearson (2005, as cited in Liu et al., 2005), the ethnic diversity in New Zealand is unprecedented and sits uncomfortably with “myths of statehood that sustained its imagination during its colonial period” (p. 16). The aforementioned myths of statehood are of New Zealand as a unitary state and part of the British Empire. In contrast to immigrants from Europe, South Africa, Great Britain, and Ireland, who look like Pākehā, immigrants from Asia or the Pacific Islands look and speak differently from Pākehā (Johnston et al., 2010). When immigrants are indistinguishable from Pākehā, the dominant group is not regularly confronted with difference, a less uncomfortable position for many.

A report titled “We all get along” focussing on social cohesion in three Auckland suburbs, and based on interviews with residents, found that a characteristic of more negative viewpoints about ethnic diversity was some level of anxiety regarding cultural domination (Meares & Gilbertson, 2013). This anxiety was expressed as concerns around certain ethnic groups not mixing with the dominant

group. The study also found that although the term kiwi was not defined, it was implied to be synonymous with Pākehā, an equation with multiple implications for minority groups.

New Zealand is known internationally for its progressiveness, liberalism, and tolerance, and prides itself on an autonomous approach to important social issues. It was the first self-governing country to provide women with voting rights in 1873 (Dann, 2015). In 2017, Jacinda Ardern became the country's third female Prime Minister and the world's youngest female leader at 37 years old (Fitzpatrick & Quackenbush, 2017). New Zealand also became one of the first countries to legalise same-sex marriage in 2013 (Henrickson, 2010). Further, New Zealand has embraced anti-discrimination laws in such ways as consistently aligning with every United Nations human rights declaration (Kolig, 2010).

New Zealand also prides itself on a co-operative and humanitarian ethos, and the government has been willing to stand separate from Western initiatives when required. This was demonstrated in the decision of Helen Clark, Prime Minister at the time, not to send combat troops in the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq in the name of the war on terror (Patterson, 2016). The reasoning behind this was that it was not mandated by the United Nations. A report from Great Britain released recently validated Clark's decision that the threat posed in Iraq to justify an invasion was overestimated.

New Zealand is secular, with religion being neither privileged nor barred, as well as being relatively non-religious (Kolig, 2016). In the 2013 census, 41.9 per cent of people reported that they affiliated with no religion (Stats NZ, 2014). This has increased from 34.6 per cent in 2006. To make a global comparison, a demographic study by Pew Research Center, based in the USA, utilised more than 2500 censuses globally to find approximately 16 per cent of people worldwide do not affiliate with a religion, placing New Zealand as comparatively non-religious (Pew Research Center, 2012). Of those who did state a religion in 2013, the majority were Christian (44 per cent). Hinduism was the second largest religion at just 2 per cent (Stats NZ, 2014). Only 1 per cent were Muslims.

There is not one essential New Zealand identity; rather, it is a social construction used strategically in various contexts (Sibley, Hoverd, & Liu, 2011). A

tension between two domains of New Zealand identity was identified in research. One is a monocultural, white representation of what it means to be a New Zealander, such as representation of rugby and sporting culture, ancestry, and patriotic values. Stereotypes of New Zealanders in ways such as hardworking, friendly, living close to the land, come under this framework of identity, based on masculine, colonial British norms (Barker, 2015). The other is a pluralist, often tokenised, recognition of symbols of Māori culture and bicultural relations, which includes representation of bicultural awareness, democratic liberal values, and patriotic values (Sibley et al., 2011). Representations of this pluralist nature, in ways such as recognition of Māori culture within the New Zealand identity, is often presented to the world as ways in which the country is positively distinct. However, Sibley et al.'s (2011) study challenges this presentation in that the study revealed only a token awareness of the contribution of Māori culture to being a New Zealander. While there was recognition of grievances of Māori culture, there was no validation of equal partnership. In reality, interaction between Pākehā and other cultures reveals a dynamic in which terms and interactions are dictated by Pākehā.

Further consideration of the New Zealand social profile is found in another New Zealand study (Sibley, 2013). Sibley's (2013) study highlights national practices which sit somewhat uncomfortably with unchallenged ideals of tolerance and acceptance. Their survey research found support for the idea that the construction of national prototypes is a resource to maintain hierarchy between societal groups in ways that marginalise and disadvantage minority group members. People who are highly motivated for inequality and group-based hierarchy use national identity to facilitate hierarchy of groups by privileging their own group over others in the definition of national identity. Various subtle exclusionary and discriminatory actions are directed toward immigrant groups so that some groups are not seen as part of the definition of the national identity. Emphasis on exclusion is a subtle way to make unequal treatment legitimate while at the same time avoiding direct challenge as racist behaviour. Whether or not an individual supports immigration is shaped by individuals' perceptions of national identity (Pearson, 2000).

#### **1.4.2. Muslims in New Zealand.**

While Muslims make up only a small minority of the New Zealand population at 1 per cent (Stats NZ, 2014). Islam is rapidly expanding, increasing 27.9 per cent between 2006 and 2013. Auckland has the highest concentration of Muslims in New Zealand by far, with a sizable minority in Wellington, and smaller populations in Hamilton, Christchurch, Palmerston North and Dunedin (Shepard, 2006).

The broad category Muslim conceals differences as this is a highly diverse group. New Zealand Muslims originate from more than 40 countries, with more than a quarter being born in New Zealand, 27 per cent born in Asia, 23 per cent born in the Middle East or Africa, and 21 per cent born in the Pacific Islands (Pratt, 2010; Stats NZ, 2014). There is also a relatively minor number of New Zealand Muslim converts since the 1960s, including 700 or more (Drury, 2016).

With the majority of the Muslim population arriving relatively recently, they appear to be a recent immigrant and refugee group (Kolig, 2016). However, Muslims are long-established in New Zealand and have been a peaceful presence since the 1850s. Furthermore, many Muslims are second and third generation New Zealanders who view themselves as kiwis. Muslim organisations are also long-established. The New Zealand Muslim Association (NZMA) was the first Islamic organisation to be set up in 1950, and built the first mosque in Ponsonby, Auckland between 1979 and 1982 (Drury, 2016). The national body for Muslims, the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand (FIANZ), was set up in 1979.

While there is much to celebrate about the Muslim population in New Zealand, throughout history, with the current significant increase in Muslims, it is important to question to what extent adaptation has been a smooth and healthy process for Muslims. One study investigated the lived experiences of Muslim young adults in New Zealand, with the aim of distinguishing indicators and influences of their success and participation (Stuart, 2014). The results of the research study identified resources, risks, and outcomes as determinants of the acculturation process. It was found that although Muslim youth are at risk of discrimination, and experience stress relating to this and dealing with cultural difference, resources including religion, family, and intercultural factors may serve to protect against unhealthy outcomes, supporting the individual in developing resiliency to meet life challenges. Resiliency is the ability to exhibit competency when confronted with life

challenges despite threats to development and wellbeing. The study highlighted the defining influence of traditional resources within the lives of these Muslim youth, suggesting a focus on ways in which these can be strengthened, rather than a focus on integration and movement away from traditional family and religious bonds and practices as most helpful.

Further, when overseas events occur, such as 9/11 or the London bombing, there is an increase in acts of discrimination towards Muslims such as verbal insult or vandalism of Muslim places such as mosques (Kabir & Hamid, 2015). A viewpoint that is not uncommon in New Zealand after international acts of violence by Islamic terrorist groups, promulgated via the internet or social commentaries, is the opinion that Islam, and by association, Muslims, does not belong in New Zealand (Kolig, 2016).

There is a dearth of empirical research in the area of Muslims in New Zealand. Further studies would be fruitful given the critical importance of the development of pro-social and resilient Muslims both for the individuals but also for New Zealand's future.

#### **1.4.3. Non-Muslim responses to Islam and Muslims in New Zealand.**

Generally, research findings indicate interactions between Muslims and non-Muslims in New Zealand are peaceful, with relatively low levels of discrimination (Jasperse, Ward, & Jose, 2012; Shaver, Troughton, Sibley, & Bulbulia, 2016). In a study of the experiences of six hijabi women in New Zealand (Ash, 2017), participants had predominantly positive experiences and a sense of widespread acceptance, with the exception of sporadic minor hostilities which did not spoil the overall perception of being welcome and safe in New Zealand. However, some discrimination has been documented in the country, as well as negative attitudes towards this group which will be reviewed.

The 2013 New Zealand Attitudes and Values Study provides a snapshot of the sentiments of nearly 14,000 non-Muslim New Zealanders regarding Muslims. Shaver et al. (2016) interpreted data from this survey to find that both anti-Muslim and anti-Arab sentiment are widespread. These attitudes are significantly higher than anti-



immigrant sentiment, indicating reasons for negativity toward Muslims and Arabs are not synonymous with negativity about issues relating to immigration. Interestingly, they also note that individual respondents with more intensified religious commitment had greater tolerance for all minority groups, including Muslims. New Zealand is strongly secular, with fewer people following a religion than in other countries, which raises the question of how these variables influence each other (Pew Research Center, 2012).

It is clear from research findings that New Zealand is not immune to erroneous beliefs about Islam, and everyday experiences are not without challenge for Muslims. Harassment and property vandalism have been reported (Kolig, 2010). Furthermore, it was found that although religious discrimination was low in New Zealand, hijabi women are the most-targeted Muslims due to their high visibility, suggesting that visible signs of Islam dispel superficial attitudes of tolerance (Jasperse et al., 2012). In New Zealand survey research, 153 Muslim women were questioned to compare the strength of their Muslim identity to their experience of religious discrimination, to explore how the degree of religious affiliation moderated the effects of discrimination (Jasperse et al., 2012). Researchers also found that wearing the hijab correlated with greater religious affiliation, which then moderated the negative effects of discrimination.

When acts of discrimination towards Muslims occur the response from New Zealand society has been supportive and sympathetic (Kolig, 2010; Pratt, 2010). For example, one recent attack made news headlines when a woman verbally abused and threw a can of beer at a group of hijabi women in Huntly (Bracewell-Worrall & Wong, 2017). After this received publicity in mainstream media, one of the women who had been attacked said she had been inundated with positive messages for herself and her Muslim friends. She tweeted the comment: "So good to know that we as kiwis don't accept this as our New Zealand" (Shuttleworth, 2017). The general tenor of this incident reflects New Zealand's desire to be tolerant, acting quickly to respond with dissent to insult or attack on law-abiding citizens.

#### ***1.4.3.1. Muslims and media in New Zealand.***

There is little local media interest in Muslims and very few studies regarding this topic, relating to the small population of Muslims in the country (Kabir & Hamid, 2015). What was found was studies considering the effect of international media on attitudes towards Muslims. It is clear that New Zealanders are affected by the aforementioned international media response to Muslims, and it is an interesting dynamic as to how this influences viewpoints.

Shaver, Sibley, Osborne, and Bulbulia's (2017) research suggests media is not creating a complete picture. These researchers looked at the relationship between level of news exposure and anti-Muslim prejudice in New Zealanders and found a positive correlation between the two: greater anger and reduced warmth towards Muslims were associated with greater exposure. Interestingly, as researchers separated out attitudes towards different ethnic groups and Muslims, they found negative sentiments aligned with Arabs but not Asian groups in New Zealand. As most Muslims in the news are of Arab-origin, this led researchers to believe media-driven Islamophobia is at work as most Muslims in New Zealand are Asian.

Another study explored interview data with 29 journalists, journalism educators, editors, and media trainers from both New Zealand and Australia to consider how news stories about Islam and Muslims are reported (Ewart, Pearson & Healy, 2016). Results were very similar to key concerns identified in international literature about news reporting of Muslims and Islam. These were negativity and stereotyping in reporting about Muslims in such ways as conflating terrorism with Islam, and underlying factors such as a newsroom culture that did not allow for negotiation about processes that would improve reporting of Muslims and Islam. These research findings provided guidance for how to address such issues, such as developing training for those involved with news stories about Muslims and Islam to be more inclusive and to diminish marginalisation of Muslims.

This literature review has highlighted major gaps in the literature regarding Muslims in New Zealand. Research was sparse regarding experiences of Muslims, attitudes, talk, and behaviour of non-Muslims towards Muslims, and the effect of media portrayals of Muslims. There are no discourse analyses of non-Muslim New

Zealanders regarding Muslims. Considering it is such a small population group, this is not surprising. Due to the high rate at which Muslims are increasing in the country however, more research on the topic is vital. As well as this, issues are well-documented in research from other Western countries regarding poor treatment of Muslims, misrepresentations by media, and negative attitudes regarding this group (Barkdull et al., 2011; Brown & Richardson, 2016; Ciftci, 2012). Outcomes for Muslims in Western research, further highlight the necessity for research on non-Muslim and Muslim relations in New Zealand.

## CHAPTER 2: Methodology

### 2.1. Research Question

The aim of this research is to explore Pratt's (2010) claim that New Zealand's non-Muslim majority is experiencing angst in relation to the growing Muslim population. Specifically, the study aims to examine the construction and function of talk used by non-Muslim New Zealanders in discussion of Muslims in New Zealand.

### 2.2. Ethical Considerations

The study met the requirements of the Massey University ethics committee and peer review process. The study complied with the guidelines explained in Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants (2017). This research sought to acknowledge the ethical implications of working within a New Zealand bicultural context and the behaviours and conduct applicable to this context. This is relevant to research undertaken in New Zealand, regardless of the fact that none of the participants identified as Māori, as this is a society that ideally bases its ethics on Māori principles alongside Pākehā (Massey University, 2017). Specific ethical considerations relevant to this research are the adequacy of the research, reduction and avoidance of harm, informed consent, privacy and confidentiality, and cultural and social responsibility.

An ethical research study must be considered adequate to justify requesting participants' time and effort to participate (Massey University, 2017). This aligns with the ethical principle *tika*, meaning purposefulness, a guideline that prompts the question of whether it is possible to achieve the research aims. This research project was considered adequate in that it had clear research goals. Moreover, the design and timeframe of the project made it possible to meet these goals. Adequacy of research also related to whether the researcher's choice of research area was believed to be valid. The topic is considered valid as the introduction to this report demonstrates. International literature illustrates Muslims in Western countries, including New Zealand, are subject to prejudice and discrimination, potentially indicating an underlying sense of angst (Kolig, 2010). In addition, Muslims are a quickly expanding demographic within New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2014).

In designing the project, I aimed to identify and minimise any risks to participants. One minor risk of harm was the interview itself being a source of anxiety or strain for interviewees as they were asked to provide personal opinions which were recorded. To counter the possibility of this risk, participants were not required to answer any question that made them feel uncomfortable; nor were they required to provide an explanation. They also had a right to withdraw from the interview and until two weeks after the interview, irrespective of whether they had received compensation for time and travel. These rights were communicated both in the Information Sheet (Appendix A) and at the start of the interview. Furthermore, the interviews were conducted in locations interviewees were comfortable with. Finally, if an interviewee was upset in any way by the research process, I planned to suggest healthcare and counselling services. The first suggestion was for the participant to see a general practitioner to be assessed for possible referral to a counsellor. Secondly, the participant would be advised that there are several nationwide, free helplines that are available 24 hours per day for counselling or referral, including Lifeline (0800 543 354) and Samaritans (0800 726 666). None of these were required by participants.

Informed consent was obtained in writing to ensure participants' involvement and was agreed to with full awareness of the research aims, what participation involved, their rights, and how findings were to be used (Massey University, 2017). To achieve this, participants were required to read an information sheet (Appendix A), and asked if they had any questions, prior to signing a consent form (Appendix B). When a participant was asked to sign a consent form, the principle of autonomous decision making was considered. The researcher took responsibility for ascertaining that participants had comprehended the information and were cognitively competent to provide consent (Smith Iltis, 2005). It was also considered whether a decision to participate did not conflict with freedom in light of their beliefs and values (Massey University, 2017). To ensure autonomy, participants were not pressured or manipulated in any way.

To ensure the ethical use of data, and to exercise respect for persons responsibly, the individual's privacy and confidentiality was kept with vigilance (Massey University, 2017). Interview data from human participants may contain

sensitive, personal, and private information. The information sheet explained that interviewees would be discussing their personal thoughts and feelings and that they had a right to privacy. This right ensured the participants' identities, along with the knowledge and information they produced, would remain confidential. Participants' identities were protected by using pseudonyms in transcripts, and not stating other identifying information such as locations in the report. As well as this, recordings, notes, and transcripts were kept securely through labelling transcripts with their pseudonym within a device protected with a password. Participants were also given the opportunity to review their interview transcripts and had a 2-week timeframe after they were emailed the transcript to make any amendments. No response was taken as agreement.

This project actively participated in *manaakitanga*, which can be explained as cultural and social responsibility, exercised by ensuring dignity and respect for those involved (Massey University, 2017). Participants of this project were those who consider themselves New Zealanders. This constitutes a wide range of ethnic and religious backgrounds, so there was no one set of rules or assumptions to approach and interact with interviewees. To ensure cultural and social responsibility, I did not express any religious or cultural bias and remained neutral in response to interview answers. An aspect of research cultural values that is relevant here is *aroha ki te tangata*, or a respect for people, which means allowing individuals to meet on their terms (Massey University, 2017). This was expressed as the participant and the researcher jointly deciding the best circumstances for an interview to take place. Furthermore, during interviews, the researcher was receptive and did not impose on the participant, but rather allowed the interview process to be collaborative. The participants were also given the opportunity to edit their interview transcript if they wished to. None of them chose to do so.

### **2.3. Design**

This qualitative research study used a constructionist theoretical framework to consider how participants' social worlds are developed and maintained (Silverman, 2014). From this theoretical standpoint, the researcher sought knowledge of how participants construct and maintain their social reality through

talk. This was achieved using discourse analysis which enables in-depth examination of talk regarding Muslims that is not possible through quantitative methods (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

As outlined in Potter and Wetherell's (1987) foundational text on discourse analysis, the process was a direct exploration of interviewee talk, and did not use data as a mode to analyse secondary indications of information such as attitudes or emotions. Within this framework, talk is the mode of action, and therefore analysis focused on asking how talk was used to fulfil a function. This may include "explanations, justifications, blamings, denials, accusations, excuses, and describing events in such a manner as to subvert negative attributional interpretations" (Tuffin and Howard, 2001, p. 161).

## **2.4. Procedure**

### **2.4.1. Pilot interview.**

To direct the choice of questions and assess for methodological flaws in this study, an informal pilot interview was conducted. From this, it became clear that the researcher needed to avoid directing conversation within the interview, to ensure capturing the interviewee's genuine responses. This is affirmed in Smith's (2005) work in which she clarifies researcher principles fitting with a bicultural context, as *titiro, whakarongo ... korero*. By observing and listening before speaking one has the potential for deeper understandings and an ability to choose the right time to add comments. Additionally, certain questions were added after the pilot interview for contextualisation and clarity. For example, the general opening question, "What has been your experience of Muslims and Islam in New Zealand?" was added to gauge relevant personal experience. Furthermore, it was apparent that I could not assume that the interviewee would know the meaning of certain concepts such as *halal* and therefore planned to offer definitions of such concepts if required.

### **2.4.2. Interview questions.**

A set of prepared questions and prompts (Appendix C) was used, while concurrently allowing for free-flowing conversation about Muslims in New Zealand. The first two questions were neutral, and both sought to gauge the degree of

experience the interviewees had with Muslims, while also enabling participants to relax in the interests of establishing rapport. These questions also allowed participants to give their opinions on Muslims in New Zealand without the influence of research on the topic. The next questions were based on research surrounding experiences of Muslim people in Western countries and prompted participants to discuss issues of discrimination and religious tolerance in New Zealand and other Western countries. This gave participants an opportunity to discuss their own socio-political perspectives and how Muslims fit into these ideas. Interviewees were also asked about the role of media in perspectives of Muslims as this is a key area of influence within the research topic. The questions that could be considered the most confronting, in regard to connections commonly made in the West between Muslims and terrorism, were asked at the end. Interviewees were purposely not asked directly about a sense of angst, anxiety, or fear regarding Muslims. This was to ensure that if such constructs did come up, it could not be attributed to my own prompting, but rather a genuine reflection in talk.

#### **2.4.3. Participants and recruitment.**

The criteria for selection were that participants considered themselves New Zealanders, were not Muslim, agreed to the interview being audio-recorded, and spoke English. Participants were also required to be 18 years or older, in order to be able to provide adult consent. Interviewees were recruited from Auckland through word-of-mouth, flyers (Appendix D) posted in university and public libraries, and online via Facebook. The majority of the participants were recruited through word-of-mouth, and I did know the majority of the participants personally. The aim was to interview between 12 to 15 participants, which is sufficient to meet the aims of the research. This many participants allowed me to analyse sufficiently non-Muslim talk about Muslims in New Zealand, and more than this would not have added anything further of value within the framework of discourse analysis.

Twelve non-Muslim New Zealanders were interviewed regarding their views on Muslims in New Zealand. Participants were aged between 21 and 63 years old. There were 7 male and 5 female participants. Six participants were Pākehā or New Zealand European, and the other four were of Fijian-Indian, Middle Eastern, Korean,



and Chinese backgrounds. Participants were also asked about their religion and the majority stated they had no religion or were atheist, and others were Catholic, Christian, and Born-Again Christian.

#### **2.4.4. Interview format.**

The majority of interviews were between 20 to 40 minutes. Each interview was conducted in a setting chosen by the participant that was neutral, private, and quiet, including libraries, participants' homes, participants' workplaces, and my own home. Prior to the interview, I emailed participants an information sheet, or they read it when I met with them (Appendix A). Their rights were reiterated when I met with them. Participants signed an informed consent agreement to confirm they had read the information sheet and were aware of the conditions under which the research would take place (Appendix B). Participants received a \$20 supermarket voucher to reimburse them for the time and travel. After the interview, participants were offered the opportunity to meet with me to assess the data and make any edits or clarifications before it was analysed. None of the participants chose to do so.

#### **2.4.5. Transcription.**

Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed by the researcher. The transcriptions were the basis of analysis. Certain notations were used within transcriptions to emphasise readability. Square brackets were used if required for information that was added for clarity in the quotation. Round brackets were used to express if the participant made some form of communication other than talk such as laughter or sighing. If there was a pause within a sentence, three dots were used.

#### **2.4.6. Analysis.**

Analysis began with the process of reading and re-reading the transcripts in order to become very familiar with the data. After several readings, I started noting particular themes and emerging discourses, for example "when in Rome, you follow Rome" or choice and freedom. There was no particular rule to doing this, and not expected with discourse analysis. Rather there is an "analytic mentality" acquired in the process (Tuffin & Howard, 2001, p. 162). I used this mode of thinking to employ

a certain amount of intuition in working with the data, that is, dependence on my familiarity with the data and focus on areas that provoked interest in what the talk was accomplishing.

Qualitative data analysis software “Dedoose” was then used to organise interview material. This software was protected with a password only known to me. The 12 interviews were uploaded, and I went through each interview on the program and highlighted and labelled what had been noted as categories. Quotations could have more than one theme. The program allowed me to separate all quotations under one theme or subtheme.

It was clear that certain categories and sub-categories emerged in every account. The predominant discourses and aspects of discourses have been integrated and discussed in depth within the research analysis. I used extracts from the interviews to illustrate the discourses, as well as comparison and contrast between quotes. Discourse functions within talk were explored and detailed notes written.

Data was analysed in a way that placed value on both consistency and variation of linguistic resources, both between and within participant talk (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Consistency was significant for organising information by identifying patterns. However, this is limited as interviewees are not using limited linguistic resources. Therefore, discourse analysis also places value on variation of resources and functions in talk, allowing a richer analysis that acknowledges the unlimited possibilities of the functions of talk.

It is important to note that the aim of the discourse analysis is not to decide the rights and wrongs of rhetoric, but rather to analyse the language used to construct the meaning, subjectivity and reality which influences non-Muslim New Zealanders’ experience of Muslims in this country (Wijsen, 2013).

## **2.5. Reflexivity**

The central question when it comes to discourse analysis and reflexivity is how to address the understanding that my own accounts of participants’ constructions of talk, are also inevitably constructions (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Such a question can spiral into unnecessary complexities. Potter and Wetherell

suggest that acknowledging one's own talk and research as a construction may be sufficient. Therefore, in this section I make my own position clear and acknowledge awareness of the issue and how this was addressed in the research process.

I am part of the dominant ethnic group in New Zealand, which is Pākehā or New Zealand European. As a member of the dominant group I grew up viewing the functioning of society in a Pākehā way as normal and other modes of social functioning of minority groups as being out of the ordinary. While my study is not focussed on Māori-Pākehā relations, I have been raised in New Zealand. Therefore, my own concepts of ethnicity are entrenched in colonisation, being part of the dominant ethnic group and therefore ethnic privilege, and understandings of biculturalism.

I have also spent much of my life agreeing with the narrative that as New Zealand is more tolerant and accepting than other Western countries, we should be proud of our current society and our history of Māori-Pākehā relations and response to minority groups. After I had lived in Australia for some time, this narrative was bolstered by the contrast with the overt racism I observed there in everyday life. It is also a common narrative to compare the treatment of Māori in New Zealand with the treatment of Aboriginal people in Australia, and find New Zealand to seem an oasis of tolerance and acceptance.

The evolution of my own ethnic and political consciousness began as a young adult building awareness of personal ethnic identity as part of a foreign minority while living in Guangzhou, China. This was invaluable in grounding me in the understanding that everyone's cultural experiences are normal to them. This experience has influenced interpersonal interactions during my adult life, and motivated me to learn about experiences of people from other religions and cultures.

My initial interest in this research topic was unsurprisingly from personal experience. Between 2012 and 2016 I lived in Sydney, Australia, in a suburb that was predominantly Lebanese Muslim. I was aware of tension between multiple ethnic and religious groups, heightened by the close proximity within which members of society lived and commuted around the city on public transport each day. This was highlighted after the 2014 Lindt café hostage situation or Sydney siege (Michael et al., 2014). This was an event which meant already simmering tensions between

dominant non-Muslim groups and various Muslim ethnic communities became fraught. There were varying responses to the siege in social and public discourse which ranged from aggressive racism to an equally racist willingness to co-exist if Muslims were willing to minimise their “Muslimness”. Returning to New Zealand, I wanted to know if there were similar tensions in New Zealand, perhaps hidden behind a more peaceful veneer.

While it is impossible to detangle my own agency from the research, there were two ways to address the complexities of my own research being a construction of the constructions of participants’ talk. Firstly, I have made my own stance and history clear and acknowledged the issue. Secondly, within analysis, effort was made to remain as close to the extract, or what was said, as possible. Detailed extracts were included in this research, allowing the reader to follow judgements and reasoning.

## CHAPTER 3: Analysis

Two dominant discourses were identified in the analysis: constructing New Zealand society and constructing Muslims. Two key strands of discourse emerged within the constructing New Zealand society discourse: New Zealand as a safe haven, and tolerance and acceptance. Three key strands emerged within the constructing Muslims discourse: oppressed women and oppressive men, they're not all terrorists, and media constructions. At times different areas of talk in analysis intertwined and overlapped.

### 3.1. New Zealand Society

The first discourse was the construction of New Zealand society. Within this, the construction of New Zealand as a safe haven was developed and maintained in various ways. The construction of New Zealand society as accepting and tolerant of different cultural and religious groups encompassed two conditions. Acceptance was conditional on whether Muslims assimilate, and whether people considered themselves safe. Talk of security related to Muslim women's dress.

#### 3.1.1. A safe haven.

Various explanations were used to foster the version of New Zealand as a safe haven. Participants identified reasons why New Zealand would be protected from external threats and not subject to international attack. These were New Zealand's small population, geographical distance from the rest of the world, diversity, political neutrality, and people that are tolerant and accepting of different religious and cultural groups. William was asked about the increasing numbers of Muslims in New Zealand:

Um it's probably, you know, with all the turmoil and stuff going on in their own countries, it's most likely the reason they're coming here. And New Zealand is seen as a safe haven and a nice place internationally.

William uses the phrase safe haven to construct New Zealand as a sheltered place or a refuge from other parts of the world. His talk suggests Muslims are

refugees, fleeing “turmoil and stuff”. His use of “and stuff” to describe further what is happening overseas, as well as his previous use of “you know”, may indicate an assumption that the listener and speaker are both aware of this information (Overstreet, 1999). The assumed shared information could indicate that contextually such narratives are pervasive, particularly in relation to the turmoil in the countries Muslims are assumed to be coming from.

New Zealand was constructed as safe from external threat through claiming various reasons the country would not be targeted with violence. Max stated, “I just don’t think they would bother (laughs) with this silly little New Zealand.” He positions New Zealand as being a pointless target for violence by being jokingly disparaging through the use of the description silly little. Being silly denotes that people in New Zealand are lacking common sense and agenda, and therefore attacking the country would be causing unfair harm to people who are unaware and uninvolved. The description silly may also be an indirect way to depict that attacking New Zealand would be silly.

New Zealand being little also denotes an innocence or quaintness in an amusing way, also making the idea of attack extremely inappropriate. Such descriptions serve a protective function within the context of increased dealings and visibility with overseas countries. That is, if New Zealand is maintained as somewhere not to bother to attack, it can remain untouched. Safety in New Zealand was also explained by its distance from other countries, its multiculturalism, and political neutrality. Tay states:

I don't believe there would be a high chance of [terrorism] happening in New Zealand. One, because we're a very diverse culture and we're very far away from every other country. We don't have military background, and we don't have any sort of ties with wars over in the Middle East and also, we do, we do have connections with America, with Britain, with the EU, but we're not a big country which makes a huge impact on decisions made by larger countries.

Tay’s talk constructs New Zealand as unique compared to other countries, regarding a number of geographical and political features. It speaks to our international insignificance. He works to build the idea of not being closely connected

to international military activity. He initially states, “We don’t have any sort of ties with wars over in the Middle East,” and then concedes, “We do, we do have connections with America, with Britain, with the EU.” He then minimises the significance of the international links through describing New Zealand’s military restraint and small size. He does not equate lack of involvement internationally with lack of exposure to people from other countries, as he describes it as diverse. Multiculturalism is also one of the number of factors that collectively make it less likely for New Zealand to be targeted in a terrorist attack. That is, if New Zealand is welcoming of other cultural groups, and these groups feel accepted and safe, then members of these cultural groups will not attack. Similarly, Josh explained that New Zealand is safe because of being accepting of difference:

No I'm not concerned at all about a terrorist attack happen in New Zealand because we're very open country and we accept people who come in. I believe it's when a country doesn't accept the certain religious... what they believe in, is when they start to act on the extremists and act towards their religious beliefs. Whereas in New Zealand we go, cool that's your beliefs and your system, that's fine to do that but we do have our set of rules. We kind of are laid back but we force - we don't force them upon them, but we give them the option.

Josh constructs terrorism as motivated by the targeted country’s lack of acceptance and intolerance of religions. Paradoxically, he uses this to argue that the potentially targeted country needs to be accepting of different religions as a way to regulate certain religious minorities not to act in line with extremist beliefs. Josh’s explanation allows him to maintain New Zealand as laid back and open, while also implying that religious minorities are dangerous and require rules and regulations for the country to be safe. Ambivalence regarding New Zealand being laid back may be reflected by a self-repair, “we force – we don’t force [rules] upon them”. He argues for us not to be constructed as inflexible, intolerant, or unaccommodating by placing the responsibility on Muslims and whether they act in accordance with our rules. As highlighted, Josh divides New Zealanders and Muslims by using they pronouns versus we.

Interviewees commonly created and sought to maintain a version of New Zealand as a safe haven through arguing that it is a country that would not be targeted by international violence. Reasons for this were New Zealand's small population, distance from the rest of the world, diversity, political neutrality, and willingness to tolerate and accept minority cultures and religions as is further discussed next.

### **3.1.2. Tolerance and acceptance.**

A significant aspect of the talk about New Zealand maintained an ideal of the country as tolerant and accepting of all cultural and religious groups. Jeff states:

We have more acceptance of different countries, and again going on the basis that New Zealand's a clean green society, multicultural society, everyone has a fresh start. And I think when you look at it, New Zealanders - the early settlers have come here for a fresh start right the... society has not developed from here, people have come in whether be from Pacific Islands whether it be from Europe they've all come here for a fresh start and I think that that's ingrained with most New Zealanders and at the end of the day you have bad apples and you know select few people will cause issues that's with every society.

Jeff links an environmental claim of a clean, green New Zealand with the treatment of people within society, painting a picture of a utopian society. The link to environment perhaps serves to deploy something more tangible, that is, the environment, than estimates of behaviour to make his claim. His talk draws upon constructions of history to support his claim of New Zealand being tolerant and accepting. He uses language such as ingrained to construct a case that such attitudes are entrenched within New Zealand culture and make immigration something that we all share. That is, he is positioning existing New Zealanders as similar to recent migrants. To maintain this construction, he uses the "bad apple" metaphor to explain why, despite being a utopian welcoming society, a few people still cause issues. He normalises this by explaining that these types of people exist in every society.



Furthermore, his use of the bad apple metaphor infers the same perception of Muslims, and that generalisations should not be made based on outliers.

Despite maintaining New Zealand as tolerant and accepting of different cultural and religious groups, participants also recognised exceptions to this idealised norm. John states:

I think New Zealand's seen as a nice place for [Muslims] to be, it's a good environment, the average New Zealander, if he doesn't like them well he can you know go and do his own thing. So probably in terms of the overall situation you know Muslims are probably quite well accepted here even though there's a long way to go.

While John constructs New Zealand as a good place for Muslims to live, he also leaves space for the possibility that some may not always be welcoming, using uncertain words such as probably or “quite well accepted” and “a long way to go”. His statement, “if he doesn’t like [Muslims] well he can, you know, go and do his own thing”, depicts what could be described as a tolerance for intolerance, in that he accepts that some people might not like Muslims. His comment also highlights the tone of the intolerance as passive and means it is effectively invisible for Muslims as the prejudiced person does not engage in active hostility and simply “does his own thing”. Also, John’s use of third person pronouns allows John to distance himself from the attitudes he is discussing and place himself as an observer and not one of those who dislikes Muslims. Summer also constructs a tolerant and accepting New Zealand, while recognising this is idealised. She states:

I think when anything is really different there’s always the potential that people will be negative about that. But I mean having not been Muslim myself and I don't, like I don't think I could honestly say I know how they feel about being Muslim in New Zealand. I would hope that most of the time there's acceptance, but I'm not so naive as to think that that's actually what happens.

Summer takes an optimistic slant, qualified by her mention of naivety, and seeks to maintain a version of a utopian New Zealand that is kind and welcoming of

Muslims. She accounts for prejudice by explaining it as a reaction to difference, rather than deep-seated prejudice or racism.

Across the interviews, New Zealand was commonly constructed as tolerant and accepting of different religious and cultural groups. There were various ways participants created and maintained this, including tolerance for intolerance in talk, use of constructions of New Zealand history, and accounting for prejudice as a reaction to difference rather than deep-seated intolerance. However, while participants maintained that New Zealand society is tolerant and accepting, this was often dependent upon conditions.

### ***3.1.2.1. On our terms.***

The analysis highlighted that claims of acceptance and tolerance were often conditional. There were two sets of conditions: that Muslims should conform to the social and cultural norms in New Zealand and that religious freedom was important, but only if safety is not compromised.

#### ***3.1.2.1.1. When in Rome, you follow Rome.***

Some interviewee talk established New Zealand as tolerant and accepting of Muslims on the condition that Muslims behave like New Zealanders. This is illustrated by Max's response to the prompt that there are increasing numbers of Muslims in New Zealand: "That's fine. As long as they behave themselves." The phrase behave themselves is paternalistic and is usually used when speaking about children. It maintains inequality between the speaker and the subject and highlights that Muslims are not equal in power to non-immigrants and should follow New Zealand rules. Furthermore, while the term behave suggests that Muslims need to follow rules or laws, the condition is that Muslims follow New Zealand social norms. This assumes that New Zealand has a homogeneous culture with one set of social norms. Michael's talk also is based on this assumption. He argues that New Zealanders are accepting if our social and cultural expectations are adhered to:

I mean one of the reasons why we have ANZAC day is that they've fought for the freedom of New Zealand. In terms of the free democracy where people have a respectful, mutual respect in terms of the opinion, freedom of religion,

and all these times and [Muslims] came from there back there, back in a country where it is okay to do honour killings, I really saw widely established and the women should be in certain ways, and they can only accept their own religion, not the others, and if they come here and not willing to change the ways of their life, then why did we fought hard for a democracy all this time?

Michael establishes an us versus them separation of values, constructing Muslim values as inhumane and violent compared with the humane and benevolent values of New Zealanders. He suggests Muslims pose a threat to deeply grounded values of New Zealand society, strengthening his argument that Muslims should conform. He constructs democracy as hard won and as something to be actively maintained and at threat should Muslims not conform in such ways as not respecting women's freedom from subjugation. There is a competing discourse in the way the speaker initially operationalises democracy as "mutual respect in terms of opinion" and "freedom of religion", but then contradicts his case by stating Muslims retaining the "ways of their life" is a threat to democracy. Mutual respect is operationalised not as a reciprocal acceptance and tolerance, but as an expectation that Muslims assimilate. He also implies Muslims come from non-democratic countries, and that those who do come from non-democratic countries are unlike the respectful people here.

Josh also outlined that Muslims should follow the social and cultural norms of New Zealand as a prerequisite for acceptance. In response to the question of what his views are regarding a higher population of Muslims in New Zealand, he states:

It doesn't bother me, New Zealand's a very culturally divided place, and it doesn't bother me if more come in or more leave or all that as long as they're happy and they follow what New Zealand's set. But it's when they come in and start forcing their stuff on, it doesn't - that's when I don't like it. Or they come in and just abuse our systems and that's when I start getting a bit angry about it all and don't approve of it.

Josh initially establishes New Zealand as diverse and accepting of those from other cultures but then indicates that acceptance is on our terms. He constructs New

Zealand as having a singular set of terms or norms. It is key that Josh's initial statement that Muslim immigration to New Zealand does not bother him, is only a relaxed position if conditions are followed. There is a contrast between him saying "it doesn't bother me", and subsequent use of language detailing that he would be bothered if conditions were not met. Josh's use of language, including Muslims forcing their beliefs, and an explanation of himself being angry when conditions are not met, supports the argument that without integration, New Zealand culture might be threatened by different practices and beliefs. An additional condition is that Muslims do not "abuse our systems" and is likely referring to social services.

The condition of New Zealand being an accepting society if Muslims integrate encompassed talk indicating that looking different, particularly Muslim women due to their dress, was problematic for acceptance. John states:

Well... a lot of the women, not all, but a lot of the women wear a headdress. And I don't think that goes down very well in the community generally. The men you can't really tell, they look like a darker Asian sort of person. That's difficult to actually figure out what their ethnicity is. But I don't hold this view, so I don't know how you want to take it, but a lot of New Zealanders hold the view that they shouldn't wear their headdress in New Zealand. That this is New Zealand, you know, they can do whatever they like back in their homeland, and quite often the point is made well if I took my wife to your homeland she'd have to wear something wouldn't she? And everyone says yes, so you know it's a bit of a difficulty.

Foremost, John's disclaimer "I don't hold this view", allows him to express disagreement with the lack of acceptance of headscarves in New Zealand, while also constructing headscarves as a problem. He pinpoints the visibility of veiled women as problematic through the use of contrast with Muslim men, who are constructed as ethnically ambiguous and therefore more acceptable. He then uses an analogy to argue that Muslim women should not wear veils. He situates himself as a balanced moderator by addressing the Muslim side and the New Zealand side, and how they should act as visitors to each other's homeland, while also separating us and them. His statement "if I took my wife to your homeland she'd have to wear something"

highlights a power imbalance between husband and wife by describing himself taking his wife with him, as though she is his possession. This has the implication that wearing a Muslim veil in New Zealand is a problem because women should dress appropriately based on the cultural norms of what a husband defines his wife should wear.

As highlighted by these excerpts, the construction of New Zealand as tolerant and accepting was often followed by conditions, one of which being that Muslims should follow the social and cultural norms of New Zealand. The threat to democracy, to current social norms, and overuse of social systems were used to argue for integration. Muslim women's dress was a common example used in talk to construct the argument. Muslim women's dress was also paramount in the second area of conditions.

#### *3.1.2.1.2. Religious freedom, but only if I feel safe.*

Religious tolerance and acceptance were spoken about as though a right of all people in New Zealand. However, this was based on the condition that safety was considered paramount. Safety was constructed as at risk when visual transparency was lacking, as in the case of Muslim veils. Max was asked what he thought about the banning of headscarves in public schools in parts of Europe:

They should be able to practice what they – their traditions in school. They're not causing any problems by wearing whatever they wear. But I'm just thinking of the security side of things, 'cause you're not supposed to wear a hat or sunglasses in a bank, are you?

While Max situates religious practices and traditions as important, talk of public safety was situated as more important, and therefore a condition of religious freedom. By stating that Muslims should be able to wear religious dress in school, he is claiming Muslim religious dress is acceptable for children and adolescents in a controlled environment. In contrast, Muslims wearing religious clothing in banks where security is paramount, is established as a problem. Max also compares Muslim clothing with other identity-obscuring articles of clothing, namely a hat or sunglasses. This suggests individual reasons for dress are equal, whether for religious or practical

reasons, and allows him to expect that Muslims follow the rules of the country they are in. Josh was also asked about the banning of headscarves in schools in Europe. He responded:

That I don't know too much about, I haven't heard much about that, I've heard the banning of the hijabs in public due to the attacks they've had lately and all that, which I understand, they could be hiding stuff under there, but at the same time it is their religion. They should be allowed to follow their religion.

Josh establishes that if there have been attacks and safety is in question, banning of hijab is an acceptable response. His talk paints a picture of Muslims being criminals. The idea that hijabi women “could be hiding stuff under there”, establishes Muslims as deceptive and threatening. He also situates himself as a balanced commentator, and therefore legitimate, in acknowledging two sides when he says, “but at the same time it is their religion”. Valerie also raised the concern about Muslims concealing weapons under veils.

Valerie: “I think they should be allowed to wear a headscarf. It's only this”  
[indicates below eyes]

Interviewer: “Yeah. The one that covers all down, I think it's a niqab.”

Valerie: “Well I don't agree with that because anybody could dress like that and be carrying a machine gun underneath.”

Interviewer: “So it's a security issue?”

Valerie: “And plus it's scary you know people look at another person and all they can see is the eyes, then it's very scary.”

While Valerie establishes that Muslims should be allowed to wear certain forms of religious dress, she makes this conditional on security and safety. She has constructed degrees of acceptance that relate to degrees of coverage of Muslim veils, implying Muslim women can dress somewhat differently, but not to an extreme. Muslims are developed as capable of sneakiness and violence, to the extreme of potentially hiding a machine gun, and therefore not to be trusted in wearing certain

types of veils, particularly when the ability to identify the wearer is compromised. It also fortifies the idea that Muslim women who cover themselves are hiding something sinister and have the potential to attack. Additionally, when Valerie states that she finds it scary when a Muslim woman hides herself other than her eyes, she establishes the Muslim woman as a perpetrator of fear, and herself as a victim of this religious practice.

Tolerance and acceptance of religious dress in New Zealand was established as something that should be allowed on the condition that non-Muslim members of society consider themselves to be safe. This provides a convenient and socially acceptable reason for resistance to accepting visual religious difference. The importance of religious freedom was a fallible ideal as the feeling of safety was compromised when it came to women wearing Muslim veils. The excerpts highlighted power imbalances between Muslims and New Zealand society members in talk, as well as constructions of Muslims in such ways as being potentially untrustworthy, threatening, and dangerous. Public safety being compromised by Muslim women wearing religious dress is founded on a construction of all Muslims a threat, as potential terrorists. The construction of Muslims is explored next.

### **3.2. Constructing Muslims**

The second discourse was the construction of Muslims, of which there were three threads. Firstly, gender-based oppression was constructed as a problematic difference between Muslims and non-Muslims. Muslim women were established as victims of oppression and at times in denial of this, and Muslim men were established as oppressive of women. Secondly, Muslims were constructed as generally not terrorists, which worked from the assumption that Muslims and Islam are connected to terrorism. Thirdly, media were constructed as creating distorting views of Muslims, and society members as having no choice in the information they were exposed to regarding Muslims, making ignorance the only option.

#### **3.2.1. Oppressed women and oppressive men.**

Gender-based oppression shaped constructions of Muslim men and women. It is central to Valerie's construction of Muslims:

[In New Zealand], the women still have to obey the rules, so they're not allowed to show too much skin. I don't know whether their husbands let them drive. I've not seen someone in a thingy driving. I also knew someone who lived by, who lived next door to some Muslims and, but I think that Jasmeen used to drive, that's the lady who lived next door, she used to drive. But I think her husband used to go away.

Valerie depicts a power imbalance within marriages between Muslim men and women, while also establishing individual victimhood of Muslim women. When she uses the term *still* to describe the continued oppression of Muslim women, it highlights that cultural norms of obedience for Muslim women to Muslim men are applied to the same extent here as in countries of origin. Her description of her friend's neighbour not being allowed to drive, but doing so anyway when her husband went away, constructs Muslim women as seeking to resist their treatment and requiring defiance to drive. Her statement "I've not seen someone in a thingy driving" allows Valerie to provide personal evidence that wearing a "thingy" is directly related to not being allowed to drive, and therefore adds to the argument that Muslim veils are enforced by Muslim men. The dismissive nature of the term *thingy* reflects unawareness of the correct term. It could also indicate disregard for the veil, possibly as she constructs it as a garment that is enforced by men and symbolises oppression of women. Overall, constructing Muslims this way legitimises negative constructions of Muslim men for the purpose of defending the rights of Muslim women.

Another part of Valerie's interview merged the construction of gender-based oppression among Muslims with tolerance and acceptance in New Zealand society being on our terms:

Valerie: "I don't mind anybody coming to live in New Zealand as long as they don't want us to change to their ways of living."

Interviewer: [...] "What kind of ways of living would you associate with Muslims and Islam?"

Valerie: "Women having no rights at all, that's the worst."



Valerie's talk constructs Muslims as having the potential to push an agenda that includes debasement of women's rights. She expresses acceptance of Muslims as long as women's rights are not compromised which builds an idea that Muslims are a threat to gender equity principles. Further, Muslims are constructed as different in "their ways of living", which heightens the threat and therefore allows her to place responsibility on Muslims to change "their ways of living", despite it also being made to seem entrenched in culture. As discussed earlier, this segment also separates them from us. Sophia also constructs gender-based oppression as problematic:

Sophia: And I have to admit that, I mean, despite what I told you before about my own experiences with Muslims, that woman who stood up and said you know "I'm not oppressed" like I still kind of like... depending on how I see a woman who's wearing headdress, it depends what the expression on her face says, it depends on the context, it depends where she is, but I mean even I perceived them as an other because I'm kind of like, I'm a feminist at heart, I'm like well you know, is she okay? Is she just gonna go home and cook the meal you know for the family? What's her husband doing to her, you know?

Interviewer: So what you're saying is just because one Muslim hijabi woman says that she's not oppressed, it doesn't mean that all Muslim hijabi women aren't?

Sophia: I think that most of them probably are, but it depends on the perception of what is being oppressed. Do they want to cook for their husbands? Do they not mind being under the thumb of their husbands? And most of all, are their husbands good men?

Sophia maintains a version of Muslim women as "under the thumb" of Muslim men in several ways. Armed with personal evidence of a hijabi woman stating she was not oppressed, she constructs this as a denial of truth. She also constructs Muslim women as different, allowing her to say they might view oppression differently from her, to the degree that they do not mind being oppressed. Unlike Valerie's version of Muslim women in which they disagree with their own treatment,

Sophia constructs their oppression as invisible to the outside world, through being upheld and denied by the woman herself. She questions the motivation for Muslim women cooking for their husbands, which is seemingly a straightforward everyday task. Furthermore, asking, “Are their husbands good men?” creates an impression of Muslim men as requiring caution or doubt when it comes to their treatment of their wives. This, as well as asking, “what’s her husband doing to her?” suggests an oppression more problematic than veil enforcement or an expectation to cook dinner, that potentially includes violence and danger. She also constructs herself as a feminist, allowing her to use the ideal of feminism to override a Muslim woman’s own words, further maintaining the version of Muslim women as oppressed.

Overall, a significant aspect of constructing Muslims was that Muslim women were oppressed by Muslim men, to the extent of “having no rights”. This was developed as something that was very different from New Zealand values, and highlighted the us and them distinction. Another aspect of this was Muslim women denying their oppression. This maintained the oppressed Muslim women construction in the face of evidence to the contrary. The implication of constructing Muslim women as oppressed was that Muslim men were bad, victimisers, and potentially violent towards the women in their lives.

### **3.2.2. They’re not all terrorists.**

Talk of Muslims consistently included that a Muslim terrorist is an exception. After discussing a positive news story regarding Muslims, and being questioned whether he was surprised by this, Max stated:

Not really, I wasn’t all that surprised because there’s a lot of nice people, they try to show the good side. It’s obvious they’re not all terrorists (laughs), probably like less than 1 per cent are terrorists.

This sentence constructs Muslims as unfairly being connected to terrorism. The first part of the sentence is intended to be light-hearted and humorous as indicated by Max laughing. This could serve to establish that it is obvious he is not racist and is not susceptible to making assumptions about others. However, this lightness contrasts with the seriousness of the second part, in which he estimates the

actual number of violent Muslims. Use of this crude statistical estimate may serve to construct himself as a legitimate source of information on the topic. However, Max's assertion of one per cent of Muslims being terrorists would be a large number of Muslims and hence vastly over-estimated. Josh uses a similar estimate:

Like any religious group it's the extremists that follow it. You could go back many years to the Crusades, they were extremist Christians. Just like now it's the Muslims who are very extremists on Islam, who do the terrorist attack, who follow the Qur'an, but page by page by page. That's I think the differences, and when something like that happens it gets blamed on everyone. And they don't get a say, it's one group of people sets it out for the rest. [...]

[...] Oh it's very, very often made but that's that one per cent out of 99 per cent that ruins it for the rest of them. And it's just sad how often it is that one per cent gets called up and gets blamed on everyone.

The use of an analogy between Christian extremists and Islamic extremists situates Josh as not prejudiced towards Muslims and Islam because he is equally critiquing Islam and Christianity, a dominant religion in predominantly white, Western societies. He uses the bad apple narrative to construct Muslims as generally unproblematic, but extremists being prone to violence. The source of this violence is constructed as Islam; the majority of Muslims are not close followers of Islam, but the closer the Qur'an is followed, the greater likelihood of instigating violent attacks. The rest of Muslims, who are following a less intense version of the same doctrine, are constructed as victims of the Islamic extremists in his sentences beginning "they don't get a say..." and later, "it's just sad...". Summer also constructs Muslim terrorists as an exception:

And yes there are people that identify as Muslim who are quite extreme and willing to go to violence, but America's prisons are full of people who aren't Muslim who have been exceedingly violent you know? New Zealand has people who are willing to behave like that. Every country in the world has got

people who are on the outskirts of what I would consider like good decent behaviour towards other people.

Summer also uses a bad apple metaphor, comparing Islamic violence with violent attacks perpetrated by non-Muslims. She de-emphasises the issue of religion by comparing Islamic extremists with the violent prison population, of whom no religion or ethnicity is mentioned. This serves to resist the idea that Muslims are connected to terrorism. It also facilitates a straightforward argument, unencumbered by complex debate regarding Islam, and possibly motivated by awareness of contention in the international Western public debate about Muslims.

The connection between Muslims and terrorism was constructed as an exception and not the rule. Although this does not implicate most Muslims as violent, it implicates Islam as the root of violence. This was achieved through the use of crude statistical estimates, comparing Islam to Christianity, and through the use of the bad apple narrative. At times participants also sought to resist any connection between Islam and violence. Contextually, talk highlighted participant awareness of Muslims being connected to violence as a common public narrative, and reasons for this were often attributed to media practices, which are examined next.

### **3.2.3. Media.**

Although participants were asked directly about the role of media in perceptions of Muslims, each participant raised the issue of media before being asked. The entwined nature of these topics indicated that media is a major contributor to how Muslims were constructed. This was also explicitly stated by some participants. The media was constructed as problematic due to distorting constructions of Muslims, and society members having no option but ignorance as a response.

#### **3.2.3.1. *Distorted constructions.***

The media was developed as a perpetrator of inaccurate constructions of Muslims and Islam. When asked why she thinks that some people in Western countries have a negative view of Muslims, Joy stated:

The whole, you know, the picture of what they look like that's portrayed in the media, maybe like what they dress like, the beard, they're always carrying weapons and just they're associated with terrorism.

Joy removes the legitimacy of media sources as a fair and balanced source of information through her talk by positioning them as creators of negative Muslim characters. Her use of descriptions such as the picture that is portrayed seeks to dismiss the idea that the media disperses facts and rather provides a reflection of something that is stereotypical but not accurately reflective of Muslims. Her use of vernacular such as "I guess" establishes that her talk is tentative, and phrases such as "you know" serve to position what she is talking about as known information. William uses his experiences with Muslims to express that the media creates inaccurate reflections of Muslims:

Not that, they've never said, no one's ever accused us, and they don't feel unsafe but they themselves feel because all the negative publicity around terrorism and Muslims and Islam that they had to come out and say we're not connected to that, just because of the association with it. And I know, I don't know the Muslim religion, I don't know that much about it, but even, they've told me, they said it doesn't actually say anywhere in there, that in their religion that we have to kill, you know that we have to kill other people and stuff like that, they said that's not in there. They said that's extremists taking it to a different level.

William pinpoints negative publicity as the reason for the inaccurate association between Muslims and terrorism. He provides a voice for the Muslims he has supported in his job, providing weight to his argument that Muslims are not violent, unlike media portrayals. He also bolsters his view of New Zealand being tolerant when he states that the Muslims he knows have stated "no one's ever accused us" of terrorism. He makes an argument that Muslims do not feel unsafe, but there is tension as he also constructs Muslims as feeling the need to defend themselves by disavowing connection to extremists. Also, William claims Muslims have defended their religious scriptures to him, but contextually there was no suggestion of Muslims engaging in extremist actions and violence. This may function

to defend against inaccurate constructions of Muslims by media and indicates from his view others do consider Islamic scriptures to contain calls to violence. He actively attempts to disconnect Islam from the extreme violence which is popularly portrayed in the media. Summer also discusses how media negatively construct Muslims:

I think there's been a pretty decent media campaign that places like Iraq and Pakistan and Syria are dangerous and full of unstable people and violence and all these like horrific acts. And I think there's lots of different groups of people in those countries, but for a lot of people the main thing that sticks out of is that there would be Muslim people there, and so they're kind of, they get like tagged with that, you know, that they're... they must be from these places where everything is violent and they must be from these places where you know there are suicide bombers, where has been plots that have been carried out to hurt innocent people. And so I think it's, a lot of that stems from - people don't often try and understand a complete picture so, they just take the bits that are quite shocking and... you know, I think the media always use things a bit as well, so it can be quite sensationalized, you know, like someone that's Muslim does something it's all over the media.

Summer's description of a "decent media campaign" positions media as being intentional and targeted in their goal of constructing Muslims as violent and unstable. Muslims are constructed as victims that are tagged by media, as though Muslims are labelled like objects, for the purpose of generalising Muslims as violent. It serves to remove some of the blame from society members for the prejudice that Muslims face in Western countries. She also constructs society members as not motivated to understand the complete picture, which may serve to reinforce an argument for not surrendering to ignorance, and rather thinking more broadly.

Media was commonly constructed as distorting ideas of Muslims and Islam. To do this, talk involved de-legitimising media in various ways such as assuming this as known knowledge, describing it as intentional and targeted in its actions, and referencing information that Muslims have said themselves. Distorted constructions by media were closely connected to talk establishing participants as helplessly ignorant about information regarding Muslims.

### ***3.2.3.2. Ignorance is the only option.***

Participants constructed media as singular in its influence regarding international events, and therefore themselves as only having the option of ignorance regarding understandings of Muslims and Islam. John considered media consumers to be ignorant and dependent on what is on the television:

Yeah see look I went home the other night, turned the TV on, the first thing I saw was you know the bombing of a city which is a Muslim, mostly Muslim, and unless you understood the reason for the war in Syria, you'd think it was another terrorist action by Muslims, you know people are ignorant.

John uses an example that constructs media as untrustworthy and takes advantage of those who are ignorant. By saying he simply “turned the TV on” and “the first thing” he saw was violent Muslims, highlights how sensationalised, violent media stories about Muslims infiltrate our daily lives with such ease. It is as though this shocking, feared information is stumbled upon. Society members are constructed as a helpless, captive audience. He constructs himself as fine because he is not ignorant, but everyone else is a victim of false depictions of Muslims, as they have no choice due to a lack of understanding. When asked what role the media had in perceptions of Muslims in New Zealand, Valerie stated:

I think that it plays a huge role because that's the only way we can hear what's happening in the rest of the world and I have - I feel fine about Muslims, but I do not feel fine about journalists! (laughs) I think that they on the same level as tow truck drivers because they have a responsibility to give us the news without any bias and they don't. They select what they're gonna tell us. And so our whole belief system is at the mercy of the journalists because they bring something that's sensational and I've heard that they can make stuff up. And it'll still be published.

The phrase Valerie uses, “at the mercy of the journalists”, denotes a lack of choice as to whether she is exposed to media with no other way of getting accurate information. It constructs herself as not an active part of the process of critically information building about overseas events, and subsequently, viewpoints about

Muslims. Valerie builds a version of journalists as having responsibilities to provide accurate information to society members and failing to uphold this. The constructions of herself as without choice, and the media as responsible for accuracy, point to a dynamic of perpetrator and victim of media and consumer. William also constructs society members as lacking in control regarding what knowledge they have about Muslims:

So, you know, [the media] tend to go oh there was an attack here or there was something intervened over here, making it seem every single day there's an increase of it, but then I don't know that myself. I'm not traveling the world, I don't see all that firsthand but then there was also a news report a couple of months ago that said the actual ISIS numbers is decreasing. So, you know are they cancelling each other out? Or I don't know.

William constructs the media as untrustworthy perpetrators, sensationalising news stories about Muslims, influencing society members “every single day” on the topic. Society members are constructed as uncertain and unaware of what is actually going on, as they have not been to these places firsthand. To maintain this construction, he expresses his own confusion as to what is actually happening in regard to Muslims. It gives the listener a sense that society members are lost, ignorant, and confused as to what to believe about Muslims.

Throughout the data, it was clear that constructions of Muslims were strongly linked to media. In each interview, talk regarding media was initiated by the interviewee prior to any direct media-related questions. Contextually, this highlights that media constitutes a dominant source of information about Muslims. The media was not constructed as a positive entity, and rather it was to blame for negative constructions of Muslims, with participants being victims of ignorance about Muslims due to the singular influence of the media. This functions to explain poor treatment of Muslims in Western countries in a way that does not implicate society members themselves as discriminatory or racist.

To summarise, analysis identified two primary discourses, namely, constructing New Zealand society and constructing Muslims. New Zealand society was constructed as a safe haven, tolerant and accepting of different religions and



cultures. Tolerance and acceptance were conditional on whether Muslims integrated, and on participants' own security and safety. Within constructions of Muslims, perceived gender-based oppression was created as a problematic difference compared with non-Muslims. Muslims were constructed as "not terrorists, mostly". The implication, even by negating the connection between Muslims and terrorism, is that there is a default connection between Islam and terrorism. Media was also a significant focus, constructed as intentionally presenting a distorted view of Muslims. Also, in relation to media, participants constructed themselves as ignorant of Muslims.

## CHAPTER 4: Discussion

This study sought to address Douglas Pratt's (2010) claim that New Zealand's non-Muslim majority is experiencing angst in relation to a growing Muslim population. Overall, this research challenges claims of widespread angst regarding Muslims. There was a general lack of angst. Rather, what was found were minor concerns relating to Muslim dress and some concern about safety. Throughout talk, there was conditional acceptance and a desire to retain social and cultural norms. Various assertions and denials were used that constructed and maintained an idyllic version of New Zealand, and the use of national identity to maintain power relations between those considered New Zealanders, largely Pākehā or New Zealand European, and Muslims. The study of non-Muslims' talk about Muslims also provided a unique interplay for considering how Western media affects the country. Participant talk paralleled media talk in many ways, but did not induce angst in participants. Considering the concepts of Islamophobia and racism, the former was only detected in minor pockets of talk. Covert racism, however, as part of a much broader pattern of talk and not specific to Muslims, was highlighted in this study. Reflexivity and the researcher's place in this research contribution is also considered.

### 4.1. Lack of Angst

The findings of the current study were not consistent with the conclusions of its grounding study in which Pratt (2010) claims a broad-based level of societal anxiety in regard to the increasing numbers of Muslims in the country. Reasons for this will be discussed. Importantly, there has not been a violent Islamic attack in New Zealand (Kolig, 2010). Another explanation for this could be that there are significant factors, unique to New Zealand, that mean the country cannot be generalised in relation to other parts of the Western world that do experience angst. The contextual factor of participants residing only in Auckland is also significant.

Central to the lack of angst detected is that there has not been a Muslim-related violent attack in the country (Kolig, 2010). New Zealand's lack of any psychologically close terror attack remains an important point of difference from many other Western countries. The Muslim population has not been high profile and

has not been brought to attention regarding anything local. Research from within countries that have experienced an Islamic terror attack, such as in England with the London bombings in 2005, or 9/11 in the US, have cited such events as defining in shaping relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, with hardening attitudes towards securitisation and immigration following attacks (Esposito & Kalin, 2011; Hussain & Bagguley, 2012). Furthermore, an experimental study by Das et al. (2009) found that death-related thoughts are increased when threat of terrorism is psychologically close, meaning the threat was in a familiar area. It is unknown how non-Muslim New Zealanders would react if such an attack occurred on home soil. It should also be noted that in “Antipodean Angst” (Pratt, 2010), potential sources of angst were highlighted including the proximity of New Zealand to Indonesia, a majority Muslim country, where the 2002 Bali bombings occurred. While the proximity to Indonesia is not in dispute, the level of angst associated with this has been challenged by this study.

Another questionable aspect of Pratt’s (2010) work was the degree to which he generalised New Zealand as an integral part of a single phenomenon of Western prejudice towards Islam. While Western countries have much in common, they are also unique which is of great importance when considering the lack of angst. This is a country that has had many successful leading social changes, for example, women in New Zealand were the first in the world to get the vote (Dann, 2015), and liberal policies including being one of the first countries to legalise same-sex marriage (Henrickson, 2010). It has not been a country to be wary of change and diversity. In regard to Muslims, a marginalised group across Western countries, in comparison to New Zealand’s treatment of other marginalised groups such as women before the vote and gay people, it is perhaps not surprising that discussion of Muslims has overall more of a relaxed and unbothered approach, rather than angst.

Also contextually significant was evidence showing that there is less discrimination towards Muslims in New Zealand in comparison with other Western countries, and that the country embraces anti-discrimination laws (Kolig, 2010; Shaver et al., 2016). A relevant American study used survey responses to investigate distributive justice, its links to exclusionary policies, and how the links were mediated by collective angst (Lucas, Rudolph, Zhdanova, Barkho, & Weidner, 2014). The

authors suggest that collective angst links a belief in distributive justice to harsh treatment of others and reduces compassion for immigrants and increases support for exclusionary practices. In this sense, the lack of widely held angst in the current study could link to less discrimination towards Muslims.

To further contextualise the lack of angst detected, participants resided in Auckland, a culturally diverse city where different cultures are widely accepted. It is one of the major metropolitan areas in New Zealand, with most recent immigrants residing there, and the highest concentration of Muslims in the country (Johnston et al., 2010; Shepard, 2006). Johnston et al.'s (2010) survey found the more contact respondents had with immigrants (as measured by Total Contact Index – TCI), the more accepting of a culturally diverse population they were. Of Auckland respondents, 36 to 45 per cent had TCIs of 7 or more, the highest amount of contact with immigrants of any city in New Zealand. Findings are likely to be different in rural or smaller towns within the country.

In summary, angst was not detected amongst the 12 non-Muslim participants. Overall, there was a relaxed approach to Muslims that did not point towards broad-level anxieties. This may be explained by participants having no experience of an Islamic terror attack in New Zealand, and the New Zealand context being one of low discrimination and leading-the-way in supporting the freedoms of marginalised groups. The fact that participants resided in Auckland contextualises this further and may also explain the lack of angst.

#### **4.2. What was Found**

While the pivotal finding of this study was a lack of angst, what were found were minor concerns about Muslim women's dress and security in relation to Muslims, and that acceptance of Muslims was conditional. Conditional acceptance fitted with patterns of talk about integration and neutralisation of any cultural difference from the dominant Pākehā group, highlighting that participants were seeking to maintain cultural and social norms in talk.

The colloquial adage "when in Rome, do as the Romans do" is part of daily social discourse, and both the phrase and the sentiment were identified in the current study. It is a well-documented discursive tool, used to create social

acceptability of the expectation of integration for those who are different, that is, not Pākehā, and is common regarding immigration diversity (Bowskill et al., 2007; Lyons et al., 2011; Scalvini, 2016). Value has been placed on assimilation and the “unity of identity can be merely the suppression of difference” (Morris, 2005, p. 243). Participants frequently stressed the desirability of assimilation. This was consistent with a study of New Zealand university students in discussion of immigration, in which it was found the students worked to diminish the rights of the other by constructing the goal of assimilation as positive (Lyons et al., 2011).

The integration argument, which is common in talk of diversity in Western countries, is not surprising in discussions of Muslims due to the often seemingly all-encompassing nature of the practice of Islam on Muslims. Kolig (2010) speaks about Muslims following Islam, which differs from dominant social norms in New Zealand and is a total and distinct way of life. That is, in contrast to the more simple practice of going to church on a Sunday for a follower of Christianity, following Islam encompasses daily religious practices and is an inherent part of living which includes such basics as diet and dress. However, Christianity also is an everyday practice for many followers. This is not salient within New Zealand society, which since colonisation, has historically based values on assumptions of Christianity. Therefore, Christianity is less likely to seem different in everyday life. Participants in this study identified as having no religion, or being Catholic, Christian, or Born-Again Christian.

A specific aspect of the religious practices of Muslims that provided a challenge to everyday social norms was Muslim women’s dress. This was raised as a concern within interviews for various practical and legal reasons including the inability to identify the wearer of niqab, the ability to conceal weapons, and that Muslim headscarves were enforced by Muslim men. The idea that veiled Muslim women are both capable of violence as well as oppressed and vulnerable presents a contradictory construction of Muslim women. Considering this from a wider perspective, contention in terms of Muslim women’s dress is common in Western countries and not unique to New Zealand (Bilsky, 2009; Fredette, 2015; Scott, 2007). Concerns about the Muslim veil in participant talk parallel the banning of the hijab in public schools in European legislation, beginning in 2004 (Bilsky, 2009). There were similarities in talk regarding gender and freedom, and the incompatibility of enforced

veiling with ideals of Western society (Fredette, 2015). Also located in participant talk, was a discourse of Muslim women needing to be liberated from their unequal society, which requires reform (Sheehi, 2011).

In summary, there was a significant aspect in talk that highlighted conditional acceptance of Muslims, often expressed through the use of the integration argument. This is common in talk of diversity in the West, and discussion of Islam and Muslims parallels findings from research with other minority groups that include arguments for integration (Lyons et al., 2011; Scalvini, 2016). Such integration arguments are closely connected to the concept of national identity, which is explored next.

#### **4.2.1. National identity.**

Participants used nuanced mechanisms that constructed their identities as kiwi. Liu et al. (2005) explain identities are “constructed through discourses”, and “while they may be perceived to be natural and matter of fact, a good deal of work goes into constructing and maintaining them” (p. 14). This was very apparent throughout both the New Zealand society discourse and constructing Muslims discourse. Understandings of national identity were drawn upon in positive constructions of the country as a safe haven, and tolerant and accepting of other ethnic and cultural groups. This was particularly clear when conditions to this tolerance and acceptance were indicated. Further, Muslims were constructed as not New Zealanders, and not part of us but rather as an other.

Various other studies have identified that New Zealanders view the country as idyllic: protected from danger overseas, and known for its tolerant and accepting inhabitants (e.g. Olley, 2009; Palenski, 2012). The vision of New Zealand from early colonisation was that it was the “land of milk and honey”, described this way to encompass it being a utopian location of agricultural abundance (Bell, 2017, p. 1). This phrase encompasses hope for people immigrating to the country for a better life. McCreanor (2005) talked about an entrenched and commonly held narrative of New Zealand’s race relations being historically and currently harmonious between Māori and Pākehā and being the framework for other countries to strive towards. Talk idealising the treatment of all ethnic groups was common within this study, and

as McCreanor (2005) states, this means any ethnic or cultural conflict is seen as disjunct with this myth. Arguably, there is no room for angst or fear, as this would be a major challenge to national identity. Furthermore, angst would compromise the ability of participants to retain the construction of themselves as tolerant and accepting.

There was a substantial amount of talk seeking to retain the construction of New Zealand as a tolerant and accepting society in the face of evidence to the contrary. The talk seemed to protect and distance the self from any sense of being racist. While concerns did not seem to be based on the behaviours of Muslims themselves, there was concern about being seen as intolerant or discriminatory. The construction of New Zealand as tolerant and accepting draws on the pluralist domain of New Zealand identity and associated democratic liberal values, a version of the country often presented to the world as how the country is positively distinct. However, the two conditions on New Zealand being tolerant and accepting of other cultural groups - Muslims integrating, and non-Muslim safety and security - drew from the other domain of national identity (Sibley et al., 2011). That domain is a monocultural, white representation of what it means to be a New Zealander, and the subsequent expectation that the dominant Pākehā group defines terms and interactions with other cultural groups.

Exclusion of non-white in practice was seen in many ways to include the way Muslims were constructed as not New Zealanders. There is much research on power relations and inclusion and exclusion relating to remaining the dominant group and retaining the dominant social norms (Augoustinos & Every, 2007; Bowskill et al., 2007; Morris, 2005). The rights of them or others are diminished and devalued and can be seen in ways such as being labelled extreme or marginal (Morris, 2005). Although Muslims are a small minority, many Muslims are long-established in New Zealand and are second and third generation New Zealanders who view themselves as kiwis. Synonymity between kiwi or New Zealander and Pākehā is well-documented (Ward & Lin, 2005; Roscoe, 1997). Liu et al. (2005) state, "identity is a fundamental organising principle in the enactment of power, in the mobilisation for and the allocation of resources and a critical marker of inclusion and exclusion in social organisation" (p. 15). Emphasis on exclusion is a subtle way to make unequal

treatment legitimate while at the same time avoiding a direct challenge of racism. As stated by Lyons et al. (2011, p.25), national identity is increasingly being drawn upon instead of ethnicity to “sanitize racist discourse”. This was the case in this study with subtle, almost unarguable discourses being used to legitimise current cultural power imbalances.

The implication of the us and them distinction is that New Zealand is a homogeneous culture with one set of social norms. In reality New Zealand is a multicultural and multireligious society (Kolig, 2016). However, us and them distinctions in talk are unsurprising considering the predominantly Pākehā/New Zealand European participants. Creating homogeneous and opposing cultures is a longstanding pattern of talk, one that I as the Pākehā interviewer recognised as normal culturally, and one entrenched in history. Bell (2017a) writes about the imagined culturally homogeneous New Zealand, Pākehā and masculine, that once was believed to exist from when Pākehā first established dominance, one that marginalised Māori across all facets of life. Such nationalist discourses are used to reinforce social dominance and perpetuate the idea of New Zealanders as being English-speaking and European-looking (Lyons et al., 2011). Part of doing this is oppressing and excluding immigrants. Humpage and Greaves (2017) comment that there is rising nostalgia for this with increases in immigration.

The creation of one society that looks and speaks English, is met with some challenges when considering that in the current study, there was no more difference between the eight Pākehā participants and the four others, than there were differences within the whole participant group, in terms of how they constructed and talked about New Zealand society. The four participants were of Middle Eastern, Chinese, Korean and Fijian-Indian descent, and all considered themselves to be New Zealanders. One reason for the similarities in talk may be the way in which minority group New Zealanders are expected to integrate or fit in with the dominant group (Lyons et al., 2011). That is, these participants may use the same discourses as Pākehā participants as this is part of social norms for New Zealanders.

The subtle and normal way in which inclusion and exclusion occurred in talk, leaves one to speculate that it must feel easier for minority group New Zealanders simply to integrate into social norms rather than challenge a “brick wall” of supposed



acceptance of other cultures. Liu et al. (2005) stated that various waves of settlers arrive and go through the process of “carving out niches for themselves, fighting for resources, shaping and being shaped by the land” (p. 12). The need to “carve out niches” depicts effort and ability to keep their culture only in little pockets of New Zealand, as well as needing to fight for themselves. The degree to which the talk of these four participants who were not New Zealand-European was similar pertaining to national identity, makes one consider what parts of their culture they have had to discard when talking within general society and the interview context.

Ultimately, what is clear is that rules of national identity were being followed in similar ways for all participants. It is possible that the expression of any angst was limited by participants’ desire to present themselves as tolerant, accepting, and fair, as well as to reassure themselves that they were leading a comfortable day to day life in paradise in the certain knowledge that it would be ridiculous and laughable to suggest that the Islamic State is interested in New Zealand.

#### **4.2.2. Islamophobia and racism.**

It is important to ask if the data indicated any form of Islamophobia. The overt form of Islamophobia: “distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims [...] that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms” (Runnymede Trust, 2017, p. 6) was not apparent, except in pockets such as talk seeking to prevent Muslim veiling and to be like us.

However, a more covert presentation of Islamophobia was apparent. Islamophobia has also been described as “anti-Muslim racism” (Runnymede Trust, 2017, p. 6). Covert, modern, or subtle racism is “complex and socially acceptable”, involves denial of personal racism, and “is less about biological weakness and increasingly about beliefs in cultural superiority” (Tuffin, 2008, p. 592). This was detected in the conditional acceptance, integration talk, and the stated desire to retain the national identity and perceived current cultural norms. However, caution is required when using definitions that construct Islamophobia as a form of racism. It has been shown that the two concepts are analytically distinct and can be disjoined in discourse (Hussain & Bagguley, 2012). Rather, as mentioned, minimal

Islamophobic talk was identified, but covert racism was detected in the common-sense ways national identity was constructed and the conditional acceptance of Muslims.

Throughout this discussion, it has been clarified that covert racism was part of New Zealand society and Muslim construction discourses. The version of the New Zealand national identity that is monoculturally Pākehā was predominantly drawn upon. Furthermore, the ways in which Muslims were constructed as not New Zealanders, but other highlights covert racism. In relation to the definition of covert racism, denials of racism and the social acceptability of integrationism were both found in this study. Such discourses are part of a system of Pākehā dominance through a historical process of colonisation, used to reproduce the dominant culture (McCreanor, 2005).

Critical awareness of Muslim stereotypes, Islamophobia, and the social construction of concepts such as terrorism are vital for movement away from the exclusionary ways of speaking about Muslims. Integration talk, that seeks to conceal assimilationism of Muslims is a deficient concept when it comes to building healthy socially cohesive societies as it removes cultural freedom and equality. Movement away from religious identity and bonds is a step towards maladaptive outcomes (Stuart, 2014). To the contrary, New Zealand Muslims should be encouraged to maintain their cultural and religious practices in the new society and resistance to difference should be dissolved.

#### **4.2.3. Media's role.**

The influential media profile of such events as 9/11 and the London bombings, together with politicised social media forums such as Facebook and Twitter, have seen conventional Western thought develop which strongly links Islam, Muslims, and the perpetration of terror (Rane et al., 2014). These links can be seen when considering how Muslims were constructed in talk in the current study. It is also known that since 9/11, much media content regarding Muslims is negative political discourse regarding securitisation and upholding of national values (Rane et al., 2014). How this relates to this study, in which angst regarding Muslims was

minimal in talk, as well as the conditional acceptance and minor concerns surrounding Muslims, will be discussed.

The us and them distinction identified in participant talk is reflective of media representation of the Western world and Muslims. The construction of Muslims as other, as immigrants, and at times as refugees, exiled from war, instability, and injustice, particularly in the Middle East, is often how they are depicted in media (Sharifi et al., 2017). This is not representative of Muslims in New Zealand, suggesting the reflection in participant talk relates to media discourse. Most Muslims immigrate to New Zealand from Asia (27 per cent), the second largest group are born in New Zealand, and the third largest group are from the Middle East or Africa (Stats NZ, 2014). The idea of Muslims as escapees of war is a common misperception, with many people thinking all Muslims are Arab and connected with war against Christians and the West (Shaver et al., 2016). All these misinterpretations were apparent in the data for this study.

Also assisting in explaining the us and them distinction in talk between Muslims and participants is that Muslims are also often constructed as one homogeneous group in the media (Kabir & Hamid, 2015). This may relate to the interchangeability of the terms Muslim and Islam (Cheng, 2015). The confusion around this has consequences and may have impacted how participants construed meaning. The most cursory of looks at public language surrounding Islamic terrorist acts, and the lack of distinction and definition between Muslims as individuals and interpretations of the Islamic religion, raise questions as to the ways in which understandings are reached about the Muslim population, and the possibility of confusion as to the way in which perspectives are organised and ordered in national mindsets.

Alongside the separation of Muslims and New Zealanders was a central construction of Muslim women as vulnerable victims of patriarchal oppression and Muslim men as the implicated oppressors. This strongly aligns with stereotypes of Muslim women that are well-documented in Western media (Hirschmann, 2003; Sensoy, 2016; Weber, 2012). Many Western media reports highlight oppressive Taliban practices or enforcement of veiling in Iran and Afghanistan, leading viewers to connect this to all veiled Muslim women (Hirschmann, 2003). From a Western

perspective, specific historical movements of veil enforcement such as Iran in the 1970s are often generalised to all of Islam, and hijabi women are therefore stereotyped as oppressed (Weber, 2012). Sensoy (2016) identifies Muslim women as constructed as lacking agenda, oppressed, and victimised, and this aligns with how Muslim women were constructed in this study. This construction of Muslims was used as a tool in talk. For instance, participants' disapproval and non-acceptance of Muslim men in defence of Muslim women was one way in which this construction was used. It was also used as a reason to construct Muslim women's dress as not acceptable in society. This is an acceptable rejection of gender inequality, rather than an unacceptable rejection of difference. This is an inaccurate depiction, and a study of attitudes of thousands of Muslims in 35 countries found Islamic religiosity in Muslim men did not correlate positively with the oppression of women (Esposito & Mogahed, 2007).

Additionally, while the line of talk "they're not all terrorists" suggests rejection of common media narratives about Muslims, implicit in this is the connection between Islam and terrorism. There are persistent themes in Western political narratives about securitisation relating to Islam since 9/11, and stereotypically viewing Muslims as a threat (Coen, 2017). Whether implicitly or explicitly, the media defines problems by selecting certain facets of reality and giving prominence through that piece of information being made more memorable and meaningful (Entman, 1993). What is known about the effects of media stories about Muslims, particularly after events such as 9/11 and the London bombing, is that in New Zealand there have been increases in acts of discrimination towards Muslims such as verbal insult, and the opinion in social commentaries that Islam does not belong in New Zealand (Kabir & Hamid, 2015; Kolig, 2016). Thus, media has been shown to have an influence, and this was also clear in the default nature by which Islam and terrorism were connected in the current study.

While in many ways talk about Muslims reflected media discourse, participant talk also encompassed rejection of media constructions of Muslims. Paradoxically, participant talk rejecting media constructions may also be explained by public discourse, including political and media discourse. Talk of news propaganda is not simply an issue of current times, and discourse regarding misleading and

inaccurate dissemination of information via media has existed long before the current wave of discourse on “fake news” since the election of US president Donald Trump (Monnier, 2018). In regard to the question of why such talk is used, Farkas and Schou (2018) consider the use of such explanations under the framework of discourse theory. They state the discourse fake news is used to “critique, delegitimise and exclude opposing political projects” (p. 303). Trump’s political attack on left-wing news media is an extreme version of current popular discourse heard within Western news media. Participant talk about media distorting constructions of Muslims and ignorance regarding widely-held information parallels such public discourse.

Ignorance regarding Muslims being the only option available to people was an interesting part of talk. It raised challenges in explaining how the outcome is situated amongst other research. It is also known that dependence on media for building information about Muslims does not reflect the way media functions in society anymore. The majority of the country is connected to the internet: in 2012, 80 per cent of New Zealanders over the age of 15 were recent internet users (Stats NZ, 2013c). Media is not the singular influence it once was. The range of viewpoints available now across more fluid forms of media such as social media, mean that consumers are not reliant on one attitude or perspective. Despite New Zealand being geographically isolated, the majority of the country is connected to the internet. That is not to say that individuals do not use media in particular ways, such as following more closely traditional forms of media such as news on television, but it does say that there is greater availability of a range of opinions and attitudes.

In New Zealand, Muslims are a small minority and participants had little, if any personal experiences with Muslims. It is known that influence of media depends on the previous experiences of the media consumer (Von Sikorski et al., 2017). That is, if there is a negative story about Muslims, this would be less likely to affect viewpoints or trigger fear if the watcher had had positive experiences with Muslims. This does not provide deep insight as neither positive or negative personal experiences were discussed by participants. However, it would seem New Zealanders and the participants would be more susceptible to a fear response to framed and sensationalised stories about violent Muslims as they do not have to consider

whether or not their personal experiences are congruous with media narratives. However, there was minimal fear in the talk.

So how can the discourse relating to ignorance about Muslims being the only option be explained? Perhaps participants positioning themselves as ignorant could be a response to not being interested in a minority group that is not a large part of most non-Muslims' everyday lives (Kolig, 2010). Muslims form only 1 per cent of the population in New Zealand (Stats NZ, 2014). Although Muslims are visibly identifiable, it was clear that most of the participants had had little or no personal experience with Muslims and did not often see identifiable Muslims in public. Another possible explanation is insight from McCreanor's (2005) discussion of patterns in Pākehā talk. The researcher found ignorance was one of the themes identified in Pākehā talk regarding Māori-Pākehā relations. He states that any offence caused to Māori by Pākehā is spoken about as ignorance, due to Māori being secretive about Māori culture, or confused themselves. The intent is that ignorance is therefore beyond the control of the speaker, and not malicious. Participants may have used talk to claim ignorance about Muslims as a way to avoid blame for any offence they may cause.

Overall, there were connections between key discourses in this study and media discourse. This could be seen in the us and them distinction between Muslims and New Zealanders, the way in which both were viewed as a homogeneous group, and the construction of Muslim women as vulnerable and oppressed. Even rejection of media discourse is recognised within political rhetoric in the West. Constructions of participants themselves as ignorant was a tool in talk that could be explained by lack of interest in a small minority group, or to use as a defence against any offence caused. The talk relating to Muslims by non-Muslim New Zealanders closely associates with media discourse and reflections of Western relations overall with Muslims.

#### **4.3. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

In retrospect, there were limitations to my study, and these raise some potentially rich avenues for future research. First, there were elements of the interview process that should be acknowledged and considered. My presence during

data gathering, although unavoidable, would have affected the participants' responses, particularly as I knew most of the participants personally, and as it was a topic that was sensitive when it came to such areas as religion and discrimination (Denscombe, 2010). This is called the interviewer effect and refers to the way in which the gender, age, and ethnicity of the interviewer affect the amount of information and what information each participant is willing to discuss (Denscombe, 2010). As personal attributes cannot be changed, the interviewer effect can simply be acknowledged. However, it does provide insight into the identified lack of angst and lack of overt racist talk as it increases the likelihood that participants are giving socially desirable responses.

Second, I was cautious of challenging deep-seated identities of New Zealanders as fair and tolerant within the interview context, in the interests of rapport-building. It is difficult to know if the data would have been different had I followed up on some responses by asking, for example: "Do you see any challenge to the rights of others by suggesting they 'fit in'?" or "By 'fit in' do you mean to 'get rid of' parts of their Muslim identity?" While the questions were chosen and placed in an order to establish rapport, and allow participants to provide opinion without undue influence of the researcher, in hindsight, I could have probed more deeply when participants made comments that reflected strong alignment to national identity.

Third, there were no Māori participants. Inclusion of non-Muslim Māori would have provided valuable insight into how they talked about Muslims, particularly relating to understandings of national identity. Perceptions of national identity both differ and are the same in ways dependent on Māori or Pākehā ethnic group membership. For example, Sibley, Liu and Khan (2008) used the Implicit Association Test with university students and found that Pākehā participants perceived their own and Māori culture as equal representations of nationhood (albeit symbolic representation of Māori). Māori participants perceived their own culture as being more closely connected with nationhood. In another study, Liu (2005) found Māori and Pākehā spoke about their own ethnic groups in stories of nationhood, excluding other ethnic groups. Such differences highlight that the inclusion of Māori

participants would have provided further insight into the New Zealand national identity.

As well as these three limitations, it should be noted that the participants were from one part of New Zealand, the largest city with the greatest number of Muslims. This was a specific subpopulation and it would be of interest for future research to explore the talk of other groups. In Johnston et al.'s (2010) survey research they found that respondents from areas with greater numbers of migrants were more likely to be welcoming of immigration. With the highest number of Muslims in New Zealand being in Auckland, and all participants residing in Auckland, it perhaps limited the range of responses (Shepard, 2006). Non-Muslim New Zealanders' talk relating to Muslims would be valuable from different areas in New Zealand, particularly smaller towns, to find out if there was greater angst regarding Muslims.

#### **4.4. Self-reflection**

My own understandings of outcomes and new learning from this research have often been uncomfortable. Being Pākehā myself, I am part of a system based on colonisation and dominance (Matthewman, 2017). Having a strong interest in cultural differences, multiculturalism, and cultural practices of minority groups in New Zealand, which motivated me to commit to this project, I had a sense of myself as engaged and aware of issues of ethnic, cultural, and religious difference. However, at times I recognised my own ways of speaking about minority groups and about New Zealand in some of the voices of participants in this study. The dominant group talks about minority groups as though they can be labelled and organised, while the dominant group "occup[ies] the unmarked, naturalised space that remains" (McCreanor, 2005, p. 53). This way of speaking is commonplace, natural, and seemingly automatic. The idea that I assumed I was "neutrally acting for the public good" (McCreanor, 2005, p. 53), particularly relating to discussions about Muslims or other minority groups, is something I now see as needing to be overcome. After this study I have stronger awareness of the quiet but powerful forms of racism, made up of subtleties that may be beyond everyday awareness for me being part of the majority group.



## CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

This study contributes to the social psychological literature on Muslim and non-Muslim relations in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The idea of angst is helpful as an organising concept with regards to exploration of Muslim and non-Muslim relations in New Zealand, for many reasons, not least among them changed perceptions due to events such as 9/11, followed by the respondent war on terror, and an emergent and evolving media discourse regarding Muslims in response to these major historical events.

The findings of this research are that angst was not detected in the talk of the 12 non-Muslim participants. Overall, there was a relatively relaxed approach to increasing numbers of Muslims in society. There was evidence in the discourse of minor concerns, but these were not indicative of broad-level anxieties or high degrees of angst. The explanation for this somewhat unbothered kiwi co-existence with the Muslim population may lie in the lack of an Islamic terror attack in New Zealand, or other forms of Muslim linked threat, which may have potentially crystallised more negative attitudes towards the Muslim group in other countries. Further, Muslims are a small population group currently, co-existing within a multinational diverse population. Finally, New Zealanders pride themselves on liberal moderate values, and kiwi citizens protect an established context of low discrimination, and a record of leading the way in supporting the freedoms of marginalised groups.

Indeed, this research was striking at the heart of New Zealand values. This sensitivity surrounding deeply held values was apparent in a very active construction and perpetuation of an identity cherished by the dominant group. Participants appeared to be aligning to shared rules, for example, the rules of tolerance, fair-mindedness and acceptance were implicitly accepted and reproduced, with discourse constructed in ways which ensured the rules were not broken. There appeared to be a combination of deeply held values and unconscious rules which precluded any expression of angst in talk. New Zealand was constructed as an idyllic location, of little interest to Muslim terrorists, a “land of milk and honey”, full of tolerant and accepting people. Such self-images and entrenched national identities

would not sit comfortably with expressions of angst, and indeed research participants actively steered talk away from anything that veered too close to anything that might look like angst.

Minor concerns were evident in the talk, but there was little concern around issues such as the potential Islamification of New Zealand. Rather, that it was fine for future generations to inherit a global culture, within the repeated condition that this be on our terms. However, a *laissez-faire* response to increasing numbers of Muslims in New Zealand presented as a superficial position, underpinned by a core underlying stance that those with different social norms should assimilate and not threaten New Zealand's current cultural norms in order to be accepted. It does make me wonder to what extent this thin unchallenged layer of relaxed acceptance is sufficient to prevent discriminatory attitudes and practices towards Muslims, on a lasting basis.

There was a complex interplay of factors relating to how non-Muslims maintain idyllic versions of the country, and power relations between the dominant culture in New Zealand and minority group members. The increasing complexity regarding New Zealand's national identity, and New Zealanders' place in the world, is reflected in the various assertions, denials, justifications, consistency and inconsistency of constructions about Muslims and New Zealand society. The reasons for the concern regarding Muslim women's dress and security were not definitive, but there did appear to be a core concern pertaining to how those not viewed as us contribute to or detract from our sense of national identity and coherent belonging.

Further studies are needed as the number of Muslims in Aotearoa grows. The willingness of the New Zealand population to be tolerant and accepting presents as a resource to draw upon in any ongoing co-operative approach to the day to day co-existence of non-Muslim and Muslim groups as there was little confident or first-hand knowledge about Muslims in this study. Rather, knowledge was emergent, offering an opportunity for psycho-education regarding Muslims as individuals, and for positive role models in the public eye who are visibly Muslim, and known as New Zealand public figures. The necessary ideal is assurance by New Zealanders of a willingness and ability to co-exist with the Muslim population on comfortable, productive, equal and non-discriminatory terms.

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## Appendix A: Information Sheet



### Interrogating Antipodean angst:

### A discourse analysis of non-Muslims' talk about Islam and Muslims in New Zealand

### Information Sheet

#### *The Researcher*

My name is Eileen Ash, and I am a post-graduate student undertaking this research to fulfil the requirements for a master's degree in psychology at Massey University. My supervisors are Dr. Ella Kahu and Dr. Keith Tuffin. Understanding inter-group dynamics within New Zealand society is of great interest to me.

#### *What is this study about?*

The aim of this research study is to understand the views of non-Muslim New Zealanders regarding Islam and Muslims.

#### *Who can take part?*

I invite you to participate in this research if you consider yourself to be a New Zealander, are not Muslim, are aged 18 or older and speak English well.

#### *What is involved in participating?*

Participation involves a one-on-one interview for approximately one hour. This will take place in a convenient location for you such as a university or library. You will be asked questions and prompts about your experiences and viewpoints. The interview will be audio-recorded for my use only and transcribed by me. You will receive a 20-dollar supermarket voucher to reimburse for the time and travel taken for participation.

#### *Will it be confidential?*

The information you provide in this study will be handled confidentially. A pseudonym will be used in the transcript, the thesis, and any other publications. Places names or other identifying information will also be deleted. The only people to view the transcript will



be myself and my supervisors. The audio-recordings and transcriptions of the interview will be stored securely on password protected computers. The transcribed interview will be emailed to you for any amendments and omissions prior to data analysis. Lastly, if you would like, a copy of the final research report can be emailed to you.

*You have the right to:*

- Ask any questions about the research at any time
- Decline to answer any questions
- Ask for the audio-recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview
- Withdraw from the study up until two weeks after your interview
- Have access to the transcript of your interview and make any changes up until two weeks after your interview
- Be given a summary of the project findings when it is concluded

*Contact details*

Thank-you for your interest and if you would like to join my research study or for further information please contact me on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. My supervisors can be emailed at [E.R.Kahu@massey.ac.nz](mailto:E.R.Kahu@massey.ac.nz) and [K.Tuffin@massey.ac.nz](mailto:K.Tuffin@massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix B: Consent Form



### Participant Consent Form

I have read the information sheet and understand the aim and process of this study.

I agree to participate in this research study under the conditions detailed in the information sheet.

I agree to this interview being audio-recorded.

I agree that the researcher may use the transcript of the interview for data analysis if I do not respond within 2 weeks with any amendments.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to be sent a summary of the findings, please provide an email or postal address here:

## **Appendix C: Interview Questions**

### **Background Information**

Age or age group

Ethnic or cultural background

Any religious affiliation

### **Questions and prompts**

What has been your experience of Muslims and Islam in New Zealand?

The population of Muslims is increasing in New Zealand. Between 2006 and 2013, the number of Muslims rose 27.9 per cent (Stats NZ, 2014). What is your viewpoint on this?

How do you think Muslims are treated in New Zealand?

In some countries, for example Australia and the USA, there is evidence of Muslims being subject to hostility and abuse based on their religion, are you aware of such incidents occurring in New Zealand?

Why do you think some people in Western countries have negative views of Muslim?

Tell me your thoughts on these events:

A year ago, a woman verbally abused and threw a can of beer at a group of hijabi women in Huntly because of their affiliation to Islam (Bracewell-Worrall & Wong, 2017).

Muslim woman Syeda Fouzia is campaigning for KFC to introduce a halal chicken option in New Zealand (Ali, 2017).

Definition: “The word halal is often associated with food and drink considered proper for Muslims”. More specifically, “for meat to be halal, the butcher must invoke the name of God and cut the animal’s throat

quickly with a sharp knife. The meat must be drained of all blood before it is consumed.” (“Halal”, 2017).

What is your opinion on government legislation in France (and similar policies in other parts of Europe) banning the wearing of Muslim headscarves in public schools?

How would you explain the differences or similarities between treatment of Muslims here compared with other Western countries?

What is your perspective on the connection that is often made between Islam and terrorism?

Do you have any concern about a terrorist attack happening in New Zealand? Why or why not?

What do you see or read about Muslims in New Zealand in the media or on your social media?

What role do you think the media plays in people’s perceptions of Muslims in New Zealand society?

## Appendix D: Flyer

The flyer has a white background with abstract geometric shapes in blue and orange on the left and right sides. The text is centered and uses a mix of bold, regular, and italicized fonts. The title is in large blue bold letters. The main heading is in black bold letters. The eligibility criteria are in a regular black font. The contact information is in a smaller orange font. The contact details are in a regular black font, with redacted phone and email addresses.

**RESEARCH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

**MY RESEARCH SEEKS TO UNDERSTAND THE VIEWS  
OF NON-MUSLIM NEW ZEALANDERS  
REGARDING MUSLIMS**

If you consider yourself to be a New Zealander, are not Muslim,  
are 18 years old or older, and speak English,  
then I would love to hear from you.

*What will I have to do?*  
Participation will require approximately one hour for a one-on-one  
interview in English, which will be audio-recorded for  
the researcher's use only.

Interviews will be held at a  
university campus or an agreed upon area  
\$20 supermarket voucher to reimburse for time and travel

For more information please contact Eileen Ash,  
a psychology student at Massey University

Phone/text [REDACTED] or  
email [REDACTED]