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CONTAMINATED DEMOCRACY

**A Discourse Analysis of the Submissions to the
Royal Commission on Genetic Modification**

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

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Abstract

This thesis investigated the practice of democracy in the Royal Commission of Genetic Modification, using a constructivist discourse methodology that drew on Mannheim's sociology of knowledge, with a critical analysis of institutional power. Conflicting worldviews materialised in the sampled Royal Commission submissions, revealing a vast majority of submissions united by a vision of a 'GE-free' New Zealand. This majority stance was however pushed aside, with views expressed in the largely pro-GM Interested Person submissions proving dominant, contaminating the ideal of democracy. The Interested Person submissions are however more complex. A century old bureaucratic legislation promoted the contamination of democracy. Section 4A of the Commission of Inquiry Act 1908 excluded individuals and various groups from being heard by the Royal Commission on Genetic Modification. A consequence of such excluding was that the Royal Commission report presented a skewed analysis of the Interested Person submissions, unjustly favouring a pro-GM stance.

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List of Abbreviations

ADLS	Auckland District Law Society
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
COI	Commission of Inquiry
CRI	Crown Research Institute
DA	Discourse Analysis
ERMA	Environmental Risk Management Authority
GA	Government Agency (submission category)
GATT	General agreement on Trade and Tariffs
GE	Genetic Engineering
GM	Genetic Modification
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
GP	General Public (submission category)
HSNO	Hazardous Substances and New Organisms (Act)
IP	Interested Person (submission category)
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
RC	Royal Commission
RCGM	Royal Commission on Genetic Modification
WTO	World Trade Organisation