

Seeking an Ethnic Identity: Is “New Zealander” a Valid Ethnic Category?

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Abstract

In the 1986 Census of Population and Dwellings just over 20,000 individuals classified themselves as “New Zealanders” in response to the ethnic origin question. By 2001, over 89,000 individuals recorded a “New Zealander” response to the ethnic group question. However, despite actively choosing not to tick the census form category “New Zealand European”, in the last three censuses these people were subsequently regrouped by Statistics New Zealand into the higher-level category “New Zealand Europeans” and, ultimately, at the 1-digit level “Europeans”. Statistics New Zealand is now proposing to abandon this practice. In doing so it will create a new level four ethnic category for New Zealander type responses. It will also create a new “Other Ethnicity” level one ethnic group into which such responses can be aggregated. In this paper I explore why some respondents have been choosing to call themselves “New Zealanders”. I also examine the arguments of those opposing the official recognition of the “New Zealander” response.

A small, but increasing, number of respondents to official surveys, including the Census of Population and Dwellings, have been writing down “New Zealander” in response to questions about ethnicity. These data have been recorded in Statistics New Zealand’s databases. However, in high-level ethnic classification from the 1991, 1996 and 2001 censuses, these people were subsequently re-grouped by Statistics New Zealand initially as “New Zealand Europeans” and, ultimately, as “Europeans” in official reports.¹ The Statistics New Zealand Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity (RME), released in mid-2004, recommended that this practice be abandoned. Instead it recommended that a new level four New Zealander ethnic group be created to capture these responses. In addition, it recommended that these responses be then aggregated into a new level one ethnic group called “Miscellaneous”. Thus, at the highest level

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of classification it was proposed there would be six ethnic groups. These were European, Maori, Pacific Peoples, Asians, MELAA² and Miscellaneous. However, in its RME, Statistics New Zealand did not go as far as saying the term New Zealander could be seen as an ethnic group, it simply accepts that such responses should be recorded and published. Subsequently, Statistics New Zealand (2005) decided to use the name “Other Ethnicity” instead of “Miscellaneous”.

The acceptance of a New Zealander ethnic response has been the subject of much debate. While there has been a long and ongoing discussion as to how to classify Maori, particularly when Maori is just one of the recorded ethnic groups (eg. Kukutai 2003; O’Regan 2001; Pool 1991), in recent years there has been parallel discussion as to whether New Zealander is a valid ethnic group. Some of this discussion has centred on the emerging ethnic identity of those New Zealanders with primarily European ancestry. But the discussion has also been influenced by the long history of intermarriage between non-Maori and Maori as well as recent migration from non-traditional sources. While it is not entirely possible to address these issues in isolation from discussions about the term “Pakeha”, in this paper I focus primarily on these recent debates as to whether New Zealander responses comprise a valid ethnic category.

The construction of ethnicity for individuals is a complex process and there is much debate about how this process takes place (eg. Didham 2004; Kukutai 2003; Pearson 1990; Statistics New Zealand 2004). Statistics New Zealand, in its RME, sets out a number of factors that may contribute to, or influence, a person’s ethnicity, also noting that many of these are interrelated. This list is: name;³ ancestry; culture; where a person lives and the social context; race; country of birth and/or nationality; citizenship; and religion and language:

“New Zealander” as an Ethnic Category

In New Zealand it is now generally accepted that ethnicity is culturally constructed, even if ancestry influences many peoples’ choice of ethnic group(s) (Allan 2001; Statistics New Zealand 2004). For example, in a paper setting out Maori perspectives for Statistics New Zealand’s RME, Robson and Reid (2001: 24) note “[i]t is our right to name our own identity and to have our ethnicity recorded as we wish.”⁴ However, in New Zealand there has been an ongoing debate as to whether people should be able to construct

their ethnicity on the basis of what some people perceive as being solely a New Zealand nationality.⁵ For example, in a book chapter on racism, Spoonley (1993:16) argues that nationality does not replace a specific ethnicity. Negating the ability to determine one's own ethnic group, Robson and Reid (2001:13), citing an earlier Department of Statistics review of ethnicity statistics, also question whether "New Zealander" can be an ethnic group:

...currently a small proportion of the New Zealand population disagrees with the ethnicity question and writes "New Zealander" in the space labeled "other". However, strictly speaking, New Zealander is a nationality not an ethnicity.

An examination of the questions in recent New Zealand censuses shows that there has been some confusion as to whether nationality comprises a valid ethnic group. In the 2001 census, respondents could tick eight possible ethnic groups and/or record their own.^{6, 7} The choices (in order) were: New Zealand European;⁸ Maori; Samoan; Cook Island Maori; Tongan; Niuean; Chinese; and Indian

A final tick box was "other" and the respondent was asked to "please state". Three examples, Dutch, Japanese and Tokelauan were provided. While the census "help notes" informed respondents that ethnicity is not nationality, some examples given in the form comprise both ethnic groups and countries. In published three-digit level data from the 2001 census, ethnic groups include Australians, Germans, Poles and Dutch.^{9,10}

The 1996 census question exhibited some similarities to the 1991 and 2001 censuses, but also some important differences. The New Zealand Maori ethnic group was at the top of the list of categories. The second choice, "New Zealand European", also had the alternative label "*or* Pakeha".¹¹ After this choice there was also an extra category "Other European".

If the respondent ticked this "Other European" box, they were then directed to another set of tick boxes that included English, Dutch, and Australian. This separation of "New Zealand European" and "Other European" provided some sense that "New Zealand Europeans" were "native" New Zealanders. The term "Pakeha" reinforced this idea. Finally, amongst the main ethnic choices there was also a tick box entitled "Other". Examples given were Fijian or Korean. Again, respondents to this "Other" tick box were directed to print their own ethnic group(s). Like the 1991 and

2001 censuses, the 1996 census had examples of groups that could be considered as countries and/or as ethnic groups.

Thus, in all three censuses, instead of, or in combination with, ticking a box for a predetermined ethnic group, respondents could write in their own ethnic group. Responses included: “New Zealander”, “Kiwi” or “Pakeha”.¹² The number of respondents claiming to be one of these groups is not insignificant. According to Allan (2001), in 1986 20,313 people recorded “New Zealander” in response to the then ethnic origin question in the census. Overall, the group recording a “New Zealander” type response rose from just under 45,000 in 1996 to over 89,000 in 2001 (Potter *et al.* 2003). In 2001, this group represented just over two per cent of the total population that gave an ethnic response.

Researchers, policy makers and statistical agencies recognise a need to reduce the complexity of large-scale data collections so they commonly regroup the many possible responses into a much smaller number of categories. Five ethnic groupings have been commonly used in New Zealand social science and policy making. These have been “European”, “Maori”, “Pacific Peoples”, “Asian”, and “Other”.^{13, 14} In order to fit everyone into one of these categories, Statistics New Zealand previously made the decision to firstly reallocate all “New Zealander”, “Kiwi” and “Pakeha” responses to the “New Zealand European” subgroup. This group then became part of the wider “European” group. Therefore, while a respondent made an active choice not to tick the box “New Zealand European”, they were nevertheless allocated to this category and ultimately were counted as “Europeans”. While other ethnic groups are recoded to higher level groupings that they did not choose for themselves (for example Samoan to “Pacific Peoples”, or Chinese to “Asian”), it would have been very rare for someone other than a “New Zealander” to be allocated to an ethnic group that they had actively chosen to avoid.

This allocation decision by Statistics New Zealand for the 1991, 1996 and 2001 censuses appears to have been based on the presumption that people noting “New Zealander” were from majority groups known variously as “New Zealand Europeans” or “Pakeha”. While in the early days of colonisation Maori were often classified as “New Zealanders”, it is now generally assumed it is only non-Maori who are choosing this label.¹⁵

While based on a different set of questions to the census, this assumption was lent some support by research undertaken by Dupuis *et al.*

(1999). In their Smithfield project, a large-scale education study, the combined group of “Kiwi” and “New Zealander” made up a fifth of responses to an open ended question about ethnicity.¹⁶ In order to further investigate the backgrounds of those claiming to be “Kiwis” or “New Zealanders”, the researchers followed up on a geographically-based, sub-sample of the original group. They report that 96 per cent of those contacted gave responses that indicated that they were “Pakeha” (p.45).¹⁷ A further two per cent were “Maori/Pakeha”, while a further two per cent identified as “Pacific People/Pakeha”. However, even based on this research by Dupuis *et al.*, the decision by Statistics New Zealand to code all “New Zealanders” as “New Zealand European” meant that over 3,000 people were misgrouped in reports from the 2001 census.

Other research undermines the assumption that almost all “Kiwis” or “New Zealanders” are from the “New Zealand European” ethnic group. Te Hoe Nuku Roa (1999:Appendix 5) reports that when individuals of the Maori-descended adults in the baseline survey had to choose *one* option that best described themselves, 11 per cent chose “Kiwi” and 15 per cent “New Zealander”.¹⁸ Therefore, one in every four Maori-descended people in this survey defined their ethnicity primarily as “Kiwi” or “New Zealander”. This 26 per cent figure does not additionally identify those people who wished to identify first as Maori but also as “New Zealander/Kiwi”. However, given that this group had already stated their Maoriness to be part of the survey, this additional response may have reflected a further willingness to be seen as belonging to a number of overlapping groups.

Again, while this survey cannot be directly compared with the census, data from a national sample of just over 2,000 individuals also suggest some diversity amongst the “New Zealander” group (Webster 2001:95). Respondents were first asked to record a single ethnic affiliation. This produced a sample in which 14 per cent were classified as “New Zealand Maori”; 72 per cent “New Zealand European/Pakeha”; 14 per cent “Other European”; two per cent “Pacific Islander”; one per cent “Chinese”; one per cent “Indian”; and one per cent “Other non-European”. These people were then asked to tick one box which best described their *ethnic national identity*. Included on the list was “Above all, I am a ‘New Zealander’ first, and a member of some ethnic group second” (p.95). Overall, 46 per cent of respondents ticked the “New Zealander” box. This included half of those who identified themselves as from the Maori ethnic group based on the

initial question. As a group, these “New Zealanders” tended to be younger than average and to have some advantage in terms of occupation, income and social class (p.98).

Allan (2001:11) reports on the findings of an ACNielsen report commissioned by Statistics New Zealand to evaluate changes to the 1991 and 1996 census ethnicity questions. She notes “that 21 per cent of non-Maori and five per cent of Maori preferred the term ‘New Zealander’” as a response to the ethnicity question.

A better data source to test these ideas is, however, the census itself. As part of its RME, Statistics New Zealand prepared a report on the characteristics of people recording a “New Zealander” type response in the 2001 census (Potter *et al.* 2003).¹⁹ The study found that the majority of “New Zealander” responses were single ethnicity responses made by people who were born in New Zealand. The small number born overseas tended to have lived in New Zealand for a long time.

The researchers investigated Maori descent responses for this group and found that the “New Zealand European” and “sole New Zealanders” groups were equally likely to be of Maori descent (12 per cent of sole “New Zealander” reported Maori descent compared to 12 per cent of “New Zealand Europeans”). In total there were 8,796 sole New Zealanders who recorded Maori ancestry. However, as a group, “New Zealanders” had an unusually high rate of “don’t know” responses to the Maori descent question compared to other “New Zealand Europeans” (7,192 responses). Because only Maori ancestry is collected in the census, it is not known how many people recording New Zealander as their ethnic group had other non-European, non-Maori ancestry.

In addition, some “New Zealander” respondents also recorded this group in combination with other ethnic groups. In 2001, four per cent of “New Zealanders” said they also had Maori ethnicity.

The 2001 data show that “New Zealander” was generally a term reported by people in the 20-49 age bracket. However, the small group for whom this response was combined with “Maori”, “Asian”, “Pacific People” or “Other” ethnicity was predominantly made up of younger people. In terms of gender, 55 per cent of “New Zealander” responses came from men.

At the April 2003 *Connecting Policy, Research and Practice* conference, Statistics New Zealand announced that it no longer proposed to recode the “New Zealander” and “Kiwi” census ethnic responses (Statistics New

Zealand 2003a). It also announced its intention to report these responses under a new category “New Zealander” at a one-digit level. This would have meant there would be six main ethnic groups in New Zealand – “Maori”, “European”, “Asian”, “Pacific Peoples”, “Other” and “New Zealander”. Subsequently, in mid 2003, Statistics New Zealand called for submissions on the topics to be included in the 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings. While several suggested changes to the ethnicity topic were raised during consultation, 12 out of 29 submissions suggested that respondents should be able to identify themselves as “New Zealanders”. In its final report on content for 2006, Statistics New Zealand (2003b:12) noted that respondents are already able to write down a “New Zealander” response. However, they went on to suggest that if the draft recommendations of the Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity were to be adopted, these responses will be coded and reported as “New Zealander” for 2006 rather than be recoded as “New Zealand European”. However, Statistics New Zealand stated that the ethnicity question would not be changed to include “New Zealander” as a mark-box option because of the strong desire of most users to maintain time series continuity for this topic. Subsequently, Statistics New Zealand faced opposition to the preliminary proposal to include New Zealander as a category at the highest level of the ethnicity classification. Its final decision to recommend the recognition of a level four New Zealander ethnic group, but not a specific level one New Zealander group, represented a compromise position after much debate.

Why the Rejection of the European Ethnic Group?

Even assuming that many people wishing to be recorded as “New Zealanders” do, in fact, have European ancestry there are a number of reasons why they might not want to be classified as Europeans.

Based on Canadian research into possible census questions, Pryor *et al.* (1992) suggest that as colonial societies mature and evolve there is an increasing tendency for settler-descended populations to see themselves as “indigenous” to the societies which they inhabit. This includes the example of Canada, where there is an increasing tendency among some of the population to view the response “Canadian” as an evolving indigenous ethnic category. For example, some descendents of immigrants can trace their history in Canada back 300 years.

In New Zealand, historian Michael King has put forward a similar idea (Butcher 2003:44).

Maori came to New Zealand from Eastern Polynesia. We don't know how long it took to actually turn their backs on their culture of origin and decide they were Maori, but it was probably only three or four generations. The point at which it happened was when they stopped looking over their shoulder to the home culture and just got on with being the people they were in a new country. My view is that Pakeha have been here long enough now to have done the same thing and are "a second indigenous culture". And I don't think that's a particularly provocative thing to say. Like most Pakeha, I've been to Europe and felt that sense of affinity – but I am not European.

With an increasing national and international emphasis on indigenous rights, this is a provocative point of view, despite King's assertion to the contrary.²⁰ However, the idea that "New Zealanders of European descent are no longer part of a "European" ethnic group is less provocative. For many people, the term "European" is not an ethnic group but simply a collection of nations. It is also a collection that, for many people, often excludes the United Kingdom and Ireland.²¹ The United Kingdom and Ireland are the stepping off point for one or more ancestors of most New Zealanders, both for Maori via inter-marriage over the last 200 years and for non-Maori via both migration and inter-marriage.

In New Zealand, a person may be a fourth-generation descendant of European settlers or, perhaps, a third generation descendant of Chinese immigrants, but no longer feel a strong affiliation with Europe or China respectively. Examples of this can be found in New Zealand literature. Wells (2001), in his memoir book *Long Loop Home*, describes how, as a fifth generation descendant of European settlers, he feels no connection with Europe.

The long history of intermarriage between Maori and non-Maori, as well as more recent intermarriage between various settler groups, is likely to be weakening ethnic boundaries for some New Zealanders. For some census respondents, the choice of the term "New Zealander" may simply represent a way to create a new ethnic group that amalgamates a complex range of ancestral and cultural backgrounds. As census data already show, this includes some people with Maori ancestry (Potter *et al.* 2003). Finally, others may choose terms such as "New Zealander" simply because they do not feel influenced by ancestry and do not relate to the various response options.

Is the Ethnic Category “New Zealander” Problematic?

While some submissions to Statistics New Zealand’s Review of Ethnicity Statistics supported the idea of creating a new ethnic group called “New Zealander”, there was also some opposition to this move. Over recent decades, Spoonley has been particularly critical of the idea that New Zealander should be an accepted ethnic group, instead maintaining that it is a nationality. He sees an appeal to the idea “we are all New Zealanders” as a way of denying ethnicity, adding “this particular form of nationalism is often contradicted by the racism of its adherents” (Spoonley 1993:16).²² There are a number of problems in relation to the viewpoint that a New Zealand nationality cannot also be an ethnic group. First, as already demonstrated, some other nationalities are accepted as ethnic groups. Second, it assumes that non-Maori, particularly those who can trace ancestral links to Europe, need to be classified in relation to where their ancestors originally came from beyond New Zealand. This is in contrast to Maori where ancestry prior to migration to New Zealand is not considered. Using the logic that groups should be classified according to where they originated from, Maori could be re-classified as Pacific Peoples as this is from where Maori are believed to have migrated to New Zealand (King 2003). Taking this logic to the extreme, and going back far enough, the entire New Zealand population could be re-classified as African.²³

In terms of submission to RME, particular resistance to the acceptance of a New Zealander category came from those classified as Maori interest groups or individuals (Statistics New Zealand 2004). This resistance revolves around four key issues:

- i. It creates potential problems for Maori/non-Maori comparisons.
- ii. It does not sit easily with concepts of Treaty partnership between two distinct peoples.
- iii. It is seen as a first step in the creation of a second indigenous group and this undermines Maori as the indigenous group within New Zealand.
- iv. It is seen as a way of denying the existence of ethnicity.

In their 1999 research, Dupuis *et al* argue that the use of the term “New Zealander” “while not recognised as an act of political positioning by the claimants themselves, must nevertheless be seen as a position that denies recognition of other ethnic groups” (p.56). Yet, those people who have a very strong, non-national, ethnic identity naturally retain the right to

choose only a non-New Zealand national ethnic group or to note this in combination with the “New Zealander” category. An individual, or groups of individuals, choosing “New Zealander” as their ethnic group is quite different from the claim that “we are all New Zealanders”. The creation of a “New Zealander” ethnic group does not deny choices for others.

The idea that identifying as a “New Zealander” is particularly problematic in regards to the position of Maori in New Zealand society, is also somewhat challenged by “values” research undertaken by Webster (2001:113). When comparing attitudes of “Pakeha” and “New Zealanders” to Maori rights, Webster notes that the views of those classifying themselves as “Pakeha” were more negative than those of people who defined themselves as “New Zealanders”.²⁴

The view that allowing settlers to identify with their country of residence will automatically undermine indigenous rights is also potentially challenged by an article based on the Australian experience. Moran (2002) explores the idea that “indigenizing settler nationalism” has the potential for supporting rather than resisting the extension of indigenous rights and claims.^{25, 26}

In official data collections, particularly those with an ancestry as well as an ethnicity question, even if many respondents do eventually affiliate with the “New Zealander” ethnic group, Maori and non-Maori populations can still be created for comparative purposes. There are three ways of doing this. First, the ethnicity data could be ignored and the analysis could be simply based on ancestry data. Second, all people who recorded only “New Zealander” ethnicity could be allocated to the non-Maori group. These respondents are clearly choosing not to be in the Maori ethnic group, even if some have Maori ancestry. However, if they ticked the Maori ethnic response as well as writing in “New Zealander”, then they could be allocated to the Maori group.

Third, if researchers want to add more complexity to coding choices, they could reallocate those “New Zealanders” who stated Maori descent to those who declared Maori ethnicity. Those “New Zealanders” who did not have any Maori ancestry would be part of the non-Maori group. However, this option would not be possible in many data collections. A question on ancestry could be relatively easily incorporated into some research, although it would be more difficult in some standard areas – in particular administrative data collections in the health and education sectors.

In terms of undermining concepts of Treaty partnership between two distinct peoples, the idea of the existence of two completely separate ethnic and ancestral groups is already undermined by historical and current intermarriage (Callister 2004). Of all those people who recorded Maori as one of their ethnic groups in the 2001 census, only 56 per cent recorded *only* Maori. For Maori, intermarriage has resulted in a complex interaction between ethnicity and ancestry data. Table 1 shows that a significant number of respondents record Maori ancestry but not ethnicity, while a small number say they have no ancestry but claim ethnicity. The “New Zealander” ethnicity simply adds another layer to an already complex and fluid construction of ethnic groups in New Zealand.

Table 1 also shows a relatively high non-response to both the descent and ethnicity questions. If people’s ethnic responses, such as New Zealander, continued to be unacknowledged by Statistics New Zealand, then there was the potential for some of these individuals not to record any ethnic response in future surveys. A high non-response rate also undermines Maori/non-Maori comparisons.

It is possible some of the opposition to allowing respondents to record New Zealander in their answer to the census ethnicity question might diminish if there was also a wider ancestry question, not just one that asked about Maori ancestry. It is possible that many individuals claiming to be “New Zealanders” would be happy to acknowledge their ancestry, whether it is “European”, “Chinese”, “Tongan”, some other group, or a combination of ancestral links. This would allow researchers to make comparisons based on ancestry in combination, at times, with the ethnicity data. This is the format of the Canadian census.

Table 1: Response to Maori descent question compared with responses to the ethnic group question, 2001

Maori ethnic group	Maori Descent				Total
	Yes	No	Don't know	Not elsewhere included*	
Yes	487,317	5,322	6,846	26,796	526,281
No	112,665	2,655,516	58,974	233,295	3,060,450
Not elsewhere included*	4,125	16,671	1,791	127,956	150,546
Total	604,110	2,677,506	67,608	388,050	3,737,277

* Includes response unidentifiable, response outside scope and not stated.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

In face of the opposition to its draft recommendations on the creation of a level one New Zealand ethnic group, Statistics New Zealand developed a compromise position. As already discussed, this is that the response “New Zealander” and like responses, be coded to a separate category in the new “Miscellaneous” group, subsequently renamed “Other Ethnicity”, at level four of the ethnicity classification. In addition, respondents will have to make an active choice to write in New Zealander as this will not be a tick box. In reality the new “Other Ethnicity” group will be a de facto “New Zealander” group. The suggestions put forward by Statistics New Zealand in both the RME and the review of questions for the 2006 census are a sensible compromise that will allow researchers to better understand the evolving nature of ethnicity in New Zealand. If the number of people putting New Zealander type responses increases in size over subsequent censuses the name of the group and whether it should have its own tick box can then be revisited.

Conclusion

Strauss (1959:15) stresses the importance of language on identity, noting “[a]ny name is a container; poured into it are the conscious or unwitting evaluations of the namer”. Furthermore, altering names is “a rite of passage”, enabling the evolution of a “new self image” (Strauss 1959:16,17). If ethnicity is seen to be both culturally constructed and reflective of individual choice, as generally agreed in New Zealand, the historical practice of allocating “New Zealander” type responses firstly to the “New Zealand European” group and, ultimately, to the “European” ethnic group, has been conceptually incorrect. Denying individuals their choice of ethnic classification put Statistics New Zealand in a position of making a political decision rather than an ethnically-neutral, statistical decision. Statistics New Zealand has recognised this and has now created a new ethnic category for New Zealander responses. While Statistics New Zealand has not gone as far as creating a specific high level New Zealander ethnic group, and nor has it recommended creating a separate New Zealander tick box on census forms, from 2006 onwards researchers will easily be able to separate out and analyse the New Zealander responses.

Despite the general acceptance that individuals should be able to choose their own ethnic group, this paper has demonstrated that there has been concern amongst some individuals and organisations that allowing a group

of people to label themselves as New Zealanders would undermine the identity and rights of Maori. I have argued that these concerns have been greatly overstated. For example, accepting “New Zealander” as a high level, ethnic group does not prevent Maori/non-Maori comparisons.

There is clearly a group of New Zealanders, many who have no connection or feel no connection to Europe, who do not wish to be recorded as “Europeans” in official surveys. Yet, they have been counted as “Europeans” in recent years. A lack of connection to Europe may have been created through having: complex mixed ancestry perhaps including Maori ancestry; Asian or another non-European background; or European ancestry but having lived in New Zealand for a number of generations. As has occurred in Canada, there may be an increasing tendency for long-term New Zealand settler populations, other than the original Maori settlers, to see themselves as “indigenous”. However, as always, the future is uncertain. It is possible there will be further growth in the number of “New Zealander” type responses in official surveys but, equally, the peak may have already been reached in this type of response and its popularity may wane.

Finally, in the longer term, it is likely that the use of the name “European” for the main New Zealand ethnic group will also continue to be questioned, a fact recognised by Statistics New Zealand. Further research and debate is needed on the measurement of many aspects of ethnicity and this is one of the recommendations of the Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity. Such research and debate is an important aspect of the ongoing construction of both personal and national identity.

Notes

Simon Chapple and I prepared a private submission to the Statistics New Zealand Review of Ethnicity Statistics and, in early 2003, a further submission on their draft report. These submissions provided the initial building blocks for a paper presented at the 2003 Ministry of Social Development conference *Connecting Policy, Research and Practice*. A number of other people read either early drafts of the conference paper or later revisions and provided insightful comments including the anonymous referees who commented on this paper. However, while I have been influenced in my thinking by a range of people, I take full responsibility for the ideas expressed in this paper.

- 1 In 2001, 78,111 recorded “New Zealander”, 8,886 “Kiwi”, and 2,230 “Kiwi and New Zealander”. In addition, 8,128 recorded “Pakeha”, 203 “Native” and 806 “White”. All these responses were classified as “New Zealand Europeans”.

- 2 MELAA itself is a new group. It replaces the “Other” ethnic group and is designed to more clearly identify the Middle Eastern, Latin American and African ethnic groups it contains. A small number of groups that are not Middle Eastern, Latin American and African ethnic groups will join the new “Other Ethnicity” category.
- 3 Statistics New Zealand (2004:7) notes that a “name” is “a common proper name that collectively describes a group of individuals and authenticates the characteristics and the history of its members”.
- 4 Statistics New Zealand (2004:25) notes that “The right of Māori as tangata whenua to determine Māori individual and collective identities is enshrined in the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1993).”
- 5 Place makes a difference to whether someone is accepted as a “New Zealander”. For example, if living in the US a person can record “New Zealander” as an ethnic group and this will be identified in detailed census output. However, when high-level output is presented, they will be placed in the group “white” (Bhopal 2002).
- 6 The 1991 and 2001 census questions were very similar. The one difference was that, in 2001 the words “New Zealand” were removed from the category “New Zealand Maori” (Lang 2002).
- 7 In their submission to the 2001 Review of Ethnicity Statistics, the Human Rights Commission (HRC) questions why some groups have the term “New Zealand” attached and others do not, e.g. “New Zealand” European but not “New Zealand” Samoan or “New Zealand” Tongan. The HRC expressed concern that people other than Pakeha were unable to indicate a “New Zealand” aspect to their ethnicity (Barnard 2001). Statistics New Zealand (2004) also noted that in submissions to its RME many ethnic groups, other than “NZ European” and “Maori”, expressed a wish to affiliate with “New Zealand” in the ethnicity question, for example to be able to record “NZ Chinese” rather than simply “Chinese”.
- 8 The 1991 census was the first one to add “New Zealand” in front of the word European in the set of ethnic choices.
- 9 Australians are then classified at the one-digit level as “Europeans”. However, there is also a separate category for Australian aboriginals (Allan 2001:11).
- 10 Collins (2001a) notes that country-based ethnicities such as Italian are themselves recent constructs often based on a regrouping following migration. In the US, Italians are comprised of people whose original homeland identities would have included Sicilians, Calabrians, Neapolitans, and Genoans. Collins also notes that even these regional subgroups are the result of assimilation of previously fragmented villages or clans.

- 11 “Pakeha” is a term that has not been universally accepted in New Zealand (for discussions of this issue see Bedggood 1997; Pearson and Sissons 1997; Spoonley 1993). For instance, in a submission to the 2001 Review of Ethnicity Statistics, the Human Rights Commission records that one of the most common complaints to the former Race Relations Office was from people objecting to being labelled “Pakeha” (Barnard 2001). Uncertainty about the status of the term Pakeha can be observed in the book *Tauīwi*. The publishers, citing “generally accepted usage and the rule of the New Zealand Government Printing Office Style Book”, decided that the term “Pakeha” should not be capitalized (Spoonley *et al.*1984:5).
- 12 In each census, there are responses that are even more difficult to classify, such as Martian.
- 13 Statistics New Zealand notes that, technically, aside from Maori, all the one-digit ethnic groups are not individual ethnic groups but collections of groups (Allan 2001). However, the general public would not be aware of this important distinction. While New Zealand European is a box that can be “ticked”, the higher-level groups of “European”, “Pacific Peoples”, and “Asian” are not groups that can be “ticked” in census responses. These latter groups are “ethnic categories” not “ethnic groups” or “ethnic communities” (Pearson 1990).
- 14 However, there is a further group that is important. This is the combined “no response” or “not defined” group. Respondents may be categorised as being in this group for a number of reasons. One is that an individual simply fails to fully complete the census form. Another is that, for whatever reason, a respondent does not want to record their ethnic groups(s). In 2001, just under 4 per cent of respondents did not state their ethnic group.
- 15 Maori in the geographic area that is now New Zealand were defined by early British explorers, colonists, and official data collectors as “Indians”, “Aborigines”, “Natives” or “New Zealanders”, as well as “Maori” (Allan 2001).
- 16 The open-ended question asked “How would you describe your cultural background?” (p. 38). However, this question was preceded by a paragraph providing examples of single and mixed ethnic groups. These groups did not include “Kiwi” or “New Zealander”. The researchers note that with such an open-ended question the respondents often provided complex answers involving factors such as language, place of birth, church membership, type of family and family connections in constructing their ethnicity.
- 17 While Dupuis *et al.* (1999:47) describe “Kiwi” and “New Zealanders” as being mostly from the “Pakeha” group, later in the paper they go further and label this group as “white”.
- 18 Only just over half of Maori descended people in the Te Hoe Nuku Roa project chose Maori as the single identity that best described themselves.
- 19 This excluded those who recorded “Pakeha”, “native” or “white”.

- 20 However, King is not the only person to question who is part of the indigenous group. For example, Royal has suggested “the concept of “tangata whenua” should no longer be exclusive to Maori but be part of a new language to include all those who share and are committed to a spiritual relationship with the natural environment” (Gurunathan 2003:1). The Treaty Minister of the Labour government, Trevor Mallard (2004), also claimed in 2004 to be an indigenous New Zealander.
- 21 A dictionary definition of “Europe” and “European” provides further confusion. One definition of Europe is “a continent in the Western part of the land mass lying between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans separated from Asia by the Ural Mountains on the East and the Caucasus Mountains the Black and Caspian seas on the South East”. The dictionary goes on to note that in British usage the term Europe is sometimes used to contrast with England. A European can be seen as either a “native or inhabitant of Europe, or a person of European descent” or “a white person in a country with largely a non-white population” (Anon 1997). This assumes the concept of Europe itself as a collectivity, which is a relatively recent conception.
- 22 This is a view shared by Ansley (2003:19) when discussing reactions to debates about ownership of the seabed and foreshore. He argues that the notion “we are all New Zealanders” stands for intolerance”. By contrast, the campaign asserting that we are “all New Zealanders”, supported by the Human Right Commission, aims not to deny ethnicity, but instead is designed to challenge “racial stereotypes” and encourage “a greater understanding of the many different groups that make up New Zealand society” (Human Rights Commission 2003:1).
- 23 Human Genome researcher Francis Collins (2001b) suggests that everyone in the world is descended from a common ancestral pool of about 10,000 individuals who lived in Africa about 100,000 years ago.
- 24 In parallel, Pearson and Sissons (1997:79) have explored whether New Zealanders of primarily European ancestry who choose to call themselves “Pakeha” are more supportive of biculturalism and Maori rights than those who do not use this term. They found only a very weak link between being “Pakeha” and being bicultural. The authors found that the majority of both those who identified as “Pakeha” and those who never did were unsupportive of biculturalism and tino rangatiratanga.
- 25 A possible example of alignment of primarily settler descendent interests with those of indigenous peoples is Federated Farmers (2003) announcement that it had serious concerns about the government's foreshore and seabed framework, which itself was announced in late 2003, suggesting that it “appears to be confiscation by stealth”.
- 26 There are parallel and on-going debates about how indigeniety can be defined (eg. Durie 2000; Waldron 2002)

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