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Middle-Class Pakeha and Dutch Childhoods in New Zealand

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Abstract

In contemporary New Zealand discourses the 1950s, 1960s and the early 1970s are seen as the era of the 'Golden Weather'. This time came to an end when social change on an unprecedented scale took place from the end of the 1960s onwards. During the 1980s and 1990s the changes became very rapid due to transformations as part of the neoliberal reforms. Neoliberalism established new ways of governing the self through discourses of personal reflection, flexibility and choice as well notions of uncertainty, instability and risk. Risk discourses can be found at different junctures in New Zealand's history, but contemporary discourses surrounding the self and childhood have shifted risk discourses in new ways. This has led to new regimes of rationality and practices of childhood and an increased governance of children and their families. This research documents the contexts and the interrelationships which influenced the new regimes of rationality and governance of childhoods in New Zealand. It also discusses the way a range of contradictory and conflictual cultural repertoires are negotiated and reproduced in the middle classes.

In the last decades Pakeha and Dutch middle-class families in New Zealand have faced the prospect of declining fortunes. They have therefore adopted a cultural logic of childrearing which stresses the concerted cultivation of children. These regimes of concerted cultivation include risk discourses which affect everyday relationships and practices. This more global middle-class regime coexists with a local regime based on the New Zealand narrative of the time of the 'Golden Weather'. Within this local repertoire a 'typical' New Zealand childhood is seen as safe and quite relaxed. This perceived childhood space is filled with beaches and other activities associated with nature which give children the opportunity and freedom to explore and develop a distinct Kiwi self. This local figuration is in contradiction with the often hectic pace of concerted cultivation and the anxieties surrounding risk discourses. Dutch middle-class parents in New Zealand also use concerted cultivation and they have adopted some of their host country's figurations surrounding childhood and the outdoors. However, there is a difference in emphasis as Dutch parental narratives of self are more focussed on relationships with people rather than nature.

Keywords: Childhood; Cultural Repertoires; Class; Governance, Neoliberalism; Risk

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Chapter 1: The Dismantling of Traditional Certainties

> As the population of their country reached four million in April 2003,
> New Zealanders waited for new social and cultural patterns to coalesce
> and new understandings to percolate through society to restore a
> measure of the cohesion that had been lost when they dismantled so
> many of the traditional certainties which had laid a foundation for a
> coherent and national view of the world … (King 2003:505)

In contemporary New Zealand discourses the 1950s, 1960s and the early 1970s are seen as the era of 'the Golden Weather'; a time when 'childhood was a beach' and a 'typical New Zealand childhood' was still possible. For many people using these New Zealand imaginary frameworks through which reality is interpreted (Park and Scott 2002) these decades were indeed a time in which the sun was shining brightly, but as Rudd (2001:244) points out:

> … the golden weather shone rather more brightly on the 'typical'
> family headed by an able-bodied, unionised, award-covered, waged
> working male, than it did on those who did not fall into such a category.

The time of the 'Golden Weather', however, came to an end even for the 'typical' New Zealand family when social change on an unprecedented scale took place from the end of the 1960s onwards which questioned New Zealanders 'coherent and national view of the world' (King 2003:505). During the 1980s and 1990s the changes became even more rapid when neoliberal reforms resulted in shifts of governance embedded in these transformations. New Zealand became 'a land transformed' (Belich 2001:463) as it changed from a tight, homogenous, monocultural and heavily regulated society to the multicultural and less regulated society it is today (see Chapters 3 and 4).

In this thesis I argue that new ways of being and new concepts of self developed in New Zealand shaped by the national and trans-national currents that started during the 1970s and these new ways of being transformed the construction and governance of childhood. My research documents the contexts and the interrelationships which influenced these new constructions of childhood and the way a range of contradictory and conflictual coexisting systems of values and meanings are negotiated and reproduced in contemporary New Zealand.

The Code: Neoliberal Rationalities and Techniques

> How we envision and regulate childhood tells us as much about ourselves as a people or a state as it does about the lives of children (McGillivray 1997:2).

In February 1998 the New Zealand Government launched a 'social responsibility' campaign. A document titled *Towards a Code of Social & Family Responsibility, a Public Discussion Document* (New Zealand Department of Social Welfare 1998) was distributed to the New Zealand population. The document explained that this code was needed to make people's responsibilities clearer and a number of expectations were set out about a range of topics on which the New Zealand population was asked to comment. Many of the expectations in this document were directly related to the concepts of parenthood and childhood. For example, one expectation stated that; 'Parents should love, care for, support and protect their children' (New Zealand Department of Social Welfare 1998:7). Another expectation declared, 'Parents will do all they can to help their children learn from the time they are born'(New Zealand Department of Social Welfare 1998:13).

Considered at face value, what could be more acceptable than a code mostly concerned with the objective of guaranteeing the rights and welfare of the children we treasure so highly? (Wallace 2000:152). However, the purpose of *The Code* was not so much a concern with the rights and welfare of children as an attempt to influence behaviour and to clarify which responsibilities belong to citizens and which belong to the government with the purpose of cutting government spending (Baker 1998:4).

> The 'expectations' in The Code focus on low-income beneficiaries or people with family or personal problems. The statements and expectations in this Code, about how New Zealanders should behave and what their responsibilities are, include expectations which may be out of the control of the individual. Little acknowledgment was made of differences in class, ethnicity and gender in terms of ability to earn a living or becoming independent of the state (Baker 1998:5).

The Code can be situated with international initiatives such as Prime Minister Blair's green paper *'New Ambitions for Our Country: A New Contract for Welfare in Britain'* and President Clinton's *'Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act'* (1996) in the United States (Larner 2000:244-5). *The Code* was a response to the increasing pressures of the globalising process and part of attempts by different governments 'to prepare New Zealand for the new global order' (Wallace

2000:159). It was also an endeavour to strengthen the influence of the state over families (Angus 2000:137); not a new aspiration as will be discussed in the historical construction of childhood in New Zealand (Chapter 3).

The Code contained 'a hybrid assemblage of neoliberal and neoconservative rationalities and techniques' and was based on concepts of active responsible citizens who will look after themselves and their families (Larner 2000:245). The rationalities of government under 'advanced liberalism', as Rose (1996:57) has argued, include new specification of the subject of government and:

> Within this new regime of the actively responsible self, individuals are to fulfil their national obligations not through their relations of dependency and obligation to another, but through seeking to 'fulfil' themselves within a variety of micro-moral domains or communities – families, workplaces, schools, leisure associations, neighbourhoods.

The autonomous responsible family stands for a new form of neoliberal government, but the tensions between the discourses of normality and what actually happens leads to 'a hybrid array of devices for the management of insecurity' (Rose 1996:37). The contradiction contained in the document was that it encouraged New Zealanders to be active subjects responsible for their own well being, but it also threatened them with direct monitoring if they did or could not comply (Larner 2000:245). These official discourses expressed in *The Code* perform a diagnostic function and impose a point of view (Bourdieu 1990:136). Bourdieu (1999) shows that neo-liberal economic discourses are not simply 'theory', but have been transformed into political programmes that continue to guide the economic choices and actions of influential economic agents and institutions.

> Everywhere we hear it said, all day long ─ and this is what gives the dominant discourse its strength ─ that there is nothing to put forward in opposition to the neo-liberal view, that it has presented itself as self-evident, that there is no alternative (Bourdieu 1999:29).

Bourdieu (1998:34) also argues that neo-liberalism is a very smart and modern 'repackaging' of old capitalist ideas and he shows the impact these ideas and policies have had on the welfare state and on working conditions. The deregulation of markets has led to an increasing exploitation and a marked increase in insecurity, suffering and stress. Work or the lack of regular work has become a 'key mechanism' in the process of social exclusion (which can also be seen in the 'expectations' in *The Code*).

Although there was conflict between the different groups of people who aimed to impose their own visions before *The Code* was published (Davey 2000), the policy document sent to every household in New Zealand was set up as the legitimate point of view containing a 'normalizing gaze' through which surveillance, classification and punishment became possible (Foucault 1977:184). Being a 'normal' parent or 'abnormal' parent became a 'key mechanism' in the process of social exclusion despite the fact that many of the expectations in *The Code* were out of the control of the individual.

The resistance directed at the *Towards a Code of Social & Family Responsibility, a Public Discussion Document* (1998) was enormous and it was rejected by many New Zealanders. A change of government from National to Labour in the next election meant that *The Code* disappeared from public view; however it remains important as it documents a particular form of governance.

> In this regard it is useful to identify how the code constitutes the object of post-welfare state governance and confers particular forms of subjectivity on political and social actors (Larner 2000:254).

My Creative Stutter: The Ethnographic Self and Theoretical Framework

> It is a matter of introducing a kind of awkwardness into the fabric of one's experience, of interrupting the fluency of the narratives that encode that experience and making them stutter (Rose 1999b:20).

My interest in *The Code* was the starting point of this PhD and my first aim was to contribute to political action through the study of 'official techniques of regulation, punishment and normalisation' (McHoul and Grace 1998:19) of childhood as reflected in *The Code*. An understanding of the constructions and governing of childhood in New Zealand seemed essential to finding solutions for the complex issues facing families, educators, policymakers and governments. I also wanted to understand why *The Code* ignored the fact that children in New Zealand grow up in a variety of cultural, social and environmental settings and that the concepts of the child, childhood and the family are diverse and complex.

My personal experience as an early childhood educator first in the Netherlands and then in New Zealand and my experience as a student of anthropology made me react strongly against *The Code* and I saw this reflected in people around me. My early childhood teaching was mainly in areas considered 'at risk' and as a middle-class

mother I was involved in the New Zealand community through my son's schools, including the Dutch language school, school camps and other community activities such as Cub Scouts. Many of the expectations in *The Code* seemed 'common sense' and to reflect a 'normal' childhood, but I saw parents struggling with the demands of these 'expectations'. Being a 'good enough' parent was hard for working-class as well as middle-class parents at the end of the 20th century.

Wallace (2000:158) argues that *The Code* asks New Zealanders to comment on the difference between 'right and wrong' and it imposes 'white/middle-class values upon those of other class and ethnic backgrounds'. When I started this thesis process I too believed, as does Wallace, that *The Code* had what Foucault would term a 'normalising gaze' and was imposing white/middle-class values onto 'others' and I wanted to contribute to political action not by entering the fray, but

> … by providing studies of official techniques of regulation, punishment, normalisation and so on to those groups that have direct interest in their subversion (McHoul and Grace 1998:19).

However, during the process of anthropological research *The Code* came to represent a 'space of complexity' (Thrift 1999) and my theoretical framework became far more complex which led to a 'creative stutter' (Rose 1999b:20).

The concept of governmentality provided a useful concept to examine the governing of childhood and the 'instances and transformations' (Foucault 1976:12) which have taken place in New Zealand. Foucault's view of power allowed a framework in which subjectivity and subjection are never clearly distinguished (Cruikshank 1999b:81). The space of government, as Rose (1999b:22) suggests, is not a homogenising discursive space but is always shaped by veridical discourses which have their own histories, apparatuses and problem spaces. Although Foucault conceptualised disciplinary normalisation as part of the Fordist mode of social regulation and *The Code* was written as part of a new regime of neoliberal globalisation (Fraser 2003), his work is useful to analyse and illuminate it.

> More precisely, it can inspire us to creatively transform Foucauldian categories to account for new modes of 'governmentality' in the era of neoliberal globalization (Fraser 2003:161).

Bourdieu's work provides a context for examining the impact of class positions and its reproduction. His model, as Lareau (2003:275) points out, 'draws attention to conflict, change, and systemic inequality, and it highlights the fluid nature of the

relationship between structure and agency'. Middle-class children in New Zealand (as in many other western countries) face the prospect of 'declining fortunes' (Lareau 2003) and New Zealand middle-class parents are determined to make sure that their children are not excluded from any opportunity. They therefore try to comply with current professional standards and 'adopt a cultural logic of childrearing that stresses the concerted cultivation of children' (Lareau 2003:3). Through this 'concerted cultivation' they try to stimulate their children's development and to foster their cognitive and social skills which may eventually contribute to their advancement. Different philosophies and approaches to child rearing between the classes lead to the 'transmission of differential advantages' as Lareau (2003:6) shows for America, and the middle-class habitus plays an important part in providing children with middle-class dispositions which produce difference (Bourdieu 1998:8). However, in times of crisis people often find themselves in 'double binds' which can result in a '*destabilized habitus*, torn by contradiction and internal division' (Bourdieu 2000:160). During these times collective expectations of what constitutes normality profoundly change and one of the consequences of the neoliberal reforms has been the destabilisation of what was considered a normal New Zealand childhood.

Risk discourse is a 'central metaphor' (Bessant *et al.* 2003:8) in the changes and transformations within New Zealand and this metaphor also plays an important part in contemporary discourses surrounding childhood. The rapid and intense transformations since the 1980s and 1990s have profoundly shaped the way contemporary childhood came to be governed and discourses surrounding 'childhood at risk' or 'children deprived of their childhood' increased as the surveillance of children and their families became increasingly tighter and more intensively governed (Rose 1999a). This increased governance and the changes in the regulation of the young through the 'conduct of conduct' is a general trend in advanced liberal democratic states and the notion of risk has become the discursive conduit through which a range of disciplinary practices can be applied (Bessant *et al.* 2003:130).

There is no doubt that the use of risk discourses to govern and discipline the populations can be seen at different junctures in the history of New Zealand. Examples of risk talk are the symbolic figure of 'the vagrant' in the later part of the 19th century and the 'moral panics' during the 'great tightening' in the early 20th century (see Chapter 3). The use of 'surveillance medicine' by the Plunket[1] society were also part

of risk discourses used to discipline the New Zealand population and to create climates of insecurity (Belich 2001:176-7).

However, contemporary discourses surrounding the construction of self and therefore childhood have shifted risk discourses in new ways. Contemporary parents not only need to socialise their children (the becoming child), but also develop their children's ability 'to be oneself' (the being child). Despite the paradigm of the 'being child', associated with children's rights and the construction of children as active agents, the changing perceptions of risk surrounding children have once again produced a conception of the child as a project that must somehow be 'managed' or guided in its development. Lee (2001) suggests that in the face of recent changes in families and employment both the being and becoming of children need to be recognised and Prout (2005:66) argues that in contemporary societies adults and children have 'unfinished' lives and therefore both 'can be seen in these terms of becoming without compromising the need to respect their status as beings or persons'.

Beck's (1992) theoretical framework on risk societies is very useful for understanding contemporary childhoods and the anxieties surrounding them. His later works give more depth to this framework (Beck 1992, 1998, 1999, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). Beck (1992:36) suggests that certain risks are more strongly situated among the poor and their concentration may have led to class antagonisms in the past. From this one could argue, says Beck, that contemporary risks heightened the 'old inequalities' to a new level. However, when looking at the expansion of modernising risks 'objectively', argues Beck, 'the social differences and limits are relativized' as 'risk displays an *equalising* effect'. Risks, states Beck (1998:37), display a boomerang effect and even the rich and powerful are not safe from them and 'with the globalization of risk a social dynamic is set in motion which can no longer be composed of and understood in class categories' (Beck 1992:39).

Caplan (2000:25), building on Douglas, argues that risk as used by Beck is a useful but 'incomplete' concept. An ethnographic method which considers risk in particular times and places and through the voices of particular informants is necessary, she states, as categories are often far more complex than is suggested by Beck and other risk theorists. An analysis of risk, as proposed by Caplan (2000:25-6), needs to incorporate an awareness of the dimensions of power. It sees individuals embedded within social contexts and includes concepts of agency, control and resistance which all have a bearing on perceptions of risk. Risk-talk as Vera-Sanso (2000:128) argues is

political and can be used to constrain. Global economic trends in the late 20th century have created both greater wealth and more inequality within national economies (Prout 2005:20). These trends can also be seen in New Zealand where conflicts over access to resources have not declined, but have become more distinct.

In my theoretical framework I use a combination of Foucault's concepts of power and governmentality, Bourdieu's model of class and Beck's analysis of contemporary risk society to 'think with' and to counteract the 'incompleteness' of the risk society theory while at the same time acknowledging its strengths. The three theoretical frameworks have introduced awkwardness into the fabric of my experience and my PhD thesis *High-wire Dancers: The Construction and Governing of Middle-Class Pakeha and Dutch Childhoods* is the result of that creative stutter.

The Theories of Michel Foucault and the Disciplining of Society

> Childhood is by definition a condition which requires intimate
> mediation and constant surveillance (McGillivray 1997:2).

The theories of Michel Foucault have remained very influential in my theoretical framework despite the 'space of complexity' which developed as I tried to understand New Zealand childhood construction and governing. His ideas give insight into the ways in which information, representations and discourse affect and interact with behaviour and practice and they highlight 'the ways in which power relations are connected to, and determined by, knowledge and communication (and their opposites, ignorance and secrecy), (Gittins 1998:14).

In *Discipline and Punish* (1977) Foucault examines the government of childhood and the technologies of normalisation which create docile bodies and governed souls. Discipline, is a type of power which comprises a whole set of instruments, techniques, procedures, levels of application, targets (1977:215-6). Surveillance is an important part of disciplining as it is through surveillance that disciplinary power becomes an 'integrated system' (Foucault 1977:176). Surveillance assures the automatic functioning of power as everyone is not only subjected to outside surveillance, but the major effect of surveillance is that it induces in the subject a permanent state of self-surveillance (Foucault 1977:201).

Foucault (1977:193) argues that the family is one of the main institutional supports of a disciplined society. Families have become more disciplined over the past

centuries through the absorption of 'external schemata, first educational and military, then medical, psychiatric, psychological' (Foucault 1977:29) which has made 'the family the privileged locus of emergence for the disciplinary question of the normal and the abnormal' (1977:216). The governance of the individual begins with children at home through techniques of discipline and surveillance which produce an effect on the soul of those supervised, trained and corrected which is then reinforced and expanded by institutions outside the home such as early childhood centres and schools.

There is an interaction between society becoming more disciplined and the academic disciplines (Foucault 1976, 1977). The academic disciplines, including anthropologists, have become part and parcel of the extension of control over population and the exercise of power by making people objects of knowledge. Children (as well as other classes of people) were observed and measured through techniques perfected by the 'psy' disciplines, which have led to 'a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible, to classify and to punish' (Foucault 1977:184). Rose (1999a:263-4) has argued that concerns about the young were often part of 'moral panics' in which certain persons or phenomena become symbolic for a range of social anxieties and are seen as a threat to the social order, morality and a disciplined society. This led to an increase of surveillance over families through an alignment between the aspirations of the professionals, political concerns of authorities and the social anxieties of the powerful. This increasing surveillance of families and the shifts in the regulations of childhood in western societies will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

Governmentality, Neoliberalism and the Regulation of Childhood

> 'Governmentality' conveniently captures the conception and the regulation of childhood, drawing attention away from 'grand acts' of 'the state', to more intimate regimes, nuanced bilateral relations between childhood and society and the experience of everyday life (McGillivray 1997:16).

The concept of government was used by Foucault in two senses. The first use draws attention to our experience and is constituted by all the ways of reflecting and acting that shape, guide, manage and regulate the conduct of persons (Rose 1996:41). What makes these forms of reflection governmental argues Rose, is the wish to make them practical and connect them to procedures and apparatuses. An example of this is

the way childhood is reflected upon which leads to practices of childrearing in order to govern children.

The second way Foucault uses the term government is in relation to political rationalities which have a moral form as well as an epistemological character,

> … in that they embody particular conceptions of the objects to be governed ─ nation, population, economy, society, community ─ and the subjects to be governed ─ citizens, subjects, individuals (Rose 1996:42).

These political rationalities deploy a certain style of reasoning which are techniques for 'rendering reality thinkable and practicable' which can then be used in reformatory intervention. Many of these political rationalities are articulated in rather general terms and catch phrases such as 'community', 'equality' and 'efficient use of resources' are used to disperse the discourses over a diverse landscape of place and space. Through a multitude of such discourses relations are established which allow the possibility to 'govern at a distance' (Rose 1996:43) as could also be seen in *The Code* described above.

Liberalism as a *rationality of rule* (Rose 1996:39) first became part of discourses in the 19th century when the limits of political authority, particularly in relation to economic and industrial life, were questioned. Expertise or authority arising out of claims to knowledge provided a number of solutions to the problems of governance which were developing and liberal discourses provide the answers to balancing the needs for morality and order and 'the need to restrict government in the interest of freedom and economy' (Rose 1996:39). The ideas of liberal government, however, failed at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century when

> … this formula of government was perceived, from a variety of political, moral and philosophical perspectives, as failing to produce the necessary economic, social and ethical consequences (Rose 1996:39).

When the undesirable consequences of industrial life became clear and the threat of socialism grew, a new formulae was developed and the 'social' became a dominant form of governing which included the concepts of a welfare state (see also Chapter 3 for New Zealand). The subject of rule was reconceptualised and

> ... where the subject invented in the nineteenth century was subject to a kind of individualizing moral normativity, the subject of welfare was a subject of needs, attitudes and relationships, a subject who was to be

embraced within, and governed through, a nexus of collective
solidarities and dependencies (Rose 1996:40).

These subject positions were changed again under what Rose calls 'advanced liberal rule' which seeks to govern through 'the regulated choices of individual citizens, now construed as subject of choices and aspirations to self-actualisation and self-fulfilment' (Rose 1996:41). Rose suggests that the regimes of rationality surrounding the non-social state are a new way of governing. They construct new cultural ways of thinking about ourselves as well as others. Under these new discourses the making of the self is no longer a coercive exercise of power, but a reinvention of the soul through self-government. 'The child' is at the centre of the remaking of the soul (McGillivray 1997:1) and through the child the family too is intensively governed. Under the new regimes of rationality families are configured as 'a matrix for organising domestic, conjugal and childrearing arrangements and are instrumental in wage labour and consumption' (Rose 1996:37).

Constant evaluations and adjustment surrounding the family now take place with criteria provided 'by the experts of the soul' which have established a particular way of viewing family lives and the way we speak about them. Parents are urged to constantly scrutinise themselves and their interactions with their children and to evaluate the consequences for health, adjustment, development and intellect (McGillivray 1997:9). Discursive practices related to decentralisation, the private, individual autonomy and responsibility encourage families, individuals and local communities to take care of each other. These new regimes focus on personal reflection, local action, flexibility, and choice as well as in notions of uncertainty, flexibility, instability and readiness for change. These concepts are in contrast to earlier notions of the welfare state (Bloch *et al.* 2003:21). These new technologies and discourses of the self establish new ways of governing our self and our children. They frame peoples' desires, actions and conduct as well as the way they care about themselves and others; they 'colonize our bodies and minds, as well as constraining the imagined possibilities (Bloch *et al.* 2003:22). This way of reasoning has an image of equality which focuses on individual choice and decision making, but this ignores that many citizens are excluded from these choices. As was the case with the governing discourses at the beginning of the 20th, the neoliberal discourses are directed at subjects who differ from 'the universal imaginaries of the well-developed and normal modern

child, family, and nation' (Bloch 2003:217). It is again the 'abnormal' who are the targets of the interventions into their lives and subjectivities.

Rose (1999a:263-64) argues that as the 20th century came to a close there was an increased demand on citizens to take responsibility for their own conduct and its consequences in the name of their own self-realisation. The government of subjectivity is no longer confined to discrete institutional practices under the guidance of experts, but expertise is now built into the very fabric of our existence through a plurality of selfhoods 'shaped by age, gender, class, race and much more'. But despite the discourses within contemporary society which encourage the shaping of the self through choices, increasingly the repertoires of the self through the use of 'identities' have become

> … relatively standardized forms of individuality and personality, each equipped with a set of habits, dispositions, tastes and aspirations (Rose 1999a:270).

Representations and conceptions of selfhood do not so much function as a way to construct the self as is implied by social constructionism, says Rose, but they make it possible for each individual to relate to themselves and the course of their life in a particular way. They teach the self how to conduct oneself (Rose 1999a:270-2) and are linked with social, economic and political objectives. Narratives and techniques of the self are clearly pluralistic and differentiated along a whole variety of dimensions such as gender, age, class, race, region, religion and involve 'the delicate construction of a complex and hybrid assemblage'. There are many benefits to the way individuals can choose certain identities in today's society, but there are also certain costs to that freedom. The choices to assemble one's own identity, says Rose (1999a:272), also leads to

> … the obligation to render ones everyday existence meaningful as an outcome of choices made, one's relation with oneself is tied ever more firmly to the ethics of individual autonomy and personal authenticity.

Bourdieu and the Reproduction of Childhoods

Bourdieu's work provides a context for examining the impact of social class positions; his ideas draw attention to conflict, change and systemic inequality and highlight the fluid nature of the relationship between structure and agency. Bourdieu's work draws on Marxist and Weberian legacies and focuses on cultural factors that affect

the production and reproduction of class inequalities (Lareau 2003). His theoretical framework also takes gender and ethnicity into account as factors that interact but cannot be reduced to a function of class (Chancer and Watkins 2006:99).

Experiences and common conditions are integrated in what Bourdieu (1977:72) calls *habitus*, a 'system of durable, transposable dispositions'. These 'structuring structures' 'generate and organize practices and representations' which produce ways of looking at the world and of operating in it which are relatively common to the members of any particular social class. The family with its 'relatively autonomous world of the domestic economy and family relations' (Bourdieu 1990:54) plays a decisive role in the maintenance of the social order

> … through social as well as biological reproduction, that is, reproduction of the structure of the social space and social relations. It is one of the key sites of the accumulation of capital in its different forms, and its transmission between the generations. It safeguards its unity for and through this transmission. It is the main 'subject' of reproduction strategies (Bourdieu 1998:69).

Early childhood is an important time in which habitus is reproduced because the habitus seems so everyday, routine and practical that it comes to be seen as 'natural' (Chancer and Watkins 2006:100) and these partly unconscious taking in of rules, values and dispositions (Bourdieu 1977:78) stay with us across contexts. The learned dispositions of habitus become part of the self and affect how we view, interpret and negotiate the world, but although habitus is culturally defined its locus is embodied in the mind of the individual:

> …these values and dispositions allow us to respond to cultural rules and contexts in a variety of ways (because they allow for improvisations), but the responses are always largely determined - regulated - by where (and who) we have been in a culture (Webb *et al.* 2002:36-7).

Ortner (1998:14) argues that although Bourdieu's emphasis on habitus is based on a constant process of cultural 'fixing' in which the conditions of life are made to seem natural, immutable and 'just the way things are', habitus is also influenced by constant processes which denaturalises them and 'little cracks and openings' appear which are the result of the complex and constantly changing dynamics of practice.

Different class, cultural and gender 'dispositions' imposed through the habitus are reinforced through socialisation, schooling and friendship networks and lead to acquiring different kinds of knowledges. These knowledges provide children and adults

with a sense of what is comfortable or what is 'natural' and shape the amount and forms of resources *(capital)* individuals inherit and draw upon as they confront various institutional arrangements *(fields)* in the social world (Lareau 2003:275). These fields, such as the academic field, political field, the legal field and the medical fields, have principles of stratification which people learn to negotiate.

Bourdieu argues in *Pascalian Meditations* (2000) that habitus generally generates responses which are adapted, coherent and immediately intelligible, but this is not a universal rule (Bourdieu 2000:159). Habitus, he argues,

> … is not necessarily adapted to its situation nor necessarily coherent. It has degrees of integration - which correspond in particular to degrees of 'crystallization' of the status occupied. Thus it can be observed that to contradictory positions, which tend to exert structural 'double binds' on their occupants, there often correspond *destabilized habitus*, torn by contradiction and internal division, generating suffering (my emphasis Bourdieu 2000:160).

When a field undergoes a major crisis, argues Bourdieu, and the regularities and the rules change profoundly dispositions may become out of line with the 'collective expectations' which are constituted as 'normal'. In these crisis situations it is often those who were best adapted to the previous state of the game that have difficulty in adjusting to the new established order as their dispositions become dysfunctional and the efforts they make to perpetuate those help to plunge them deeper into failure. Habitus during these times may have 'blips' which are critical moments when an instant of hesitation may lead to a form of reflection (Bourdieu 2000:161).

It is during these moments of hesitation that fields of power may change and institutions shift their positions in relation to each other. Individuals too, says Haimes (2003:30), use these times of crisis to advantage their interests while they invoke traditional boundaries, such as 'we are the proper/true/real family', to underpin their claims. The family is not only the site of the accumulation of capital, but can be in and of itself capital as coming from a 'normal' family is central to the amassing and passing on of various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1998:69).

Bourdieu identifies four different types of capital: economic capital, cultural capital, social capital and legitimate capital. People are distributed in overall social space (fields) according to the volume of capital they possess, the composition of their capital, the evolution in time of their capital and their trajectory in social space (Skeggs 1997:8). Bourdieu (2000:216) explains the competition for capital within fields with

reference to two terms, reproduction and transformation. He argues that by and large, agents adjust their expectations with regard to the capital they are likely to attain in terms of the 'practical' limitations imposed upon them by their place in the field. Their place in the field is based on capital such as educational background, social connections, class, gender, ethnicity, age and so forth.

It is therefore important to understand how children and families are placed within different fields such as for example the state, the market or the academic disciplines as 'each field prescribes its particular values and possesses its own regulative principles' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:17). The family, says Bourdieu (1998:69), plays a decisive role in the maintenance of social order through the reproduction of the structure of the social space and social relations and it is one of the key sites for the accumulation and transmission of capital in its different forms. Children enter an inherited social space at birth from which comes access to and acquisition of differential amounts of capital. Access to and acquisition of different forms of capital play an important part in the construction and governing of childhood and coming from a 'normal' family is central to the amassing and passing on of various forms of capital (Bourdieu 1998:69).

Middle-class families in New Zealand are considered 'normal' and they are part of dominant economic, cultural as well as intellectual forces in New Zealand society whose interests and normative values help define the 'natural order of things' and their capital decisions help to shape what happens in wider society (Shore 2002:4). As in most other western societies, however, they are not the only 'makers and shakers' (Shore 2002:4) as there are a number of groups who all aim to impose their own visions and decisions on society which leads to conflict and contestation (Bourdieu 1990:137). In New Zealand, for example, there is contest between the rural and city elites. Although declining since the 1980s, high country farmers still have high cultural status as 'rural New Zealand' plays an important part in New Zealand's national identity (Dominy 2001, Hatch 1992, Morris 2002).

Contestation between these groups means that 'makers and shakers' in different elite groups are under constant pressure to maintain their positions and this pressure to maintain positions is even more pronounced during times of rapid social changes such as those which have taken place in New Zealand society in recent decades. As Bourdieu (1998) described for the French middle classes, although people are not always rational or aware of their actions (Bourdieu 1998:viii) they developed 'a

feel for the game' (Bourdieu 1998:77) which provides middle-class children and parents with a sense of what is comfortable or natural. During the decades of the 1950s and 1960s the middle-class habitus in New Zealand and the corresponding dispositions were subject to revisions, but these revisions were not radical. However, this 'stable' habitus changed when collective expectations and rules which were constituted as 'normal' were profoundly changed during the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and New Zealand parents lost their 'feel for the game' which led to a 'destabilised' habitus and feelings of anxiety and risk (see Chapter 3 and 4 for historical discussion and Chapter 7 for a further discussion on parental discourses about anxiety and risk).

Education has become increasingly important in instilling middle-class habitus and families start investing more in education when strategies for directly passing on economic capital become less successful (Bourdieu 1998:19, see also chapter 5). Schools are now the most important avenue for transfer of cultural capital and for the 'sanctification of social divisions' (Wacquant 1989:x). Lower-class families too strive to get their children educated, but the habitus of these children may disqualify them from success (Bourdieu 2000:214-16) and schooling therefore maintains 'the pre-existing order, that is, the gap between pupils endowed with unequal amounts of cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1998:20).

Beck and Risk Society

> We now think of ourselves as exercising a high level of control over the extent to which we expose ourselves to danger and therefore as culpable for becoming prey to risk (Lupton 1999:4).

The theoretical approaches of anthropologist Mary Douglas and the sociologist Ulrich Beck have had a major impact on the examination of risk. Other theorists examined risk as part of the concept of governmentality based on Foucault (see for example Castel 1991, Culpitt 1999) and they explore ways in which the state and other governmental apparatuses work together to govern; 'that is, manage and regulate populations via risk discourses and strategies' (Lupton 1999:1-4). Despite the different approaches to risk there seems to be agreement that a number of important new features in notions of risk have developed under the conditions of late modernity. The questioning of the outcomes of modernity in terms of their production of risks can also be seen in public debates and in private lives which are dominated by concerns about risks on an everyday level.

Anxieties about risks serve to pose questions about current practices and knowledges. The perceptions of 'lay' people has been questioned (Castel 1991) and expert knowledges increased in importance to interpret and detect these future risks. However, while people have become increasingly reliant upon expert knowledges to inform and warn them about risks, they have also become aware that experts themselves disagree with each other.

> As a result there are now a far greater number of uncertainties than ever previously existed. Greater knowledge has led in turn to greater uncertainty and a subsequent turn to alternative expertise and knowledge claims (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:3).

Beck's book *Risk Society* written in 1992 has been very influential in the social sciences. In this book Beck (1992:19) argues that, although risks have always been present in societies, they have increased in recent times and are shared by western and non-western societies. Many risks, says Beck (1992:2), have their basis in industrial overproduction. Risks, such as those surrounding environmental and nuclear issues, have become more and more difficult to calculate and control. They have also become largely invisible. Beck also details the erosion of public trust in governments and science as conditions of the second modernity and he argues that the diminishing of trust and the increased perception of risk are directly connected. Beck suggests that the consequences of scientific and industrial development lead to risks and hazards never faced previously. Future generations too are affected by these and as they cross national boundaries it gets harder and harder to find who can be held accountable for the hazards of the risk society.

Although Beck (1992:23) acknowledges that some people are more affected by risks than others, he declares that contemporary risks cross national and socio-economic boundaries and affect both the wealthy and poor alike. This sameness needs to be stressed, he argues, to revise the bias towards 'otherness' which afflicts many social sciences. The pluralisation of modernity and the conceptualisation of different trajectories of modernities in different parts of the world in the sciences needs to be challenged (Beck 1992:2).

Beck argued in 1995 (as quoted in Day 2000:51) that traditional moorings such as family and class have been lost, because people are forced to live as reflexive individuals faced with unfamiliar hazards and unclear trajectories. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:2) extend this argument by claiming that individualisation in

contemporary societies has led to the disintegration of previously existing social forms such as class and social status, gender roles and family. They state that in contemporary society new demands, controls and constraints are being imposed on individuals through a network of regulations, conditions, and provisos. The decisive feature of these modern regulations or guidelines is, say Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:2), that individuals are expected to import them into their biographies through their own actions. In previous times and contexts many biographies were predefined within families, communities or classes (Beck - Gernsheim 2002:4). However, this is not the case in contemporary risk society and individuals must now perceive, interpret, decide and process new demands, controls and constraints by themselves. This leads to constant demands on the individual to plan and shape the future and the

> … normal biography thus becomes the 'elective biography', the
> 'reflexive biography', the 'do-it-yourself biography'. This does not
> necessarily happen by choice, neither does it necessarily succeed (Beck
> - Gernsheim 2002:3).

This elective do-it-yourself biography is always a risk biography, argue Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, and often becomes a 'tightrope biography' as the wrong choices can lead to a downward spiral of private misfortune. Difficult decisions and dilemmas have become part of the individualisation processes as they demand an active contribution by individuals. They have to create and manage their own biography and the bonds with family and friends, while constantly adapting to the conditions of the labour market, the education system, the welfare state and so on.

> If they are not to fail, individuals must be able to plan for the long term
> and adapt to change; they must organize and improvise, set goals,
> recognize obstacles, accept defeats and attempt new starts. They need
> initiative, tenacity, flexibility and tolerance of frustration (Beck -
> Gernsheim 2002:4).

However, the choices which seem available are not real choices, argue Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, as the risks cannot be determined. The desire to exert control over the conditions of life through rational processes has therefore become eroded. Under the conditions of late modernity risks are incalculability and unpredictability (Beck 2000b:215).

Critique of Risk Society

Anthropological discussions on risk have challenged some aspects of the risk society thesis and its sometimes ethnocentric claims (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:39). However, as Tulloch and Lupton also acknowledge, risk theorists such as Beck incorporated some of the critiques in their later work. Questions of risk and danger have been at the center of anthropological and sociological inquiry at least since Douglas' classic analysis in *Purity and Danger* (1966). Douglas showed how societies socially construct categories of safe behaviour and persistently displace danger and blame onto external sources. Douglas (1992:78) illustrates how risks are about the social forms in which individuals construct their understanding of the world and themselves.

What is considered as risk, argues Douglas, depends upon the organisation or grouping to which a person belongs or identifies with. Douglas points out that judgments of risk are social, rather than scientific. In *Risk and Culture* (1982), Douglas and Wildavsky (as quoted in Caplan 2000:10-2) argue that societies choose risk on both social and cultural criteria and that what is seen as risk differs. In her subsequent work on risk Douglas' (1992) emphasis remains on the social to explain why different societies and different groups in complex societies, view risk differently. Risk perception in other words needs to be conceptualised as a multiplicity of views which may vary according to a wide range of factors (Oaks and Harthorn 2003:5).

Scott Lash (2000:47) suggests that risk needs to be positioned in such a way that it is more effective as social critique. Lash focuses on cultural aspects of risk and he sees the individualisation of society as less important than some of the other risk theorists such as Beck. He argues that the notion of risk society

> … presumes a determinate, institutional, normative, rule bound and
> necessarily hierarchical ordering of individual members in regard to
> their utilitarian interests.

The concept of 'risk culture', he says, is more reflexive and based in 'non-institutional and anti-institutional sociations'. Membership of 'risk culture' is more fluid, collective as well as individual and based on values rather than norms. Lash uses Douglas and Wildavsky's ideas (1982) to argue that 'risk culture' is based less in cognitive than in aesthetic reflexivity. He asserts that

> … the open-ended nature of aesthetic judgement is integral to the *mentalitè,* to the habitus, the background assumptions of the risk culture.

This notion of aesthetic judgement, argues Lash (2000:52-3), is a reflective judgement'. This reflective judgement is subjective and based in feelings not understanding. Lash argues that we need to take into account the role played by unarticulated and taken for granted assumptions, moral values and practices. The ways people respond to risk are often full of contradictions, ambivalence and complexity. Tulloch and Lupton (2003:6) suggest that Lash sees aesthetic reflexivity as embodied in such aspects of self interpretation as taste, style, consumption, leisure and popular culture. This, they say, involves the sophisticated processing of signs and symbols rather than simply the accumulation and assessment of 'information'.

Risk and 'social bads' are not equally distributed as argued by Beck (1992, Beck 1998) and inequalities of class, gender and ethnicity still govern personal choices (Mythen 2004:130). Although class, gender and ethnic divisions and structures such as families have changed:

> In casting individualisation as an evenly falling snow, Beck rather flattens cultural, economic and regional differences (Mythen 2004:130).

It is important, as Summerton and Berner (2003:7) argue, to capture the dynamic, interactive practices through which actors acquire, construct, negotiate and contest interpretations of their situations.

Lupton (1999:1) states that the role risk discourses play in contemporary social life and the way it constructs subjectivities is one of the liveliest areas of theoretical debate in social and cultural theory in recent times. I agree with her statement. Risk theory is a great approach 'to think with' despite its incompleteness and is part of my multi layered approach to the study of childhood. Risk talk and the way this affects New Zealand parents and children will be further discussed in Chapter 7.

Complicated Categories and Multiple Identities

> Class, ethnicity, gender and age are categories which are constructed through the recognition of difference: a difference which is produced through the generation and distribution of representations of different, identifiable others (Skeggs 2000:130).

The disciplining of children and their families is part of wider practices and technologies of discipline. Included in these disciplinary discursive practices are concepts of class, gender and ethnicity which are 'mutually implicated' (Ortner 1998:9). Categories such as class, gender and ethnicity are part of a 'real structure' (Cousins 1999:299) which is 'out there' and related to inequality, privilege and social difference (Ortner 1998:8). However, ethnicity and class, like gender, are also sustained through social performances and 'doing' (Butler 1999). In the post-structural way of thinking class, gender and ethnicity are now thought of in a processual way and Foucault's theory of power and Pierre Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' (1984) have become influential in this thinking. Bourdieu's theoretical framework (in which the enculturation of class takes place through habitus) also takes gender and ethnicities into account as factors that interact with class (Chancer and Watkins 2006:99). Butler's argument in *Gender Trouble* (1999) that gender is created through various acts of 'doing' sustained by dominant discourses and collective agreements which uphold these performances of 'normality' has added a new dimension to theories on how people actively produce class, gender and ethnicity. These three categories are all a product of regulatory discourses in which certain practices are reified and naturalised as 'normal' (Fortier 2000:5) and people constantly negotiate 'the intersection of individual self definition (who I am) and collective attribution (who they say I am)' (Nagel 1996:21).

Ortner (1991) notes that the topic of middle-class culture is marginal in anthropological studies and it has remained a marginal topic today. It is therefore essential to take up the study of the middle-class, says Liechty (2003:8-9), as we have to counter claims that 'class' does not exist or if it did it has become a moot point in contemporary society. Liechty argues that there are many reasons why students of anthropology should be interested in class as half of the world's population are now living in urban areas. Anthropologists need to confront the complex processes of social life encapsulated in class relations and practices. Studying the middle-class is an important subject of anthropological inquiry especially as the middle classes have an increasingly dominant role in cultural processes worldwide (Liechty 2003:9).

There are theoretical challenges of actually describing and analysing the relationship between class and other social categories. Practices in the middle classes, as Liechty (2003:35-6) describes in Nepal, are not so much about having or possessing as about being and belonging and the process of youth production is an integral part of middle-class formations. Class is constructed through imaginations and through

patterns of material privilege (Liechty 2003:64) and the nature and meaning of that construction shifts perpetually depending on the demands of middle-class society. The middle classes are therefore a constantly re-enacted cultural project and never a 'thing' that exists by 'itself, prior to, or outside of, its actual performance in everyday life' (Liechty 2003:37).

Liechty (2003:23) states that theories of performativity (Butler 1999) are built around a distinction between intentional behaviors and 'scripts' which are enacted and embedded in complex cultural contexts and it is the regularity of performances that makes certain social norms acquire their authority. The idea of performativity, says Liechty, helps to see class as process which is being re-enacted and recreated by the bearers of class culture. However, this framework does not convey a sense of how 'historical continuity, or inertia, of cultural life extends from the past into the present and even projects itself onto the future'.

To explain how that matrix of intelligibility is culturally produced, narrativity needs to be added to the theoretical framework, argues Liechty (2003:22) as Bourdieu's notion of habitus is not useful because it does not break cleanly with structural understandings of culture and class. I do not agree with Liechty on this point. I find Bourdieu's concept of habitus a very useful way to conceptualise and analyse class. Bourdieu's later work clarified and extended the concept of habitus which allowed it to become much more than 'a kind of iron cage' outside of which creative thought and practice is 'unthinkable' (Liechty 2003:22). As Liechty (2003:25) himself argues, there is 'cultural inertia' within stories which offer useful insights into the nature of the 'matrix or constraining context of cultural performance and performativity'. To explain this continuity and inertia Bourdieu's notion of habitus is very useful.

Liechty's use of the concept of narrativity, however, is a helpful conceptual tool and it adds another dimension to the processual concept of class. Social life is storied and people construct their often multiple and changing identities by locating themselves or others within a repertoire of emplotted stories. It is through these cultural narratives that people learn who they are and they learn who they should become through cultural narrativity. Narratives and narrativity transport ideas, meaning and value from the past into the present and lay claim to the future (Liechty 2003:25).

In Chapters 5, 6 and 7 I will trace a number of New Zealand cultural narratives, because these stories are very powerful. The idea of narrativity as discussed by Liechty does offer ways of analysing the 'dramas' that are being performed and the stories that

are told. His perspective is well-suited to an analysis of middle-class cultural process 'because it allows us to capture something of the chaotic interplay of competing, often contradictory, narratives, and the fragmented, nerve-wracking performances that they inspire' (Liechty 2003:25).

Each person participates in many different discourses at any one time and each of these discourses may have its own preferred way of doing things and may propose a variety of ways to think, feel and behave. These discourses can therefore be contradictory and people can adopt or select from the range of positions available, but also may be positioned by them ((Grieshaber 1998:18). Deviations from the accepted ways of doing things may pose a threat to the continued effect of class, gender and ethnicity discourses and practices and if these breaches happen too frequently then these deviations from the norm may lead to new and alternative subject positions (Grieshaber 1998:19).

Lupton and Barclay (1997:14) point out that, the difficulty with dominant discourses is that there is little recognition of differences between men (and women) of different social classes, educational level and ethnicity/cultural background. In contemporary society mothers, fathers and children are constituted as multiple identities and gender is one of the identities around which subjectivity is constructed (Grieshaber 1998:19). Through the unpacking of everyday taken-for-granted assumptions that surround family members and their lived experiences, it is possible to make visible the subject positions that operate within the family and deconstruct familiar codes, styles and conventions associated with commonsense conceptions of families. Rituals such as eating, cleaning, mothering and fathering inscribe the institution of the family, says Grieshaber (1998:20) and the subject positions adopted by particular family members as part of their daily practices can be identified through the examination of such routines. Family members may adopt different subject positions or are positioned there by the discourses in their cultural repertoire which can lead to disagreement and conflict. The family is therefore a site of potential struggle and offers opportunities for resistance, negotiation and change over time as has happened in many families during the past decades.

Anthropological Frameworks

> Children provide us with a philosophical and an emotional conundrum,
> 'how did we come to be as we are?' In asking this question, we
> recognise that the way we think about children, about being young is at
> the basis of our vision and theory of society (Moore 2004:736).

Children provide anthropologists with an interesting starting point because our theories of society and culture are bound up with our theories of the child, their capacities, behaviour and responsibilities (Moore 2004:736). Amit (2000:236) points out that the interest in children in the academic disciplines and public, professional and popular discourses is not surprising as discourses surrounding children 'inherently invoke fundamental issues of social reproduction' and

> … questions about the place of children in society lead to questions
> about the ways in which social institutions, practices, relationships and
> cultural meanings are reproduced (or not) from one generation to the
> next.

The study of children is framed within a wider theoretical shift within anthropology and also adds to these debates (Amit 2000:237). It can deepen anthropological understandings and explanations of how social relations unfold in local and global contexts.

Ethnography's strength lies in its attempts to get as close as possible to local, everyday worlds without disrupting them. Bourgois (2002:18) suggests that researchers who are not cultural anthropologists have a hard time believing that useful, reliable data can be generated from the small samples of people who anthropologists study through qualitative methods, but the anthropological process of participant observation and interviews enables the examination of social variation and social heterogeneity and adds a 'multiplicity of voices and discourses' (O'Malley *et al.* 1997:505).

When conducting participant observations anthropologists try to put themselves 'in the shoes' of the people they study which implies a power imbalance and the premise that the 'essence' of a group of people or a culture can be understood. Anthropologists therefore risk imposing ethnocentric categories onto the people they study in the name of 'an arrogantly assumed ethnographic academic authority' (Bourgois 2002:19). To avoid this ethnographers need to be self-reflexive and recognise that 'no single, simple reality or essence of a culture necessarily exists'. But

despite its problems participant-observation remains meaningful. Ethnography's overall
goal is

> … to obtain a holistic perspective on the internal logics of and external
> constraints on the way processes unfold while at the same time
> recognizing humbly that cultures and social meanings are fragmented
> and multiplicitous (Bourgois 2002:19).

Graduate students in social anthropology know that it is fieldwork that makes
one a 'real' anthropologist and as Gupta and Ferguson (1997:1) have stated, the single
most significant factor determining whether a piece of research will be accepted as
'anthropological' depends on experiences 'in the field'. 'The field' functions as the
master symbol of the discipline and the frameworks we apply even in non-traditional
field sites are inflected with a host of assumptions (Passaro 1997:148). One of these
assumptions is the idea of `distance' and it is assumed that an anthropologist has to
travel a certain social distance to be able to 'see well'. This view claims authority and
legitimates knowledge (Passaro 1997:152). However, research 'away' does not produce
privileged or complete understandings. Neither does the cultural knowledge of
indigenous authorities or 'insiders', but all are differently situated as dwellers and
travellers in 'fields' of knowledge (Clifford 1997:218). The frequently unspoken
assumptions of 'home' as a place of cultural sameness and abroad as a place of
difference rest on the idea that different cultures exist in discrete and separate places.

To challenge this picture of the world is to challenge the image of fieldwork as
involving the movement in and out of 'the field'. The question arises if we are ever 'out
of the field' and for those interested in working with their 'own' communities this
question is extremely relevant (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:17). The distinction between
'the field' and 'home' rests on a spatial separation which is based on two central
anthropological contrasts. It differentiates the site where data is collected from the
place where analysis is conducted and the ethnography is written. What is important,
say Gupta and Ferguson (1997:14), is not whether anthropologists should be working
'at home' or 'aboard', but the uncritical mapping of difference onto exotic sites as if
home were not also a site of difference.

This study of childhood in New Zealand is not always seen as being
'distanced' enough and assumptions that 'otherness' is the best route to 'objectivity'
have come up during my research as people suggested that 'at risk' groups or 'other
cultures' within New Zealand might have been a better 'object' and 'subject' of my

study. However, as Passaro points out 'distance' and 'otherness' are not a geographical given but a theoretical stance. There were many advantages to the 'insider' research 'at home' as it placed me in a unique position with regards to access, knowledge already gained, knowing the language and being able to understand and interpret. However, a hypothesis by Atkinson (as quoted in Hammersley 1990:x) expresses the idea that

> ...the easier it is to gain access, the more troublesome life in the field will be for the ethnographer.

As I moved between insider/outsider roles at different times during this research and tried to maintain some 'intellectual detachment', I started to appreciate the meaning of that quotation. The insider/outsider question was frequently one of anxiety and ambivalence, as I was forced to look at my personal and professional identities. Rose (1999a:270) suggests that we now have plurality of selfhoods and

> …disseminate repertoires of the self in terms of `identities' which are relatively standardized forms of individuality and personality, each equipped with a set of habits, dispositions, tastes and aspirations.

Through these repertoires and identities the self learns to relate to a range of dilemmas and singles out certain events as significant or problematic. These repertoires and identities also teach the self how to conduct oneself. As part of my research I was choosing repertoires of self and identities depending on where I was and with whom. Identities included 'being' Dutch, a Pakeha, an anthropologist, a mother, a Cub Scout leader, a lecturer and an early childhood teacher. These pluralities of selfhood led to dilemmas during my research especially during times of 'small talk'.

Small Talk

Participant observation as described by Agar (1996:9) means 'being there'. It involves entering the world of the people you are working with by participating in the practices of everyday life. My role as a parent and early childhood educator meant that I spend a lot of my time 'being there' and 'hanging out' with parents and children in different environments such as a early childhood centres, primary school, Dutch classes, Cub Scout evenings, school and cub camps as well as in my personal relationships with other parents and children in their or my home. 'Small talk', which forms the basis of much anthropological research, was very much part of the interactions taking place during these times. It is in the often informal 'small talk', argues Dyck, that rhetoric and

patterns regarding the regimes and patterns of childhood are revealed. It is this 'small talk' with Pakeha and Dutch parents which form the basis of my thesis.

The study of anthropology posses the capacity to identify and explore the taken for grantedness in societies. Noel Dyck (2000)points out in his article *Home Field Advantage: Exploring the social Construction of Children's Sport*, that anthropology often seeps out of the confines of one's academic career and spills over into home life. I too recognize this seeping out of anthropology into my home life. The study of anthropology possesses the capacity to identify and explore the taken for grantedness of societies. My anthropological knowledge and research made me question my own assumptions and those of the people I interacted with in my personal life. This questioning continued and has grown in depth over the past years through my study, my continued work in early childhood education and as a mother of a now questioning teenager.

The practice of anthropology at home is complicated. This complexity increases when ethnographic research is conducted in an area in which the anthropologist has a personal involvement. Dyck (2000:34) raises the question:

> Which considerations should govern what, where and how we write
> about relationships and activities that may involve relatives, neighbours
> and consociates?

These considerations were also very much part of my research and, like Dyck (2000:44), I grappled with issues of what to do with information gathered during participant observation. Many of the conversations I had during my participant observation were ethnographically off the record. My role as a parent and educator allowed me access to conversations and interactions which otherwise would have been difficult. My friends, family and 'consociates' knew of my anthropological study. Jokes regarding the use of certain discussions and events in my thesis were frequently made. At my early childcare centre too my study was frequently discussed with parents and colleagues. However, I struggled with concerns regarding the use of the information that I gathered at these times. It was often impossible to turn off my anthropological ear, eye and mind and I turned into fieldwork mode regularly without having planned this. Finally I decided to use information gathered in this way with utmost care and discretion in my thesis. The strategy I adopted allowed me to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants in my social world while also providing me with a sound basis for my analysis. Although I used my notes regarding these small talks to

further my understanding of childhood and parenting in contemporary New Zealand society, I did not use them in my thesis as examples. I used the interviews Instead to highlight the themes and patterns also present in the 'small talk'.

The ethnographic study for this PhD was mainly based in one suburb of Auckland. The participants were middle-class Pakeha and Dutch residents of the area and were parents, early childhood educators and caregivers who were interested in educational and childhood issues. The study included a small survey to help with the recruitment of interview participants (see appendix). A total of 22 parents, caregivers and early childhood educators were interviewed. The interviews took between one to two hours and were based on topic based open ended questions (see appendix). The selection criteria were based on location, ethnicity, income, educational interest and class. Some of the participants were interviewed more than once and many of the interview participants were also part of the 'small talk' (see above) which took place during my participant observation.

The Unfamiliar within the Familiar

All data is the result of limited interactions with the people we study and compromises are often necessary. By using participant observation and interviews, I tried to balance some of these compromises. Anthropological ethnographic research, however, is also about connecting often diverse and contradictory discourses to patterned activities, institutional interests and personal relationships that span a variety of social realms (Dyck 2000:41). The challenge is, as Wolcott (1995:19) states,

> … to preserve, convey and celebrate that complexity, even to the point
> of 'messing up' science the way humans seem capable of doing.

Strathern (1987:18) suggests that when studying at 'home' both researcher and study participants will assume they share the same worldview, but she cautions against 'auto-anthropology', which assumes that anthropology at home means greater reflexivity and warns that there is 'always a discontinuity between indigenous understandings and the analytical concepts which frame the ethnography itself'. Selecting relevant information from the vast array of events that appear before one's eyes is something which affects all researchers, but is an even bigger problem when dealing with a culture which is known to you as you have

> … to find the unfamiliar within the familiar, to make it clear that things are not what they seem, to reach behind the facade of ordinary behaviour and belief to the deeper implications of social action (Goldschmidt 1995:18).

The issues of representation and how audiences perceive the research have been part of my reflexivity since my Masters thesis. Writing about culture raises questions about modes of representation, about objectivity and accountability, relativism and ethnocentrism, science and truth and the creation of a text within an anthropological framework can thus be problematic (Brettell 1993). My research for my Master's thesis as well as my PhD involved issues surrounding my personal as well as my professional life and were part of the interactive and mutually constitutive cultural processes surrounding constructions of childhoods.

In the past, anthropologists went off to far away places and the chances that their study would be read by those who were written about was small, but this has changed as anthropologists started working closer to home and 'the natives' have the opportunity to start talking back (Brettell 1993:9). I discussed in my master's thesis (Tap 1997) how writing for an audience consisting of my own Dutch community was not always easy and I reflected on the insider/outsider debate and the difficulties I faced. As Jaffe (1993:51) remarks:

> Learning about the extreme delicacy of balance between involvement and detachment when anthropologists study people like themselves has important methodological, ethical, and theoretical implications.

These questions still applied for my PhD thesis as my research interests moved from aging and identity in the Dutch community towards younger middle-class Dutch immigrants and Pakeha New Zealanders and the construction of childhood. Again I studied people like myself and needed to balance involvement and detachment. As with my Master's thesis there was the struggle to find patterns and consistencies within the narrated stories (Sørensen 1997:147) and there were more questions about the way to deal with the inconsistencies which were also part of the narratives. There was also the anthropological necessity to reflect even deeper on the available theoretical frameworks and to use my knowledge of these frameworks to examine the multiple identities of others as well as my own as a middle-class researcher and anthropologist, a parent, a 'younger' Dutch immigrant, a 'sometimes Pakeha' and as a early childhood teacher, to name only a few of the identities I occupy.

Sørensen (1997:146) remarks that with the flow of people, goods, information and ideas across borders, a new ethnographic narrative is emerging in which culture and society are regarded as always changing. Within this new narrative, she says, change, inconsistency and paradoxes are seen as an integral part of people's reality. Personal identity, according to this view, is a complex sense of being or belonging not derived from one local structure, but actively and strategically constructed in relation to multiple spaces and for a variety of purposes (Sørensen 1997:146).

These actively constructed shifting and conflicting identities are reflected in the word *mengelmoes* (hodgepodge) which is the title of my Master's thesis (Tap 1997). How to do justice to this mixture of identities, this *mengelmoes* full of complexity, is one of risk and anxiety for a PhD student. Sørensen (1997:146) points out that we need to keep in mind the individual in all of this

> ...not as a typical representative of a culture whose point of view should be voiced, but as a human being and as a social individual.

I hope that this thesis reflects the individual as 'a creative agent in the construction of the story' and show the patterns which can be found in every society.

The Thesis in Outline

In this thesis I examine the construction and governing of childhoods in New Zealand society showing the world of change, complexity and ambiguity which is part of the rationales and practices of childhood today while attempting to understand what is emerging as childhood's future. In Chapter 1 I set out my theoretical framework and how questions about the construction and governing of childhoods became important for my own ethnographic self and how they relate to anthropological questions. Chapter 2 sets out childhood's 'history of the present'. In this chapter I describe how regimes of rationales developed over time in western societies and how children came to be viewed as 'becomings' and 'other'. Changes in the last decades of the 20th century led to new regimes of rationality and practices which affected the way childhood is viewed and governed. This led to a new paradigm in the studies of childhood which sees children as 'beings'. However, this paradigm has become inadequate to deal with the new figurations of childhood in contemporary society and a new framework (of which this thesis is a part) is developing to deal with the new rationales of the self as 'multiple becomings'. Chapter 3 examines New Zealand's 'history of the present' until

the 1970s. It shows how local rationales and practices of childhood were influenced by travelling discourses and visa versa. Chapter 4 continues New Zealand's 'history of the present' by describing the transformations in New Zealand since the 1970s and the influences of neoliberal discourses on the construction of the self. These changes have greatly affected the way childhood ha come to be governed and constructed in New Zealand. Chapter 5 considers the myth of a classless New Zealand society and it examines how class, gender and ethnicity influence the figurations of contemporary childhood. Chapter 6 traces a number of powerful cultural narratives at work in the New Zealand middle classes. Middle-class parents are struggling to combine ideas of the 'traditional' constructions of childhood with constructions of a 'suitably modern childhood'. These contradictions lead to ambiguities and anxieties about the construction and governing of modern childhood. Chapter 7 examines how the increasing availability of risk knowledges through experts, books, television and the internet has led to dominant risk discourses in contemporary western societies. One of the rationales surrounding risk which is particularly dominant among people with significant cultural and economic capital, such as members of the well-educated middle-class, is that risk can be personally controlled. Middle-class parents in New Zealand use 'concerted cultivation' as one way to personally control the unpredictability and anxieties surrounding childhood today. In Chapter 8 I revisit some of the issues raised in this thesis and look at what is emerging for childhood's future in New Zealand

Chapter 2: Instances and Transformations of Childhoods

> In short, I would like to disengage my analysis from the privileges generally accorded the economy of scarcity and the principles of rarefaction, to search instead for instances of discursive production (which also administer silences, to be sure), of the productions of power (which sometimes have the function of prohibiting), of the propagation of knowledge (which often cause mistaken beliefs or systematic misconceptions to circulate); I would like to write the history of these instances and transformations (Foucault 1976:12).

Contemporary childhood is changing in ways which has led to a 'crisis' in representation (Prout 2005:33). To understand the changes which have led to this crisis it is necessary to write the history of the instances and transformations. The historical contexts for these changes in the construction of childhood are rooted in the political, economic, technological, social and cultural changes which took place in Europe from about the 18th century onwards. The rise of the nation state and capitalism led to the decline of traditional social hierarchies. New classes began to appear and assume central importance. Religious beliefs were challenged by rationalist and scientific reasoning and gender relations changed as new identities were created and contested. This was not a homogenous, smooth, uniform and continuous process, but it was a heterogeneous, uneven, contingent and contested process which happened over a long period shaped by specific sets of local circumstances. It was within these contexts that the modern idea of childhood came into being (Prout 2005:8-9).

This chapter describes how certain regimes of rationales of childhood developed over previous centuries through which children came to be viewed as both 'becomings' and 'other'. Due to changes in societies since the mid 1960s, these rationales were increasingly challenged and a new paradigm of childhood had developed by the 1990s. However, this paradigm too has become inadequate to deal with the continuing transformations in contemporary childhoods and a new framework is now developing to deal with new rationales of the self as 'multiple becomings'. This thesis is part of these new frameworks and some of the issues discussed in this chapter will be revisited in Chapter 8.

Histories of the present, as Barry, Thomas and Rose (1996) write, draw attention to the intellectual and practical techniques and inventions through which

society is brought into being. They give a greater understanding of the historical and social production of knowledges and the shifting social forces and power relations which shape and construct our lives. These histories led to understandings about how those aspects of human experience, that were previously considered to be fixed, natural and immutable, were produced. Foucault's (1965, 1976, 1977) work on prisons, asylums and sexuality are great examples of this. The instances and transformation of childhood address important theoretical issues and offer 'a window into the culturally constituted self' (Harkness and Super 1996:5). This window can be used as an interpretive device, 'as something that might tell of historical and political developments' (Steedman 1992:180) and provide a perspective on 'the nature of the social order, on questions of regulation, culture and subjectivity' (McGillivray 1997:2). James and Prout (1990a) stated that underlying many of the debates surrounding childhood is the question 'what is a child?' This question has remained at the base of childhood studies today as in any discussion on childhood there are implicit assumptions about the boundaries between childhood and adulthood. These boundaries are now considered as multiple and children are seen as being socialised 'by belonging to a particular culture at a certain stage in history' (Stephens 1995:6). However, the study of childhood can also ask the question 'what is an adult?' and the study of children and childhood must inevitably look at the ideas and practices of adults. These ideas and practices are often based on beliefs which are part of taken for granted ideas and assumptions (Harkness and Super 1996:8).

Regimes of Rationale and Practice

> The human subject in any given historical era apprehends her or his world, the self, and the relations between self and others on the basis of historical discursive practices that name, locate and organize concrete and abstract knowledge and experience (Luke 1989:29).

Luke (1989:16), drawing on Foucault, uses the concepts of 'regimes of rationality and practice' to explain the ideas and practices surrounding childhood. Foucault (1976, 1977) uses the concept of regime to refer to power/knowledge schemes which seek to normalise power relations. Regimes of rationality, says Luke, are always related to other sets of ideas or concepts within society. These regimes are framed as natural and normative and they 'justify and provide reasons for doing things'. Childrearing practices or 'regimes of practice' are informed by these regimes of

rationality. These regimes relate to everyday practices such as styles of talking to children, methods of discipline or seeking advice from experts (Lareau 2003). The construction of childhood is to a large extend about these everyday governings conducted in the privacy of the home (Luke 1989:30), but also refer to regimes of rationality which develop in particular places and times and are shared by members of a cultural group or subgroup (Harkness and Super 1996:2). Regimes regarding the best way to raise children change regularly, but generally there is widespread agreement among professionals at specific historical times about how children should be raised (Lareau 2003:4). This widespread agreement permeates society and because these guidelines are so generally accepted 'they form a dominant set of cultural repertoires' (Lareau 2003:4). In this chapter I describe the dominant regimes of rationality and cultural repertoires of childhood as they developed from the 16th century onwards and show how they emerged as part of a series of separate, but related discourses, on individualism, the family and the state (Luke 1989:53-4).

New Paradigms of Childhood

Mead (1955) and Ariès (1962) were among the first to draw attention to the idea that childhood is socially and historically constructed rather than innate or natural and the concept of social construction remains important in research on childhood. Hendrick (1997:9) suggests that:

> Put simply, the term refers to the way in which our lives are socially produced, i.e. by ourselves, rather than naturally or divinely given.

However, taken to its extreme social constructionism can also become overly relativist (Lupton and Barclay 1997:10-1). Lupton and Barclay argue that biological realities of differences written upon bodies cannot always be ignored and class, gender, ethnicity and age are not endlessly malleable or 'written upon' through social and cultural processes. Nevertheless the insights offered by social constructionism offer much to the analysis of phenomena such as childhood and its associated concepts of fatherhood, motherhood and parenthood. As suggested by Lupton and Barclay (1997:11), the notion that there are distinguishing anatomical features between people can be retained but there also needs to be a recognition 'that the *meanings* given to these features are socially constructed and differ historically'.

Children and adults are, as Wyness (2006:27) argues, also embodied representatives of pre-existing and separate categories. Childhood does not only arise out of discourse, but is

> … an essential component of a social order where the general understanding is that childhood is a first and separate condition of the lifespan whose characteristics are different from later ones (Mayall 2000:22).

Prout (2005:84) argues that the claim that childhood is a social construction reproduces an opposition between 'nature' and 'culture'. There were benefits to be gained from this discourse, says Prout, as it promotes the exploration of the social, cultural and historical construction of childhood which was important.

> However, it did so at the cost of bracketing out or expelling biology, the body and even materiality as such from its accounts of childhood.

Childhood studies need to re-examine dualisms such as being/becoming and nature/culture, suggests Prout, and a new theoretical framework needs to be developed which incorporates multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary fields. The governing of the body by society is highlighted by the study of social constructionism and governmentality, but many social practices are also material ones which concretely shape the body. The relationship between the body and society is therefore reciprocal (Prout 2005:104).

Chapter 3 of this thesis, for example, shows the way New Zealand regimes of rationality led to the increasing disciplining of the body from the end of the 19th century. Discourses do shape the way children's bodies were perceived, understood, worked upon and produced in the early 20th century, but the ravages of early diarrhoea in infants, for example, and its effects on the body was also a factor in the creation of the Plunket society. The body and its representations are mutually dependent. Childhood studies must step beyond dualisms and incorporate the perspective that all childhoods are constituted through juvenility and that all human cultures have to negotiate this. These negotiations and translations of juvenility into culture can be accomplished in many different ways, says Prout (2005:11) and how this is done is often played out through the body 'both working on and being worked on by society'. This framework is useful for the analysis of childhood. Although the main focus of this research is the construction of childhood, it also recognises that children are distinguished by physical features.

This chapter briefly traces the history of the instances and transformations which occurred in the dominant regimes of rationality of childhood from the 16th century until the 20th century. It examines how and why children came to be set apart as special, different and 'other' (Gittins 1998:11) and how these concepts have changed in the past decades. These instances and transformation will be used as part of the 'creative stutter' this thesis is trying to create. As Rose (1999b:20) has argued it is a matter of forming a connection or relation

> … between a contemporary question and certain historical events, forming connections that vibrate or resonate, and hence introduce a difference, not only in the present, but also in the historical moments it connects up with and deploys.

Instances and Transformations in Academic Discourses about Childhood

> The social and educational sciences (anthropology, psychology, sociology and new fields of child development and educational psychology) that began to emerge in the late nineteenth century, appropriated ideas from natural science and assumed that reason, rationality, and the growth of information and truth would guide rational 'development' (economic and human) within individuals and individual countries, as well as in nations or regions considered colonies (Bloch *et al.* 2003:17).

Ariès (1962) argues that the medieval European world was ignorant of childhood and lacked an awareness of the particular nature which distinguishes the child from the adult. He states that society perceived young people to be small-scale adults and that the 'discovery' of childhood would have to wait until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. During this time a shift occurred in peoples' way of thinking and a new concept of childhood appeared. There have been various critiques of Ariès work and questions have been raised about his historical accuracy and the application of present day assumptions on the past (Pollock 1983), but Ariès was one of the first to describe the new knowledges and practices related to the child and childhood which took place during this time (Marshall and Marshall 1997:54). However, as Stephens (1995:5) points out, although some of Aries' arguments need to be modified, the originality and generativity of his claims remain.

Mayall (1996:43) suggests that the idea that there is such a concept as 'the child' is grounded in the early 19th century, when psychology tried to establish itself as a science. Many of the early people in the child study movement had a natural science

background and 'scientific methods' were established to identify, codify and describe the 'child'. The concept of development was very important in the psychological thinking of the time and children and, commonly, childhood was conceptualised by a series of stages and theories of child development focused on certain behaviours which were seen as appropriate, normal and necessary for the psychological and physical wellbeing of a child. These theories of child development did not pay much attention to the different social, economic, political and cultural contexts of childhood (Gittins 1998:26). Western societies often tend to think of a 'child' as having a clear meaning which relates to its chronological age, however, there are many conflicting definitions even within cultures and there is no single definition of when childhood ends (Gittins 1998:3).

The study of cultural difference provided a way to broaden psychological ideas and to point out the various factors which may affect children's childhoods. Margaret Mead (1955:3) suggests in *Childhood in Contemporary Cultures* that in each historical period for which there are records different versions of childhood can be seen, a point also made by van den Berg (1956 as quoted in Dekker 2000:3). Mead points out that childhood is complex and that cultural diversity and the interrelationships which existed between different aspects of childhood need to be taken into account in theoretical frameworks. As Gittins (1998:13) notes, Mead examined some of the continuing important issues around the question as to whether there could be any such thing as 'the child'.

The question of how a child becomes a member of a culture has been of concern to anthropologists since the discipline started, but the question was never a central one as socialisation was seen as an unproblematic process (Morton 1996:3). The term socialisation referred to the internalisation of culturally appropriate norms and values. Psychological anthropology, as Scheper-Hughes (1994:135-36) points out, was the only subdiscipline of anthropology that took children seriously until recently, but childhood was of interest only as a transitional stage 'en route to real culture and personality'. Psychological anthropology, like the cultural and personality approach preceding it, was based on white-middle-class subjects, techniques, assumptions and interpretations (Morton 1996:7-8). It was not until the late 1970s that the unidirectional model of socialisation was questioned and an interactional model was developed which greatly influenced sociological theory (Morton 1996:9) and challenged adult-centred approaches (Hendrick 1990, Jenks 1996, Prout and James 1990).

Anthropological theory, however, did not draw on these new concepts and in the early 1980s Schwartz (as quoted in Morton 1996:8) commented that 'anthropology [has] ignored children in culture while developmental psychologists [have] ignored culture in children'. His challenge to explore the ethnography of children was ignored until the 1990s when new ethnographies developed the notion that assumed biological givens or social facts needed to be examined. Morton's ethnography on Tongan childhood (1996) is part of this trend as are Riesman's (1992) study of the Fulani, Stafford's (1995) ethnography of childhood in China, Warnock Fernea's (1995) edited book on children in the Middle East and Stephens (1995) edited book which brings together a group of researchers from different parts of the world who explore 'various aspects of the current global politics of culture in relation to changing discourses on childhood and to changing conditions and experiences in diverse world regions and social context' (1995:4). Anthropological childhood study during the 1990s finally started drawing together a variety of theoretical strands that demonstrated the value of placing children and childhood at the center of anthropological discourse and acknowledged the socially constructed character of childhood (James *et al.* 1998).

But although developmental and socialisation models have been critiqued in recent years they remain a powerful influence in western discourses as the alliance between medicine, psychology and education has remained strong and resistant to change (Mayall 1996:53). These assumptions, say Jackson and Scott (1999:92), are so pervasive that it is difficult to think outside them. They are so widely accepted that they have become unquestioned 'truths' and the developmental or socialisation paradigm is at the heart of risk anxiety and risk management in relation to children' (see Chapter 7).

The 16th and 17th century: New Discursive Constellations

> There is the government of children and the great problematic of pedagogy which emerges and develops during the sixteenth century (Foucault 1997:87).

During the 16th and 17th century European societies became increasingly disciplined through institutions such as police forces, prisons, charity hospitals and asylums aimed at the normalisation, disciplining and surveillance of subjects (Foucault 1965, 1976, 1977). These new regimes were part of a broader system of ideas and practices which Foucault calls a 'discursive constellation' (as quoted in Luke 1989:19). To explain children's appearances in 16th century discourses, one must look at these

constellations, says Luke (1989:19) and at the 'adjacent and contemporaneous networks of concepts'. The spread of these constellations was not a uniform transition in Europe. Many Protestant discursive constellations, for example, predated similar changes noted for 17th and 18th century France (Ariés 1962). Luke (1989:139-40) shows how the conceptual and practical changes concerning the self had their base in the events and the literature of the German Protestant Reformation. More standardised discourses on childhood emerged from the 1520s onwards as part of Protestant religious discourses which touched on almost all aspects of civil and spiritual life. Protestant discourses saw individual self-discipline as a prerequisite to greater social cohesion and childhood became 'the target upon which the rebuilding of a fragmented society from the ground up was focused' (Luke 1989:141). The ultimate aim of the new religious pedagogy was to provide long-term beneficial consequences for the individual and for society and to protect the young from 'the power of sin'. These discourses established children as a distinct social group and created public institutions for them in which to standardise their beliefs, behaviors, attitudes, and values (Luke 1989:146). Ideas that many parents were unfit to teach the young also surfaced strongly. Compulsory schooling (although still a long way off) became a goal for the reformers as the way to mould and train young minds and bodies.

> Standardization of treatment ─ curricular content, rules, punishments, rewards ─ according to uniform codes was meant to preclude the idiosyncratic and unregulated moral training that families provided (Luke 1989:146).

Two other processes added to these new forms of religious governing; the shattering of the structures of feudalism and the establishment of the great territorial, administrative and colonial states (Foucault 1997:87-8). The problem of government surrounding these newly developing states led to new questions, says Foucault, about how to govern oneself, how to be governed and how to govern others. These questions of 'biopower' (Foucault 1976) led to the construction of 'docile bodies' and changes to the 'modal self' (Kennedy 1998:9) as well as to new ways to govern populations . The increasing disciplining of the body (which showed for example in the changing attitudes and behaviours relating to nudity, bodily functions and sexuality emerging in the 16th century) was joined by a new focus on interventions and regulations in the lives of populations including for example births, general health and life expectancy.

Children and their families became the locus of these new forms of governing by institutions such as the state, religion, schools and the sciences. This new developing 'self' (mainly in the higher and middle classes at this stage) was taught to repress impulsive and instinctual life, watch themselves carefully, read books and become more private and introspective. Attitudes and behaviours common among medieval adults such as unselfconsciousness about nudity, bodily functions and sexuality came to be seen as vulgar and childlike (Kennedy 1998:12). The development of reading and writing, new distinctions between public /private, the Protestant work ethic and growing individualism all added to this new regime of rationality surrounding the self. As a result adults and children (who used to share a more common world) became increasingly separated, first only in the wealthier classes, but gradually spreading to the other classes in the following centuries. As a consequence of the new 'enlightened adult self' the child was left behind (Kennedy 1998:12). Adults and children became different beings and childhood became a time in which children needed to be socialised to become full human beings (Holloway and Valentine 2000:2).

In the Netherlands (a mainly Calvinist country) the character of the child was also seen as determined by birth through the burden of 'original sin'. Education in the Christian faith was therefore seen as essential in the upbringing of children and religious discourses stressed the need to 'break the will of the child' (Dekker 2000:9). However, these religious discourses surrounding Dutch children were already changing and new discourses surrounding the adult self led to the acceptance of different pedagogical ideas. Wealthier Dutch parents increasingly started consulting pedagogical advice, books and authors such as the Reverend Petrus Wittewrongel started emphasising 'the mutual obligations of parent and child' (Dekker 2000:9). A Dutch pedagogical treatise published in 1690 by an unidentified author denounced the ineffective and undisciplined childrearing of the Dutch (Dekker 2000:7) and blamed especially the mothers for 'foolish clemency' for misbehaviour. However, despite this advice the affluent Dutch classes increasingly invested more money, time and love in their children. Foreign visitors to the Netherlands during this time often commented that Dutch children were spoilt and Dutch parents were seen as indulgent and permissive which resulted in 'unruly' children (Dekker 2000:6).

John Locke's book *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) became an important and widely read book at the end of the 17th century which greatly influenced the discursive constellation surrounding childhood. His book had many editions and

was translated into French, German, Italian, Swedish and Dutch. Locke wrote his book in the Netherlands during his years in exile and Dekker (2000:9) argues that he was influenced by Dutch pedagogical books which advocated a gentler upbringing than was advocated in Britain at the time. Locke's ideas did much to boost the image of the child as a *tabula rasa*. But although Locke saw the child as born innocent and a 'blank slate', he also continued the Christian perspective of the child as 'weak' and steeped in 'sin' and 'depravity' (Heywood 2001:23-4).

The dissemination of knowledge to the well off classes concerning childrearing and the education of children (Luke 1989:x-xi) was made possible through the new mass communications technology of printing (Anderson 1983). Discourses of childhood could now be spread and changed much faster. The new print media had a wide audience among lay people as well as among academics and clergy, but despite a greater standardisation of childhood through the print media a variety of views continued to co-exist (Heywood 2001:27).

The 18th Century: Sites of Investments and Gardens for the Young

Bauman (1987) describes the relationship between the rulers and the ruled of European societies before the 17th century through the metaphor of 'gamekeeping'. The pre-modern ruling class was in a sense 'a collective gamekeeper' (Bauman 1987:52). The job of a 'gamekeeper' is to ensure that the population of animals on a stretch of land is kept at the right levels to sustain hunting for food and sport. The gamekeeper's activities are therefore oriented toward the preservation of a balanced environment and few interventions in the lives of animals and plants are necessary. But as populations increased, towns and cities expanded and the new explorations started a process of colonisation of other lands far from home, the attitudes of the rulers toward the ruled began to change.

> Where, previously, gamekeeping could be relied upon to secure food,
> goods, skills and social order, the increasing needs of the ruled, coupled
> with the colonial ambitions of rulers, meant that more was required of
> the population (Lee 2001:25).

The rulers changed to become 'gardeners' who designed, planned and developed strategies and technologies to shape, train and control the populations. 'Shackled bodies and subjected souls' became the new mechanisms of power (Bauman 1987:59). A number of interventions characterised the 'gardening' attitude of the rulers

of modernising states, but one of the most significant features of the shift from 'gamekeeping to gardening' was the emergence of the notion that the population was in need of education to become 'good' citizens. This new form of education was quite distinctive in purpose and practice. It was seen as a tool to rescue the population from ignorance and ill-disciplined conduct and to turn them into a disciplined force whose every action would add to the strength of the state (Lee 2001:26). It was the young (as embodiments of the future and sites of investment) who received most attention in this new relationship between rulers and ruled.

In the middle of the 18th century an abundant literature on the preservation of children began to flourish in Europe. Jean-Jacques Rousseau's book *Emile, ou de l'education* printed in Amsterdam in 1764 added to the reconstruction of childhood with his ideas of childhood as a time of innocence which needed careful guidance. Rousseau attacked Locke's ideas regarding the need to reason with children. He argued that nature did not develop children's reasoning fully until they were adults and that nature wanted 'children to be children before being adults' (Heywood 2001:24). Rousseau's ideas were part of and contributing to the regime of rationality regarding rulers and parents as 'gardeners' who encourage 'human becomings'. Rousseau saw children as close to nature, which was seen as spontaneously plentiful and abundant. But there was also a perception that nature (and thus children) was 'lacking' and 'incomplete'. Gardeners, as Lee (2001:112) suggests, have dissatisfaction with nature and they create 'a mythical relationship between an incomplete nature and a completing culture'. For Rousseau, nature is also linked with God, who performs his work of creation and then 'leaves the scene' to leave the completion of the task to humankind.

> Thus, Rousseau's mythic 'nature' does its work before the work of culture, cultivation and education, and abandons the scene before socialization or development begins.

'Nature' and 'culture' are therefore perceived to be happening at different times, says Lee (2001:112), for 18th century thinkers and rulers. This distinction between the work of nature and culture which happen at different times has led to ideas of incomplete/complete and becoming/being which still underlie childhood regimes of rationality today. However, they lead to anxieties and stress because in contemporary societies the human 'self' has become associated with 'multiple becomings'. The concept of multiple becomings and the critique of the dualities inherent in childhood constructions based on these ideas will be discussed further later this chapter.

The 19th Century: Disorder and the Increasing Regulation of Childhoods

> The knowledges and practices aimed at controlling children's development are central to the process of modernization. Children's special status as sites of investment meant that they needed to be regulated and closely supervised, not only for their own sake, but also for reasons of state (Lee 2001:30).

The 19th century saw a series of shifts in the regulation of childhood and the family, in particular the working class family, became the site of investment for citizenship. 'Modern' citizens were expected to be independent, have choices and the right to freedom. They also needed to be able to 'participate actively in the formation of democratic and/or modern industrialised and scientific, progressive nations' (Bloch 2003:207). But a large proportion of the population was seen as 'incomplete and deficient' and interventions in the lives of the ruled were deemed necessary for the future success of the state. Jacques Donzelot (1979:52-7) argues that the family was cast at the center of political debate during the 19th century when 'disorder' such as the threat of pauperism and revolutionary movements threatened the developing state.

During this time childhood became a site of investment for the future and techniques for intervening in childhood were developed as means to intervene in the future of the state (Lee 2001:22). The rulers of modernising states who had begun to think of their populations as a resource and a 'garden' which needed shaping, controlling and disciplining started investing in children. These investments focused on the normalisation of deviant, difficult and potentially dangerous children through philanthropy and all others through the family as the primary site of childrearing (Donzelot 1979:54-7). This increasing investment in and regulation of childhood redefined the private, changed parenthood and inspired and fuelled scientific disciplines which defined normality (McGillivray 1997:16).

From the middle of the 18th century the medical profession played an increasing role in the normalisation and disciplining of society. During this time the body was constructed through new techniques of medical surveillance (Armstrong 1983 as quoted in Prout 2005:47). An 'organic link' was established between doctors and family which had profound repercussions for bourgeois children and their families. Until the middle of the 18th century medicine had taken little notice of women and children and the 'conquest of this market' by the medical profession was an attempt to destroy older discourses and practices related to 'the old wives' (Donzelot 1979:19).

Children of the wealthy and the middle classes were seen as at risk through exposure to bad influences by household servants and their childrearing practices. Books on childrearing, often written by the medical profession, increasingly offered mothers alternatives to their servants' traditional ideas on childrearing (Lee 2001:29). Gradually it became the mother's job among the wealthier groups to either raise children herself with the help of expert advice or to set up lines of defence within the home to protect her children from the servants through growing surveillance. Pedagogical advice praised maternal nursing and a childhood free of constraints such as swaddling and corsets. Play, educational toys, exercise and the creation of different spaces for children were suggested as well as a closer supervision of children to protect them from physical and mental harm. The alliance between doctors, families and children happened on three different levels; it closed the family against the influence of previous generations, it made an alliance with mothers by recognising their educational usefulness and it used the family against older structures of educational and religious institutions (Donzelot 1979:17-8). The new ideas resonated powerfully in middle-class circles where the interest in domesticity and education was particularly developed. Under the increasing influence of the medical profession 'the bourgeois family gradually became a hothouse insulated against outside influences' (Donzelot 1979:20).

But many of these discourses had little relevance to working-class people's lives where women often worked long hours inside or outside the home and young people became part of the adult world from an early age. The discourse surrounding poorer families therefore took a different form, but served the same end of isolating children from bad influences (Lee 2001:30). From the late 18th century to the mid-19th century charitable societies devoted to strengthening the institution of the family proliferated and provided 'guidance' to the 'unenlightened classes'. Family allowances, as Donzelot (1979:177) shows for France, were often coupled with increased surveillance through medical and moral supervision of working-class children. The same was the case in New Zealand where philanthropy and welfare also put families under surveillance (see Chapter 3). The 'preservation of children' turned families, both rich and poor, into sites for the defence of children against the ignorance and insufficiencies of mainstream society (Lee 2001:30).

Establishing new relationships of governance requires a reconstituted subject (Cruikshank 1999:82) and expert knowledges and scientific reasoning grew at a rapid rate from the middle to the end of the 19th century (Lee 2001:27). Scientific reasoning

became important in the discourses of rule and science became an 'engine of truth and progress' (Bloch 2003:204). The expanding medical sciences were joined by the developing social sciences such as anthropology, psychology and sociology and research institutes, universities and other centers were established at a fast rate.

The growing discourses of scientific reasoning made new discourses to categorise and differentiate between populations possible. It helped establish strategies and technologies 'to categorize and label populations', to 'divide normal from abnormal' and the 'civilized from the noncivilized' (Bloch *et al.* 2003:15). This led to new identities and different geographical and imagined spaces which were 'translated and transformed within different colonial contexts' (Bloch 2003:204).

However, the questions explored by the rapidly expanding social sciences did not only examine progress. Disorder, disintegration, degeneration and the breakdown of the moral order as a result of the industrial revolution were also examined. This can for example be seen in the work of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber (Denney 2005:9). There was widespread anxiety over the future in the 'age of progress' and many people in Europe (including academics) became disturbed by the forces unleashed by the industrial revolution. In Britain there was a general unease over the physical and moral condition of populations as well as a new insecurity about Britain's industrial and military prowess (Heywood 2001:161). Many of these ideas were part of the travelling discourses which influenced regimes of rationality and practices in New Zealand (see Chapter 3).

Children were given a specific status within the social sciences which served to 'invent' them as special beings (Hendrick 1997:13). The new experts, with the help of politicians and philanthropists, tried to instil proper conduct and moral behaviour in children and their families through the construction of 'the normal, good, and civilized family'. Children's special place as future citizens led to discourses of the 'dependent and vulnerable child in need of maternal protection guided by expert insights' (Lee 2001:30). These new 'widely acceptable social truths' were a new stage in a continuous process, says Hendrick (1997:12), but had now become a political and cultural struggle to extend the developed conceptions of childhood from the higher classes to all social classes. These new dominant discourses ignored all previous distinctions such as those between rural and urban worlds and the distinctions between the social classes.

Childhood was now seen as a time of distinct stages and different from adulthood for all children. In elite and middle-class families children were already

separated from adults through space, activities, disciplinary strategies and schooling. But a proper physical segregation of children from adults in all classes was seen as necessary and demands for 'a truly *national* childhood' increased (Hendrick 1997:12). Compulsory national schooling (already mentioned as a concept during the Reformation) developed rapidly in response. These discourses meant that wage-earning was no longer an accepted endeavour for children aged around five to thirteen. The notion of 'economically worthless' but 'emotionally priceless' first adopted by wealthy and the middle classes was extended to working-class families through child labour legislation and compulsory education (Heywood 2001:28). Attempts were also made to extend the educative role of middle-class women to the public classroom. The concept of the 'teacher-as mother' was used in the foundation for a new educational order (Steedman 1992:183). This ideology was developed because social theories at the end of the 19th century saw schools as places where children could be compensated for belonging to a working class family (Steedman 1992:190). By the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century the vision of the autonomous, but still developing child (originally constructed for the child of a particular class and cultural group), was translated as 'an imaginary of a child and childhood for all which embodied the rationalities of civilization and progress' (Bloch 2003:203).

The 20th Century: Children's Rights and the Universal Child

When discussing childhood and children in western societies two sets of ideas have been dominant since end of the 19th century: one is children's 'needs' and the other is children's 'interests' (Qvortrup 1994 as quoted in Wyness 2006:46). In the regimes of rationale surrounding 'needs' childhood is perceived as 'a deficit model of personhood' (Wyness 2006:46). Within this model, argues Weyness, adults either do or don't fulfil children's needs and comparisons are made between children 'in need' and 'those assumed to be enjoying a normal childhood'. Social policies, philanthropic organisations and development schemes invest money, time and energy at national and global levels to bring children 'in need' up to a 'normal' standard (Woodhead 1997 as quoted in Wyness 2006:46)). This can also be seen in New Zealand and was one of the aims of *The Code* which initiated this PhD research.

Black (1996:1) points out that not that long ago, the idea that statesmen sat around a conference table discussing the wellbeing of children would have been greeted with amazement. But times have changed and during the 20[th]century there was an

increased emphasis on the importance of children nationally and internationally. In the 19th century the removal of children from mines and factories and their universal attendance at schools became targets of lengthy campaigns in western societies. In the 20th century the state became increasingly involved in social services for children and many professions developed around the nurture and care of children. Children also remained an important part of charitable organisations. However, says Black (1996:2)

> … efforts to project the conditions of children as seriously significant in economic or political terms were not until the very recent past greeted with much success.

Long-term changes in the make-up of western societies changed all that. Changing parental expectations and levels of investment in children, the impact of modernisation and industrialisation, ongoing transformations of gender relations and the reverberation of all this on the political agenda increased children's importance (Black 1996:4). The encapsulation of these altered social values and perceptions at an international level through certain events and documentary expressions also played a role in these new regimes of rationality surrounding children's rights.

The story of the international movement for children's rights begins after World War I with the adoption of the World Child Welfare Charter in Geneva in 1924. This Charter set out the principles for the universal treatment of children (Black 1996:21) and the underlying image of the child contained in this document was thoroughly 'imbued with a modernist concept of childhood' (Prout 2005:31). The Declaration of Geneva (of which the Charter was a part) was a first step of a long process which saw the radical transitions of human rights during the 20th century. In 1946, at the end of another World War, the International Union of Child Welfare began to press the newly formed United Nations for endorsement of the Charter of 1924. Approval in principle was given by the United Nations, but work on a modified draft was delayed until other human rights documents were completed. In 1959 a modified Declaration of the Rights of the Child was unanimously passed by the United Nations General Assembly (Black 1996:21-2).

From the 1970s onwards international discourses on children's rights developed rapidly culminating in the 'International Year of the Child' in 1979. The 'bandwagon of momentum' (Black 1996:5) gained even more speed in the 1980s eventually resulting in the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). This document was a response to the perceived problems facing children in a variety of

distinct cultural contexts, but it restated and reaffirmed a particular conception of childhood (Wyness 2006:94). The document was ratified by the vast majority of the world's governments including New Zealand. However, as Scheper-Hughes and Sargent (1998:7) point out:

> The translation of basic rights across society and culture, even when as seemingly blameless as promoting the citizenship rights of women and children, can be a risky business.

These new rights, they argue (1998:8) also served the needs of the modern bureaucratic state to keep tabs on its population (and future workers and consumers) to become part of 'biopower' (Foucault 1976). Stephens (1995:37) also questions the implications of the demands for universal rights for children and suggests that 'it remains to be seen how these discourses will be interpreted, transformed, and applied to communities with very different social, cultural, and historical contexts'. *The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* was a legal and political response to the perceived problems facing children in a variety of distinct cultural contexts, but by implication this was also a document that restated and reaffirmed a particular conception of childhood, a conception sometimes at odds with children's experiences (Wyness 2006:94).

The implications of these demands have become clearer in recent years and have led to outcomes which may not have been foreseen by the children's rights movements and the institutions and states supporting these regimes of rationality. The 1924 Charter of Geneva and subsequent international children's rights documents such as the *United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child* (1989) consolidated the concept of the child as universal and 'other'. During the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s a new notion of children as active agents was added to these figurations. Although newer children's rights rationalities still believe in the duties of state to ensure that children are adequately looked after and educated, the newer rationalities also mean that children are no longer seen as being the property of the 'gardening' state or their families.

In the past the rulers of 'gardening' states could act as gardeners, argues Lee, because their state had clear boundaries which allowed the control of all that lay within. This boundedness of the state and the distinctiveness of the population formed a firm basis for 'the rhetoric of national progress that infused the preservation of children'. However, states Lee (2001:34), the link between childhood dependency and the state has been disrupted now that the dependency of states themselves has become clear

across the globe and the 'global child citizen' which has come into being is positioned in overlapping states of dependence and independence. These new regimes of rationality of the child have decoupled children's interests from reasons of state and the child is portrayed as a 'global citizen in the present' (Lee 2001:31-2).

Moving from a Standard Adulthood to a Flexible Being-Hood

The 'invention' of the child as 'other' was based on images of a 'standard adulthood' and was made more credible by social and economic contexts which included specific patterns in the organisation of people's working lives and in the organisation of their intimate relationships. There were good reasons for thinking of adulthood as a state of personal stability and completion until the 1970s, says Lee (2001:7), because once an adult had a stable job, a stable intimate relationship and children there would generally be very few significant changes in their life. Even when this level of stability was never reached or changes did occur 'stability still had the status of a norm or a guiding model of adult maturity'. Childhood was defined in relation to this stability and was seen in dominant discourses as 'a journey towards a clear and *knowable* destination'.

> Thus, children were often defined as whatever adults were *not*. Where adults were stable and mostly unchanging over time, children, as they grew up, were going through many changes. This made them, by nature, unstable and incomplete (Lee 2001:8).

The Fordist economic discourses prevalent between the end of the Second World War and the early 1970s were also based on certainty and little change. Goals surrounding it were high levels of employment, long-term political stability and economic growth. Economic arrangements between businesses, governments and employees were such that once one was in employment, one could reasonably expect that one's working conditions would remain stable (Lee 2001:12). Welfare systems in western countries (which had begun at the end of the 19th century) were extended as part of the stability and security needed for the 'Fordist' approach. Support systems for families in areas such as childcare, education, and health were established and a living wage for all families was instituted. Within the notion of a living wage was embedded an emphasis on the autonomous, responsible male 'breadwinner' who would care for his family (Bloch *et al.* 2003:11). Discourses of the 'normal' child and the 'typical family' were extended from previous regimes of rationality to guide the reasoning of state

welfare policies as well as practices of salvation and intervention. These rationalities assumed that individuals and families needed the protection of a centralised social state (Bloch *et al.* 2003:14).

Ideals of the welfare state focussed on building an imagined collective nation which would serve as a model of 'family' and good citizenship. Social benefits and entitlements were put in place to provide a reasonable standard of living for citizens (Bloch *et al.* 2003:11). New forms of 'charity' were created for populations who did not embody 'the norms of autonomy' embedded in 'the responsible male breadwinners'. However, by the end of the 1970s this widespread socioeconomic and cultural preference for stability came to an end in many parts of the western world as economic conditions and political discourses changed. Concepts of flexibility and 'flexible being-hood' became key governing discourses of neoliberalism. These concepts became incorporated in the construction of paid employment where people had to be prepared 'to adapt at any time or find oneself economically dead' (Lee 2001:14). Flexibility also became an important discourse in people's intimate life as concepts such as the 'normal family' were questioned as gender roles and expectations within families changed. New norms of male and female adulthood developed which questioned the stability of the intimate relationship and expected more flexibility between partners (Lee 2001:18).

Neoliberal economic and social welfare discourses encourage decentralisation of government and they promote 'responsible families' who are no longer dependent on the state (Bloch 2003:220). In this non-social state individuals and local communities are encouraged to take care of each other as also happened at the end of the 19th century. Philanthropic private volunteer services were again asked contribute to 'the salvation of individuals, family, and nations' (Bloch 2003:220). These governing discourses construct what appear as real or natural boundaries, says Bloch (2003:216), between the state and nongovernmental organisations in civil society including the family. This new way of governing again leads to new ways of thinking about the self as well as others (Rose 1996, 1999a) focussing 'on personal reflection, local action, flexibility, and choice' (Bloch *et al.* 2003:21). This regime of rationality includes notions of uncertainty, flexibility, instability and readiness for change which are in contrast to earlier notions of the welfare state. This way of reasoning has an image of equality and inclusivity which appears to give people the choice to be autonomous, responsible, independent and self-sufficient, but these discourses hide social exclusion as these

governmentalities focus on choices and decision making which may not be in the individual realm.

Regimes of Egalitarian Individualism and Sameness

Gullestad (1997) examines the double and ambiguous nature of the modern family as a site for the transmission of values, morality, new ideas and resistance, but also as instrumental to adapting individuals to productive life. Gullestad (1997:203) argues that there are some intriguing parallels between present changes in theories of management and work-life and changes from an emphasis on 'being of use' to an emphasis on 'being oneself' in the upbringing of children.

> In short, young people who are brought up to 'be themselves' seem in some ways to be in tune with the kinds of flexibility and creativity cherished by emerging production systems (Gullestad 1997:203).

The economic policies since the 1970s have emphasised deregulation and labour market flexibility. Economies have shifted from industrial to service sector employment and part-time employment and job insecurity have grown. Gullestad (1997:204) shows that there are a range of contradictions and ambiguities within contemporary Norway. There are tensions, she argues, between the fixity imposed by state regulations and the rapid fluid motion of capital, humans, commodities, ideas, technologies and images. More women have entered the labour market and there have been shifts in the gender composition of the working population. The assumption that the father/husband would be the main breadwinner for a family, while the mother/wife would look after the home, has to a significant degree disappeared. Discourses involving a separation of the domestic sphere from the market and the location of women, children and certain kinds of virtue in the home have therefore been challenged (see Chapters 3 and 4).

> Women are no longer equally suitable symbols of care and compassion. Children are no longer equally suitable symbols of certain kinds of innocence (Gullestad 1997:205).

Economic and familial changes have altered the texture of everyday life in families and changed the experience of children. Contemporary families have to engage with complex timetables in order to coordinate the activities of their different members, both adults and children (Prout 2005:23-4). Women in western societies struggling to manage both a job and family have argued for more flexibility and egalitarian power

structures at work and for more egalitarian relations at home. This can also be seen in New Zealand (see Chapter 4). These requests for more flexibility and equality has meant that 'egalitarian individualism' has been brought to the home, argues Gullestad (1997:203), using the discourse of 'equality as sameness'.

These regimes of egalitarian individualism and sameness have become part of regimes of childhood by the 1980s. Children were increasingly expected to be independent and equal in new ways in families as well as in other institutions such as schools. Gullestad's analysis of Norway shows how dilemmas in the transmission of values (which can also be seen in contemporary New Zealand (see Chapter 4) were brought about by a shift in expectations surrounding childhoods and families. Regimes of rationality based on 'obedience' shifted to regimes of 'influence' through complex negotiations and persuasions (see also Lareau 2003). Contemporary parents are expected to teach their children the ability to 'be oneself' and 'to develop oneself' (Gullestad 1997:216) rather than specific ideas and values.

> Parents do this through discourses of influence, seduction and guilt, teaching children to be attuned to indirect and subtle clues, to be part of a teamwork where the power-relations can be more or less hidden, to deal with and find one's own solutions in the midst of many conflicting messages, and to make use of a rich variety of cultural resources for creative purposes.

These new tendencies, says Gullestad (1997:216), resonate with the kinds of flexibility and creativity needed in the present stage of capitalism. Du Bois-Reymond, Sünker and Krüger (2001:3-4) also describe how contemporary European parents expect their children to be self-sufficient and able to voice their wishes early in their development. Parents today, they argue, communicate through the principle of negotiation rather than the principle of command which was used in earlier decades. Prout (2005:24) suggests that part of the appeal of the idea of children as active and socially participative can be traced to the obvious advantages that such children would have in the everyday management of household timetables. Discourses of 'influence' allow children to 'choose freely' but only within certain limits. This teaches children indirect, flexible and finely attuned ways of paying attention to other people and to context, ways that are entirely different from the rigid power hierarchies of 'obedience' which can be seen during the earlier decades.

These concepts of self in regard to children are part of the wider concepts of self which developed under neoliberalism during the latter part of the 20th century.

These discourses see the subject as being shaped through choices which has led to multiple selfhoods which are shaped by 'the dilemmas of existence, shaped by age, gender, class, race and much more' (Rose 1999a:263-4). Rose (1999a:270) argues that subjects have become increasingly part of repertoires of the self in terms of 'identities'. These 'identities' are relatively standardised forms of individuality and personality, 'each equipped with a set of habits, dispositions, tastes and aspirations' which teach the self how to conduct oneself (Rose 1999a:272). However, in this thesis I argue that these relatively standardised identities with their associated habitus (Bourdieu 1984) have become destabilised due to wide-ranging transformations in contemporary western societies. In this destabilised habitus it has become more difficult to know how to colonise the future or 'to predict what sort of person is best suited to that future' (Lee 2001:33). The construction of identities which teach subjects the 'conduct of conduct' has therefore become harder. Predicting which investments in the young will produce a reliable return (no matter how carefully planned) has therefore become fraught with uncertainty (Lee 2001:34).

Parenting for both men and women in the middle classes has become a site of competing discourses. Being a parent now is conceptualised and approached as requiring much considered thought and the weighing up of alternatives. Being a 'good enough parent' requires moving back and forth between different and often contradictory subject positions even within the context of a single day (Lupton and Barclay 1997:15). Parenthood is now understood as a project of shaping one's own life and that of the child as 'a rational, autonomous, responsible individual seeking to maximise one's potential and achievements as a worthy person' (Lupton and Barclay 1997:18).

Traditional notions around gender roles and expectations have, to some extent, dissolved, and have been replaced by a more androgynous approach (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995). This involves a greater need for couples to work out for themselves how their relationship will operate with an increased emphasis on negotiation, egalitarianism and communication in intimate relationships (Lupton and Barclay 1997:19). This intensification of discourse around intimacy and love in the marital and family context coincides with an increased concern about the vulnerability of the child, and the importance of parental actions in affecting children's moral, emotional, social, physical and cognitive development. Parenthood is now a prime site for the expression and investment of emotions. Being a parent has become an integral site of the

reproduction of modes of care of the self and a performative practice. The child's demeanour, appearance and achievements are strongly linked to parents' own subjectivity; 'their presentation of the self to others *qua* parent' (Lupton and Barclay 1997:20). Individuals in western societies have been constructed to experience and perceive relationships between children and their parents as highly important, emotionally charged and integral to the sense of self. It is no longer considered enough (as it was in earlier decades) to provide food, clothes, manners and education for your child (see Chapter 5, 6and 7 for New Zealand's narratives on this).

Blurring the Boundaries: Beinghood and Multiple Becomings

The emergence of studies of childhood during the 1980s and 1990s was a 'crystallizing moment' (Prout 2005:60). A new paradigm of childhood was set out (see for example Hendrick 1990, James and Prout 1990a)which included notions of childhood as a social construction dependent on variables such as class, gender or ethnicity. It called for comparative and cross-cultural analyses and the study of children in their own right. The concept of socialisation was criticised for assuming the universality of childhood, being too individualistic, rendering children as passive and setting up adulthood as the standard of rationality.

This new paradigm of childhood had its beginning in the middle of a bigger crisis of social theory as rapid economic and social changes showed a diversification and destabilisation of societies. This 'complex, messy disordering of social life' (Prout 2005:61) challenged the social sciences in general and childhood studies in particular. It presented a double task: the first, to create a space for childhood in the human sciences, the second to confront 'the complexity and ambiguity of childhood as a contemporary, destabilized phenomenon' (Prout 2005:62). However, as Prout argues, the expanding theoretical frameworks in childhood studies are only just beginning to address the second part of this task and although they have given new insights and opened new questions, the frameworks are inadequate to deal with the increasingly hybrid character of the contemporary world. Critiquing his own work and that of others, Prout (2005:67) suggests that the 'new' paradigm of the 1990s is increasingly troubled as these theoretical frameworks do not incorporate the ambiguous nature of contemporary childhood and its continuously shifting boundaries. Childhood should be seen as a variety of complex hybrids constituted from heterogeneous materials and emergent through time.

It is cultural, biological, social, individual, historical, technological, spatial, material, discursive ... and more (Prout 2005:144).

Adulthood in contemporary society can also be seen in this sense, says Prout, and the distinction between adulthood and childhood, between beings and becomings and between nature and culture should therefore not be taken for granted. An interdisciplinary study of childhood is needed, argues Prout, as a cross-disciplinary gaze is more likely to detect and correct naïve, taken-for-granted assumptions.

Children (as well as many 'others') have been excluded on the basis of a being/becoming distinction made in western societies. This distinction is based on nature/culture categories which allow 'others' to be seen as incomplete human becomings not worth hearing (Lee 2001:11). The new regimes of rationality of childhood developed in the 1990s therefore concentrated on critiquing the 'children as becoming' frameworks based on socialisation and development theories. Children as 'beings' are portrayed as independent and stable, able to self-regulate with abilities to handle 'freedom' and to make choices. But both the frameworks of children as 'becoming' and as 'being' have become inadequate and need to be questioned as these regimes of rationality see 'being' and 'becoming' as opposites; one full, complete, stable and independent, the other incomplete, unstable and dependent (Lee 2001:106). The new frameworks need to recognise that adults as well as children are incomplete in contemporary society with 'multiple and different states of becomings' (Lee 2001:106).

Wyness (2006:94) argues that most rationales still see childhood as an essential feature of culture based on biological and psychological inferiority and this makes it almost impossible for children to be taken seriously in their own terms. The retention of this well-established but narrowly conceived framework through which we view children, says Wyness, filters out other ways of thinking about children and childhood. Children who demonstrate competence outside the dominant rationales and practices of this childhood are often called precocious or overdeveloped and children who challenge the associated rules or laws are described as delinquent and troublesome. Those children who assume a different position within the generational hierarchy, says Wyness, are seen as a social and moral threat to society and declared deviant. The governance of these 'abnormal' childhoods has been part of the increasing governance of childhood (see Chapter 3 for an example of this in New Zealand). This increasing governance has also affected the governance and construction of 'normal' childhoods. However, as Wyness argues, there are some interesting changes taking place that

provide space and fresh opportunities for children to demonstrate their competence. The area of technology being one such space for children (see chapter 7 for a more in-depth discussion).

Children who do not fit in the dominant rationales of childhood are often described as the 'knowing child' (Wyness 2006:81-2). This 'knowing child' appears in many different figurations and is also referred to as the 'risky child' (Brownlie 2001) or the 'dangerous' or 'non-child' (Gittins 1998, Wyness 2006). The children involved in the James Bulger[2] case are an example of this as they went from being children to child murderers. 'Knowing', 'dangerous', 'risky' or 'non-children' are terms frequently used in descriptions of childhood in crisis. These figurations and 'demonisation of childhood (Wyness 2006:75) serve to reinforce a powerful set of ideas about where children fit within the social structure. This concept of the 'knowing' child should not be confused with ideas inherent in the concept of 'concerted cultivation' where increasing children's knowledge and skills is perceived to be necessary for children to reach their 'full potential'.

Another way of discussing childhood is through the concepts of children's 'needs' and children's 'interests' (Qvortrup 1994 as quoted in Wyness 2006:46). The assumptions within this rationale are that children's needs have to be met by adults in order for them to attain personhood. Comparisons are therefore often made between children 'in need' and those assumed to be enjoying a 'normal' childhood (Wyness 2006:46). Money, time and energy, as Woodhead (1997 as quoted in Wyness 2006:46) argues, is invested at national and global levels to bring these children 'in need' up to a 'normal' standard. The needs discourses, argues Wyness (2006:47), position adults as mediators between children and the rest of society. In political terms children's needs discourses therefore become a way through which different adult groups compete for resources and professional expansion using rationales such as childhood innocence and incompetence to back up claims. However, within these discourses children's sense of self, their commitments and expectations are still regulated by adults, says Wyness, and the idea of adults acting in the 'best interests' of the child positions the child as a separate category from 'non-child' groups in society. The idea of children's 'best interests' therefore still continues the dualities prevalent in the 'becoming'. Although the 'being' child paradigm with its associated 'children's rights' and 'children's needs' frameworks has brought children more into view, they are now seen as 'dependent beings' rather than 'dependent becomings' (Lee 2001). Childhood in these frameworks

remains a fixed rather than a variable category (Wyness 2006:48), as children and adults are still treated as a binary polarity. The categories of being/becoming or adult/child as well as the categories of sex/gender are not opposites, however, they can not be collapsed into each other either (Moore 1999:168). New sources of power, as Martin (1994:xvii) argues, have led to new models of the flexible body. Ong (1999:7) too shows that the notion of flexible citizenship has been developed as a result of changing political and economical conditions which induces subjects to respond with fluidity. Children are part of these new regimes of fluidity and flexible bodies. Childhood studies needs to debate and incorporate these new concepts into their theoretical frameworks.

Conclusion

The governing and construction of childhood changed rapidly towards the end of the 20th century when 'there developed a pervasive sense that the social order was fragmenting under the pressure of rapid economic, social and technological change (Prout 2005:7). The governmentalities, which became part of western societies from the 17th century onwards, were based on dualities such as the stable adult 'human beings' and child 'human becomings' division. However, in the last decades of the 20th and the first decade of the 21st century 'standard adulthood' can no longer be understood as a state of stable completion (Lee 2001:2). Childhood is affected by this destabilisation of the 'adult self' and the distinction between adulthood and childhood, established as a feature of 'modernity', has become more blurred (Prout 2005:7). This has led to a crisis in representations of childhood (Prout 2005:33). New figurations of childhood have eroded (but not completely dissolved) the boundary between childhood and adulthood and the oppositional dichotomies used for understanding childhood have become problematic. The boundary between childhood and adulthood, 'which modernity erected and kept in place for a substantial period of time, is beginning to blur, introducing all kinds of ambiguities and uncertainties' (Prout 2005:34). This is the soil, says Prout, from which anxiety grows and it demands new approaches to its understanding and analysis.

> In particular, childhood studies should examine the processes and
> materials that go into the making of childhood and, in a world of
> change, complexity and ambiguity, should be concerned to understand
> what is emerging as childhood's future.

In the following chapters of this thesis I examine the making of childhoods in New Zealand society showing the world of change, complexity and ambiguity which is part of the rationales and practices of childhood today while attempting to understand what is emerging as childhood's future.

Chapter 3: The Disciplining of New Zealand Society

> The nature of family life in contemporary New Zealand can be seen as
> an outcome of a whole range of complex cultural, social and economic
> processes. If we are to understand family and kinship relationships
> today, we need to know about our past (Toynbee 1995:9).

A history of childhood is a history of ideas, institutions and adult practices as
the role, status and experiences of children are always related to other sets of ideas and
concepts. Discourses of childhood emerged as part of a series of separate but related
discourses on individualism, secularism, nationalism, matrimony, the family and the
state and it is important to examine these constellations of adjacent and
contemporaneous networks of concepts and to explore how these are regulated and
systematised (Luke 1989:16-9). New patterns of governing associated with the notions
of welfare, care and education have emerged in New Zealand informed by particular
political and cultural circumstances and new discourses on the social constructions of
personhoods: parent's and children's personhoods are part of these constructions (Bloch
2003, Heywood 2001, Luke 1989, Rose 1999a, Scheper-Hughes and Sargent 1998).

New Zealanders have shown an increasing interest in history and history-
making over the past few decades and it is especially our social history, as Dalley and
Labrum (2000:1-2) point out, that has aroused the greatest interest, including my own.
'Social history', say Dalley and Labrum, traces the experience of ordinary people
frequently excluded from accounts of national politics or state activity, it describes the
ways New Zealanders have made sense of their lives and the events around them and it
incorporates ideas and theories 'emanating from cultural anthropology, literary theory,
semiotics or feminist theory'. Everything has a history which is socially and culturally
constructed and the concepts of knowledge and power and the use of discourses as
described by Foucault (see Chapter 1) are a very useful part of the examination of the
histories of childhood. Phillips (1992 as quoted in Dalley and Labrum 2000:3) asserts
that a social historical approach needs to trace the evolution of New Zealand culture to
evoke 'the history of a culture in all its richness – its smells, its tastes, its fashions, its
rituals, its words'. 'Richness' or 'thick description', as described by Phillips, has
always played a big part in the anthropological approach and is one of its greatest
strengths (Geertz 1973). This and the following historical chapter and the ethnographic

descriptions in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 will evoke some of that richness and detail and offer glimpses of how New Zealanders lived their lives and

> …the meaning they accorded to events around them, the stories they told and wrote, their relationship to the land and to each other, the way they dressed, and the things about which they pondered (Dalley and Labrum 2000:4).

However, as Fairburn argues (1989:9-11) details and 'richness' are interesting and useful, but 'the facts do not speak for themselves' and a historical approach needs to show 'how they mesh together' and 'to make sense they have to be interpreted' within a 'governing category' because

> … they are intelligible only if they are fitted into a pattern, related to some principle (Fairburn 1989:10).

At the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century new discourses associated with the social state surfaced (Donzelot 1979, Foucault 1965, 1976, 1977). The requirements of modern capitalist societies and changes in the structure of societies through urban and population growth meant that sovereign power was displaced by disciplinary power. The body was more regulated (Lowe 1995 quoted in Howson 2004:125) and the state became more concerned with the governing of populations and the management of life (biopower) and the knowledges, practices and norms (biopolitics) which developed to regulate the biopower of populations (Howson 2004:125-6). Foucault (1977) points out that there are discontinuities in the development of knowledges and exercises of power and these discontinuities can also be seen in the historical constructions of childhood in New Zealand. The new forms of power, discourses and knowledges which emerged during this period were located in specific institutions and spaces and were associated with the classification and monitoring of populations through schooling, health and welfare practices based on the systematic surveillance of populations by the state and the development of professionals and new disciplines.

The governmentalities which were embedded in the new welfare states which emerged at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century included notions of freedom, rationality, science and progress. As part of these governmentalities new ways of governing emerged and to be a 'normal' citizen of a modern democratic nation one had to behave in a certain way and make the right choices (Bloch 2003:208). This 'governing of the soul' (Rose 1999a) required different discourses and new

technologies. New forms of expertise and expert knowledges were developed to categorise, differentiate and normalise populations. These new strategies and ways to administer, reason and conduct oneself involved governing everyday moralities and truths which help the governing of the self. The notion of welfare was part of the policing and social contracts with populations became part of governance and enabled individuals to see themselves as autonomous participants (Bloch 2003:197).

Discourses related to children have a global similarity which suggests the emergence of similar ideas across different spaces (Bloch *et al.* 2003:3). Regimes of rationality and its associated practices surrounding childhood in New Zealand too have a global similarity as 'Britonnic networks' (Belich 2001:166-7) have enabled ideas to be transmitted to and from America, Australia, Britain and Canada in the past and continue to do so today. However, as O'Malley (1998:162-3) has pointed out for Australia, local regimes of rationality and practices often ignore certain aspects of travelling ideas and take on others. This was also the case in New Zealand and this has led to distinct local regimes of rationality and practices. In this chapter I will describe the history of those local regimes and the global influences until the mid 1960s.

Senka Božić-Vrbančić (2004:44) argues that one of the most difficult tasks of colonial society is to produce its subjects. New Zealand's governmentalities took a very dispersed form in the beginning of New Zealand's colonial period and it was not until the last decades of the 19th century that the state intervened to control and define the family and gender relations that are our inheritance today (Park 1991:28-9). The increasing 'gaze' and forms of self surveillance coincided with the establishment of New Zealand as a more settled colony and they survived in different forms until the last decades of the 20th century when a new set of discourses indicated the demise of the social state (Rose 1999a). These latter discourses signalled a rupture with the previous governing categories and patterns of regulation. They were associated with new patterns of globalisation, shifts in economic and political relations and new cultural systems of communication and knowledge (Beck 2000a, Bourdieu 1998, 1999, 2003, Gray 1999, Larner 2000, McAuley 2003, Smart 2003). These new patterns, practices and discourses are

> … associated with what some call a postmodern shift in cultural
> anxieties about self and others, increased insecurity and uncertainty
> about the future, and uncertainty about the promises of progress and
> rationality associated with the Enlightenment and modernity (Bloch
> 2003:197).

Different 'governing categories' and theoretical frameworks have been put forward to make sense of New Zealand society such as gender, ethnicity, region, class, religion and social organisation (see for example Hatch 1992, James and Saville-Smith 1989, Park 1991, Phillips 1996). A 'governmentality' framework based on the work of Foucault has been added to these categories in the past decades (see for example Marshall and Marshall 1997). In this chapter I will incorporate both the 'richness' of the social historical approach (Dalley and Labrum 2000) as well as 'governing categories' (Fairburn 1989) to show patterns and depth. I draw on Foucault's (1965, 1976, 1977, 1988, 1991) work to examine these new patterns of governmentalities (see Chapter 1 for a general discussion on this) in New Zealand and to link these local changes in power/knowledge relations, practices and discourses governing 'the child', 'childhood' and 'family' to global changes (Bloch 2003:195). I will also draw on O'Malley's (1998) notion of 'travelling' and 'indigenous governance' to examine ways in which discourses travelled to and were translated into the New Zealand context.

Colonial New Zealand

Fairburn (1989:235-40) argues that hierarchy, class conflict and oppressive status conformity were not big issues in colonial New Zealand, but that a minimal social organisation in the new colony created different problems. Wilkes (1990:73) shows that although New Zealand had a relative 'fluid nature' in the early stages of colonisation, it was never planned as an equal society,

> …but rather as a society which produced the inequalities of private property more successfully than Britain.

There is little doubt, argues Wilkes that New Zealand in the 19th century had an unequal class structure and divisions in terms of wealth and income. The class structure incorporated a planned division between owners and workers and it also disadvantaged women and Maori. New Zealand's myth of classlessness is based on the fluid nature of New Zealand society in the 19th century, which did offer newcomers a chance to escape and New Zealand was partly open compared to a more rigid class based Britain at the time.

> It was not until the twentieth century that class structures became more rigid (Wilkes 1990:73).

New immigrants did have the opportunity to buy land cheaply (through the alienation of Maori land) and Toynbee (1979 as quoted in Wilkes 1990:71) estimates that by 1882, almost half the male population owned some land and the small family farm had become a source of sustenance for many people. Fairburn (1989:11) suggests that this 'fluidity' was only part of New Zealand society until the late 19th century. Part of that 'fluidity' was derived from the fabric of interpersonal relationships and social organisation in colonial New Zealand which was of a particular type; community structures were weak, bondlessness was central to colonial life and the typical colonist was a socially independent individual. The 'looseness of the social ties' had a paradoxical effect, says Fairburn, as this 'atomisation' of the individual accounted for a lack of interpersonal ties which produced social problems such as loneliness, drunkenness and violence. However, the same lack of interpersonal ties also helped prevent social problems such as collective protest and group disorder and assisted in maintaining Pakeha New Zealand's remarkable political stability. This 'atomisation' also contributed

> … to the colonial's powerful attachment to family life, to the rapid
> growth of a coercive and beneficent state institution, and to the
> development of a deeply self-repressed personality (Fairburn 1989:12).

New Zealand's high level of prosperity and material wealth, and the expectations that these were achievable for all, forged strong petit-bourgeois tendencies. New Zealand was visualised as a land of plenty with economic and social opportunities for everyone. Fairburn (1989:240) argues that the discourses at the time stressed the natural abundance of the new country which allowed individuals to get on as long as they had the right personal qualities and that they could do so unaided by any organisation or collective except for the immediate family. However, the reality was quite different and

> … a great deal of 'getting on' was promoted and facilitated by the state
> – a large-scale organisation, a social contrivance (Fairburn 1989:241).

The growth of the state was stimulated by the expectations and the imagery of New Zealand as an ideal society, says Fairburn, and public demands for state assistance occurred when these expectations and ideals were not met. The state was expected to put constraints on what was perceived as 'frontier chaos' and the problems experienced in a rapidly expanding colony. Consequently during the 1850s to 1880s policing expanded at a rapid pace. Fairburn (1989:245-50) argues that anxieties about deviation

from the imported normative code was one way to contain 'frontier chaos' and helping to maintain that anxiety was a symbolic figure, 'the vagrant' who was seen as the colonial 'demon'. The 'moral panics' over vagrancy were very much part of New Zealand's way to discipline people. This created a climate of insecurity which left individuals open to the danger of being suspected or accused of being of this 'deviant type' and 'unruly' single men and the work crews to which they belonged became a key target of moral evangelism which was part of the 'Great Tightening' which took place between the 1880s and the 1920s (Belich 2001:121-5). During this time, says Belich, New Zealand society was 'harmonised' through processes of social, moral and racial integration.

New Zealand's frontier society and the presence of 'vagrants' made 'most colonists place more emphasis on the family and fret about the dangers of family breakdown' (Olsen 1999:48). Dominant discourses started to allocate central importance to the 'family' and the 'family man' despite the fact that many men could not live up to the subject position provided for them and a sizeable itinerant population of young single men remained part of the New Zealand landscape. The morals of these 'vagrant' men as well as the quality of women immigrants prompted many debates often tinged with hysteria and helped to embed a consensus about the central importance of the family to New Zealand society.

> Settled families came to represent the ideal society; footloose itinerant men and prostitutes its evil shadow (Olsen 1999:48).

This led to new public policies during the 1890s which targeted 'vagrants' and 'tramps' and they had as their aim to discipline unmarried itinerants and turn them into better citizens.

> …the complexity of policing systems was a manifestation of the state's extraordinary adaptation and sensitivity to the complexities of the colony's disorder (Fairburn 1989:244).

The taming of 'vagrants' was largely complete by the end of the 19th century and the focus of moral evangelism shifted to 'decent working men' (Belich 2001:178) as well as to the 'disciplining of motherhood' (Belich 2001:181-8). The concept of the 'family man' increasingly contested the concept of the 'itinerant man' and 'vagrant' and the presence of women was increasingly seen as a civilising factor in the reformation of the frontier and pioneering men (Phillips 1996:50-1).

Public/Private Spheres: Nurturing and the Ideal Family

> The first few decades of Pakeha contact were notable for their lack of
> Pakeha women and for the macho images of masculinity portrayed by
> the Pakeha sailors, whalers, sealers and adventurers who frequented
> these shores (Park 1991:26).

By the 1820s families of missionaries and administrators started to settle and
although few in number their influence was widespread. The new settlers were almost
entirely from Britain and Ireland and they brought with them ideas about social
difference that were current at the time, ideas about 'race', sex and class (Park 1991:27).
The settlement of New Zealand by Pakeha families occurred not only during a time of
economic changes and therefore of changing class structures, but also at a time when
new ideologies about families, children and gender took form as part of those economic
developments. The separate spheres of home and work created new discourses in
western countries that defined the two sexes as opposites and it constructed public and
private spheres in which a woman's role was defined as separate from that of a man.
Women's 'civilising' role was now seen as central to the cultural evolution of human
society and became an issue for public policy. It was not until the last decades of the
19th century that the state intervened to control and define the family (Park 1991:28).
These interventions were applied to both Maori and Pakeha and were both responses to
and part of changing gender relationships. These events in New Zealand related to the
local conditions but the changes were paralleled elsewhere and can be compared to
processes and ideologies in Britain, Australia, Canada and the United States.

However, these ideologies, events and processes also created a greater division
between the public and private world and the home came to be seen as an emotional
refuge from the economic relations of the marketplace.

> Over the home presided the 'good woman', the guardian of moral and
> spiritual values. The good order of the home was the product of the
> woman's valued housewifely skills. These attributes of the home and
> the woman who presided over it provided the basis of 'domestic
> feminism', the name given to the movement in which the redemptive
> power of the home was extended to society at large (Park 1991:29).

Discourses surrounding childhood changed too during this time and childhood
came to be defined as a natural stage in the human life cycle which required a nurturing
family to flourish (Olsen 1999:38). Because of these new ideas, says Olsen, a new ideal
family was imagined and these new concepts were the background to the European

colonisation of New Zealand (Olsen 1999:38). As they travelled to New Zealand these discourses were reworked. Gender had always been an important element of social and power relationships in the new colony and the local New Zealand discourses surrounding gender were quite different from other western countries (Olsen 1999:108). New Zealand society is based on what James and Saville-Smith (1989:6) call a 'gendered culture in which 'the structures of masculinity and femininity are central to the formation of society as a whole'. This gendered culture enables distinct New Zealand hierarchies of 'sex, race and class to be maintained' (James and Saville-Smith 1989:6).

Despite the existence of the many 'itinerant' single men in New Zealand, created by the working conditions of the colony which 'created a powerful and distinctive frontier male culture' (Phillips 1996:47), there was also a strong dominant discourse that this was a temporary condition which needed to be rectified as soon as possible. A more ordered society was seen to be needed to tame the 'wilderness' associated with the new frontier country and Wakefield, one of the important English 'founding fathers' of New Zealand, believed that a great excess of single young men made frontier societies pathological. He considered the nuclear family central to colonisation and saw young married couples who had not yet had any children as the ideal emigrants. New Zealand would be an 'immense nursery' where women's moral authority would transplant civilisation (Olsen 1999:40-1). Wakefield's ideas were reflected among the rest of New Zealand's colonising elites who, as Phillips (1996:47) points out 'nearly always like to see their role in history as bringing civilisation to a wilderness'. These discourses, stressing the importance of women and families to the colony, remained a recurring theme throughout the 19th century, says Olsen (1999:108), and this emphasis on the importance of women and families made New Zealand different from other colonies. This emphasis also meant that many immigrants attracted to New Zealand were from what Olsen (1999:41) calls the 'uneasy class' whose members believed that a society must be centred on the family. Men and women from the 'uneasy class' sought greater opportunities, a simpler life and they dreamed of a new country where they could achieve independence, abundance and freedom. They also hoped to escape

> … the separation of home and work and to maintain the family, under
> the husband-father's authority, as a productive economic enterprise
> (Olsen 1999:41).

Disciplining Society: 'Settled Society' and the 'Great Tightening'

> From the 1880s to the 1930s, a crusade for moral harmony tightened up
> New Zealand society like a giant spanner, and its after-effects kept
> things tight until the 1960s (Belich 2001:157).

The 1880s marked the start of rapid changes in the colonial family as the
middle classes grew and there was 'a desire to seize opportunities for upward mobility'
(McDonald 1978:46). Education received a growing emphasis, Pakeha fertility began
to fall, women began demanding greater equality and a small group of activists spelt out
a new vision of an alcohol-free society. As 'part of the new emphasis on purity, the
home was elevated into an article of religious faith and Mother was reinvented as its
guardian angel' (Olsen 1999:54). New standards of mothering and fathering were
articulated, says Olsen, and adults began governing 'the playground'. The state too
involved itself more and more in the protection of children and new public policies
began defining the standards of family life, although the Liberal reforms of the late 19th
century did not touch children's lives directly until 1900 and after (McDonald 1978:47).

The state's increasing role in the governing processes of the family and 'the
tightening' of New Zealand during this time of growing expectations of 'public order'
and a 'settled society' meant that stricter codes for public and private morality were put
in place, helped by an increasing professionalising of the police force and the medical
profession. These crusades for 'moral harmony' and 'the tightening' of New Zealand
society were very powerful, and had many excesses, but they also were incomplete,
contested, resisted and subverted. However, they can be credited with some great
achievements such as votes for women and better lives for children (Belich 2001:169).

Watson (1998:20) uses the term 'settled society' to highlight a reduction in the
rate of transience in European New Zealand and the increasing dominance of the white
Pakeha settler population from the 1880s to the 1930s. Of central importance in this
concept of a 'settled society' is the image of the settled, disciplined individual within a
nuclear family and a network of established community institutions. This 'settled
society' concept and the practices and technologies which followed were part of
'civilising' processes happening in many other western countries but which had a
distinct form in New Zealand. These 'civilising' processes and the disciplining of New
Zealand citizens focussed on reconditioning the individual's capacity for 'self-restraint.
However, when 'self-restrain' failed, social pressure was used to try to make people
conform (Belich 2001:157).

'Moral panics', as Rose (1999a:123) points outs, are discourses which surface when certain people or phenomena are seen as a threat to the social order and morality of a disciplined society and they become symbolic for a range of social anxieties. As we saw above, there were 'moral panics' about 'vagrants' and 'loose women' at the start of the new colony. These categories were expanded in the 20th century to include Chinese, socialists and youthful larrikins and in addition they included an

> … intense social obsessions with sexual impropriety, prostitution, masturbation, venereal disease and uncontrolled motherhood and childhood (Belich 2001:158).

Part of the discourses in New Zealand surrounding these 'moral panics' was the concept of 'moral harmony'. 'The crusade for moral harmony was a 'knot of many strands' (Belich 2001:159) and was an international notion which 'found particularly fertile ground in New Zealand' (Belich 2001:160). While travelling to New Zealand the discourses surrounding 'moral harmony' developed some stronger, thicker 'strands of the knot' than in other places and 'a world fad easily became a New Zealand fetish' (Belich 2001:169), something which occurred again in the 1980s with neoliberalism (see Chapter 4). Many of the attitudes growing during this time, says Watson (1998:20) remained dominant among decision-makers in New Zealand at least until the 1960s.

During the early 20th century there was an increasing willingness by the state to give funding to health and welfare services for children run by church and charitable groups as well as an increasing range of other services managed by the state itself. This willingness of the state to supply funding and services was the result of campaigns in New Zealand and overseas which argued for a fairer distribution of wealth across social and economic groups and greater responsibilities for governments in ensuring the well being of their citizens from 'cradle to grave'. This gradual increasing intervention in the private world of the family was based

> … upon the notion that the adult contribution of citizens, the society's *social capital*, was related directly to the degree of care given in childhood (McDonald 1978:47).

This was an ideological shift of revolutionary proportions, says McDonald (1978:47), as society now sought to control the end product of its investment in people.

> Childrearing was deemed to be too important to be left to the discretion of the family.

A certain degree of collective responsibility for societies' 'wrongs' were part of that ideological shift and it was the end of the right of the family to decide the quality of life of its children. New policies were put in place justified by this new ideological shift especially in the area of health, education and welfare. But despite the significant changes affecting child health and welfare 'the progression was neither smooth nor cumulative (McDonald 1978:47).

> However, the gains made in providing nurturing services for children up to 1930 were disrupted by two distinct periods of social upheaval which required re-appraisal of the investments being made in New Zealand's human capital. These were the 1930-36 Depression and World War Two (McDonald 1978:48).

The deepening depression during the 1930s exposed the inefficient systems of the state and led to new public expectations of what the state should provide for its citizens. Poverty became more public and it dismayed many people. New Zealand was still seen as the country where prosperity was possible for all.

> The reaction against widespread poverty in a supposed land of plenty brought a longing for a civilised community, for decency, comfort and security for all (McClure 1998:6).

The high unemployment rate and reduced government investments during the 1930s meant that many families could not support themselves or their children and found it hard to get support from other sources as all welfare, education and health services, which had been increasing over the past decades, dropped substantially and became overburdened.

New Zealand's first Labour government came to power in 1938 promising a wide range of social reform measures and better provision for individual security. The introduction of their social security system in the same year was a response to the hard years of the 1930s. The new government implemented many new policies as part of the social security scheme of which children and the aged were the main beneficiaries. Within these new policies 'human resources' were to be valued and state intervention, in the form of financial assistance to the disadvantaged, was considered essential (McDonald 1978:48). There was much rivalry for resources and government investment was selective and targeted to agreed political ends (May 1997:131). Real needs, such as those of Maori and solo parents, were often not met (McClure 1998:258). Children, their health, welfare and education, however, were part of the selective and

targeted government investments as these were areas which received wide support from politicians as well as other dominant groups in society.

The social security legislation enacted in 1938 defined the state's responsibility for meeting individual needs and while it did not alter the wide disparity in people's life chances, it provided protection against the worst that could happen. The legislation promoted a sense of shared rights and equal citizenship and was a landmark on the international scene. Many of the ideals surrounding the legislation dissolved when the cost of social security grew, but the 'pioneering social reform' was important to New Zealand's identity and a general consensus surrounding these ideals remained in place until the 1970s (see Chapter 4).

'Proper' Management of Motherhood and Childhood: Cults of Domesticity

> The pure home was divided from the sullied marketplace, and women's place was the home, leaving to men the public arenas. This model of gender relationships was seen as both natural and divinely ordained. In the extensive literature it is often referred to as 'the cult of domesticity' (Park 1991:29).

During the 1900s women's roles as 'the angel of the home' and the moral guardians of New Zealand society changed. A 'good' woman's place was still in the home and the redemptive and restorative function of women was not totally lost. However, 'experts' started challenging women's abilities as mothers and wives and women received the blame for the 'disorder' of society, including the loss of able-bodied men and healthy breeding women (Park 1991:29).

A growing militarism and the knowledge that the country needed able-bodied men and fit breeding women to produce them were part of the dominant discourses which developed in the early 20th century. New Zealand was part of an empire which felt increasingly threatened and linked with this was a belief that the Anglo -Saxon race was declining in physical and moral quality. When during World War I it was found that two-thirds of recruits did not make the fitness grade, fears of the deterioration of Pakeha surfaced. Another factor which contributed to the increasing need to manage the physical well being of mothers and their infants was a falling birth rate in western countries, including New Zealand. Ironically some of the contributing reasons for the declining birth rate were the growing significance of motherhood and the different

discourses surrounding childhood which emerged as part of the growing militarism and the cult of domesticity.

> …mothers had fewer children partly because they invested more time and energy in raising the children they had (Vosburgh 1978 as quoted in Phillips 1996:224).

People such as Dr Truby[3] King saw the declining birth rate as 'race suicide' especially since the declining birth rate was most pronounced among educated middle-class women (Phillips 1996:224). A renewed emphasis on women's and men's 'proper' roles was the result.

> This meant that boys had to develop virile qualities by playing rugby or training to be soldiers, and girls had to develop 'womanly qualities' (Gardner 1975 as quoted in Phillips 1996:224).

Powerful campaigns for a better and fitter population became part of the disciplining of New Zealand society and doctors' powers and expert knowledges greatly increased as breeding the 'superior baby' and even the 'superior race' became one of the aims of the public health service. New Zealand was not alone in this preoccupation as the growth of the Eugenic movement in other western countries shows. A new model of surveillance medicine was emerging during this time which was based on the observation of seemingly normal and healthy populations. It involved a remapping of the spaces of illness and attempted to bring everyone within its network of visibility through the problematisation of the normal. The child 'became the first target of the full deployment of the concept' (Armstrong 1995:395-6). The significance of the child was that it underwent growth and development, says Armstrong, and 'there was therefore a constant threat that proper stages might not be negotiated'. This justified close observation and monitoring of children's development through the establishment of a number of institutions such as antenatal care, baby and infant clinics, health camps[4] and nursery schools, as well as the constant monitoring of schoolchildren through school nurses and health inspections.

> In parallel with the intensive surveillance of the body of the infant during the early twentieth century, the new medical gaze also turned to focus on the unformed mind of the child. As with physical development, psychological growth was construed as inherently problematic, precariously normal (Armstrong 1995:396).

It was, however, the concern for the physical development of the child which was of the strongest influence in New Zealand in the early 20th century and the gaze on

the psychological development did not come to the foreground until after World War II. These new concerns for the politics of the body, particularly as it affected the early childhood years, was taken up by one of the more renowned campaigners in New Zealand. Truby King, the founder of the Plunket society, became one of New Zealand's most influential childhood experts.

> His prescriptions for rearing healthy infants reached into the core of most Pakeha families and were exported to Britain, Australia, and Canada (May 1997:133).

King's initial aim was to combat the ravages of early diarrhoea in infants due to poor feeding and his prescription of a clock-based feeding schedule and his advocacy that the breast is best were very effective. 'The Plunket baby' came to represent an approach to child rearing which was seen as an essential part of the survival of the nation. King's ideals included a new moral order 'that was peopled and protected by fit, Plunket-reared adults' (May 1997:140). King argued that order, regularity and discipline were the keys to both motherhood and childhood

> …and that the proper management of both was the key to success for children, races and empires (Belich 2001:163).

There can be no quarrel about the significance of domesticity in Pakeha women's lives throughout the last hundred years (Nolan 2000:15). This concept of 'domesticity', says Nolan (2000:12) refers to women's lives and work within the family and outside the workforce, as well as to a set of normalising ideological and cultural presuppositions. 'Domesticity' also refers to an ideal

> …in which the two spheres of domesticity and paid work are never completely separate–a useful rhetoric for the state to popularise at certain times in the national interest.

The glorification of the cults of motherhood and domesticity deepened during the depression years of the 1930s (Phillips 1996:227-8) as the worsening economic conditions and the financial pressures consolidated family life. Men had less money to spend outside the home and women's work was re-valued. Married women did not return to paid work to relieve the economic pressure caused by the Depression, but instead the ideals of 'good manager', 'making do' and 'making money last' took hold.

> Home-baking, knitting, darning – anything to avoid spending money on expensive manufactured goods – became increasingly significant (Phillips 1996:227).

Phillips (1996:221) discussing 'the family man' from the 1920s until the 1950s, demonstrates that the New Zealand Pakeha male too was put under pressure from dominant discourses to conform to a breadwinner role which fitted in with a national discourse on the sanctity of the ideal family which was increasingly seen as the cornerstone of New Zealand society.

> An ideal family was conceived to be a bourgeois family, a family with hearth and home, a private largely nuclear family sentimental in tone and ruled in maternal love by non-earning women (Phillips 1996:221).

Although this discourse had a long history in western societies, it took on a special significance in colonial New Zealand and this emphasis was extended during the next decades as 'the family' was cast in the role of the upholder of an ordered and settled civilised society. The 'cult of sentimental domesticity' which spread from England to New Zealand through books, magazines and new migrants offered a vision of the stable family serviced by a 'hard-working husband' and 'a moral and temperate mother' (Phillips 1996:223).

The notion of the 'good' woman as the 'angel' of the home which had been part of the middle-class ideology since the late 1800s now also became influential in certain sections of the working class and formed one basis of trade union argument for the family wage. The state did not invent the concepts of 'the cult of domesticity' or 'the male breadwinner', but it certainly supported them through its laws, social and economic policies and the education system (Nolan 2000:12-3). It promoted a high birth rate for many decades as well as institutionalising the 'male breadwinner' or 'family wage' and gender relations were 'shaped by the state's two-pronged emphasis on female domesticity and the male breadwinner' (Nolan 2000:13). However, the state lacked coherency and consistency in its policies, says Nolan, and although the domesticity and breadwinner discourses were, there were always divisions and disagreements about these discourses among state institutions, non-government institutions and society at large. This meant that while some policies promoted domesticity and the male breadwinner ideals, others facilitated women's independence and enhanced their wage earning capacities.

The Disciplining of the 'Wild Child': Disciplined Recreational Activities

New ideas and concepts about health, discipline and fitness gradually shifted from the 1890s until the1950s and the disciplining of children took on new forms when

team sports for boys and girls increased in importance. However, these ideas on disciplined recreational activities, which began to appear in Europe at the end of the 19th century, did not have their full effects in New Zealand until after World War I.

> During this period adults began to take a positive interest in children's play, and by so doing they influenced that play in terms of the adult culture (Sutton-Smith 1981:152).

The continuation of frontier recklessness in the early 20th century was seen as harming the healthy development of the young and there was considerable concern at the growth of 'larrikinism'. Disciplined recreational activities were seen as an antidote to this and also as a means to prepare for military conflict. Phillips (1980, 1996, 1999) claims that the forms of recreation fostered in New Zealand, such as rugby, served to condition New Zealand men to accept the disciplines of work, family and military service which capitalism and imperialism imposed on them. Phillips (1996) argues that rugby became the principal form of recreation for men as in the view of the imperial elite such a physical game preserved the vigour of colonial manhood as well as producing a disciplined subject.

The drive to make recreation more disciplined in the effort to produce disciplined, robust people, can also be seen in the increasing intervention of adults in children's free time (Sutton-Smith 1981). The 1877 Education Act meant that children's 'freedom' was increasingly curtailed and by World War I childhood had become increasingly segregated from adult life in economic, educational and recreational terms.

By the First World War the role of organised sports in 'building character' and good health in children was educational orthodoxy in New Zealand, and most schools were providing sporting facilities. Formal sports, especially rugby, cricket and netball, came to occupy much school leisure-time, with or without adult supervision. There was debate on the proper recreational activities for young women given that their role was to be the healthy mothers of the next generation. There were fears that too much exercise would harm the female physical and emotional reproductive capacity, but this gave way to a belief that exercise would enhance that capacity through improved health (Watson 1998:24).

The increasing number of children in schools meant that a universal school medical service could be mounted in 1912 and for the first time a significant number of the nation's youth were surveyed. The picture was not very encouraging and the poor

health of New Zealand's children led to many voluntary organisations taking the lead in improving their general health. This was increasingly followed by state intervention in this area too, especially through schools and health camps.

The themes of improved physical health and fitness and good moral health for the New Zealand population can also be seen in the health camps which became a significant part of New Zealand life in the 1920s. Tennant (1994:6) points out that the history of health camps is an important part of the history of childhood in New Zealand as:

> Health camps were created by adults for children and they embodied, at each stage of their development, a particular vision of childhood. It was hoped that children attending camp would absorb ideals of health and proper living, and return to home and school as proselytes for the habits they had learned during their stay (Tennant 1994:3-4).

Children's health camps were often presented as the symbol of the welfare state even though their existence could be seen as a failure to provide adequately for New Zealand's children. The history of health camps are part of a number of spaces and places which

> … illustrate the contested ground between lay organisers and professionals, between groups of professionals, between trained and untrained, over access to the school-aged child (Tennant 1994:6).

Health camps and schools were part of a series of institutions aimed at socialising New Zealand children into particular ways of living as the welfare of children gradually shifted during the 20th century from the private concern of families, and the occasional concern of philanthropy, into the public domain (May 1997:131).

1945 until 1960: 'The Child as a Psychological Being'

> The picture was of mass internal migration, rapid population growth, an escalation in the demands for services to family and child, some loss of extended family supports as may have existed, and a diffuse questioning of values in an unfamiliar social terrain (McDonald 1978:49).

The 1940s wartime crisis and the years of affluence which followed brought unexpected challenges to the social security system (McClure 1998:94). The ideals fractured as the cost of social security grew and the rivalry for resources brought divisions between old and young, Pakeha and Maori, and one and two -parent families

(McClure 1998:258). New priorities meant that attention switched from the aged to the potential of the young and the fitness of the nation. There was rapid economic change as the war inspired an economic boom in New Zealand which continued until the1960s and New Zealand experienced virtually full employment for more then twenty years. The standard of living rose as consumer goods became increasingly within the grasp of more New Zealanders. Social policies which supported families, such as family benefits and low-interest housing loans, all added to the prosperity many families experienced and when married women started to move into the workforce family income was boosted even more (Dalley 1998:171).

The political scene in New Zealand between 1949 and 1972 was dominated almost totally by the National Party governments and those governments

> … embodied and articulated the concern for normalcy, security,
> prosperity and comfort which pervaded New Zealand society
> throughout the 1950s and, to a somewhat lesser extent, the 1990s. After
> twenty years of depression and war there was a widespread desire
> among tired but hopeful New Zealanders that the next twenty years
> would be far less stressful (Gustafson 1996:267).

Welfare policies, which were set into motion in the 1930s, firmed up after the Second World War and private ills now became public causes with collective remedies (McDonald 1978:49). The Child Welfare Amendment Act 1948 led to many legislative and administrative changes in child welfare. Psychology became an increasing influence in the socialisation of children as psychologists started to provide the norms of childhood, family life and parenting and psychological images of 'normality' and 'abnormality' made families an even bigger part of the technologies of regulation (Rose 1999a:132). This surveillance of families and children, as Rose shows, increased in the latter decades of the 20th century and has led to a childhood in New Zealand society today which is more intensely regulated than at any other time. It has made childhood 'the most intensively governed sector of personal existence' as well as 'linked in thought and practice to the destiny of the nation and the responsibility of the state'.

> The modern child has become the focus of innumerable projects that
> purport to safeguard it from physical, sexual, or moral danger, to ensure
> its 'normal' development, to actively promote certain capacities of
> attributes such as intelligence, educability, and emotional stability
> (Rose 1999a:123).

This has led to new subjectivities for parents and children and an extension of surveillance and control over the family. The growth of welfare surveillance over the

families has arisen, argues Rose, from an alignment between the aspirations of professionals, political concerns of authorities and the social anxieties of the powerful. It is often linked to concerns and 'moral panics' in which certain persons or phenomena become symbolic for a range of social anxieties and are seen as a threat to the social order, morality and a disciplined society. This can also be seen in New Zealand when the focus on delinquency throughout the fifties turned attention even more to the family life of children and kindled interest in the rights of children and parents.

> Links between family structure and delinquency were looked for, and found, as families became seen as the environment in which both delinquency and neglect occurred (Dalley 1998:216).

Medical surveillance (Armstrong 1995:398-400) too expanded during these years as it left the institutions and penetrated into the wider population. There was an expansion of the techniques of monitoring through the 'deployment of explicit surveillance services such as screening and health promotion' and 'concerns with diet, exercise, sex, etc, became the vehicles for encouraging the community to survey itself'.

> The ultimate triumph of Surveillance Medicine would be its internalisation by all the population (Armstrong 1995:400).

Surveillance Medicine expanded even further in the next decades (Armstrong 1995:400-1) as new concepts of risk were developed (see Chapter 7). Risk factors open up spaces for 'future illness potential' and the discourses surrounding these risk factors are related to the notion of 'lifestyle' and have

> ...a mobile relationship with other risks, appearing and disappearing, aggregating and disaggregating, crossing spaces within and without the corporal body (Armstrong 1995:401).

The convergence of these influences changed family life and childrearing in New Zealand as there was a determination by the new parenting generation that life was going to be different for their children (McDonald 1978:49). Although many mothers still relied on Plunket for advice during these years, many parts of the Plunket's ideology were challenged,

> … as new and radically different ideas about how to bring up children started to percolate through society (Kedgley 1996:173).

Influenced by Freud, childrearing experts began to focus on the emotional rather than on the physical aspects of childrearing. They stressed that the mental and emotional development of children was important and the new, psychology focused,

experts challenged the strictness and discipline which Plunket had advocated for so long. The new childrearing theories found a receptive audience in the more relaxed and equalitarian post-war climate and the new experts, such as Dr Benjamin Spock, Dr Bevan-Brown and Dr. John Bowlby, advocated that warmth, intimacy, love and nurture were needed for children's 'normal' development (Kedgley 1996:173).

Bowlby's theory of 'maternal deprivation' stressed the importance of the mother-child relationship (Kedgley 1996:178) and he argued that children, who had been left orphaned or had been separated from their families during the Second World War, had emotional and developmental damage. From this he concluded that children who were separated from their mothers or mother substitutes would suffer irrevocable psychological damage. Bowlby's influence was great in New Zealand and continued well into the 1970s.

> Women's organisations such as Playcentre and Parent Centre
> championed his ideas. There was 'incontrovertible' evidence, Parent
> Centre maintained in its bulletins, that the major cause of delinquency
> and other personality disorders in adulthood was maternal deprivation
> in early childhood (Kedgley 1996:179).

Bowlby's ideas were incorporated into social policies as policy makers decided that their most important task was to maintain the mother-child relationship and they were influential in shaping childcare policies in New Zealand. Although early childhood education was still viewed positively for older preschool children, there was a shift away from the earlier view that nursery schools could provide expert care and attention to some children whose mothers may not be able to do this (May 1997:209). The dominant discourses stressed the notion that good preschool experience in the home and in planned environments was critical for the development of the child, but that preschool experiences such as Play centre or public kindergarten should only be part-time with the mother supplying most of the caring for children. Bowlby's ideas fitted well with the dominant discourses existing in New Zealand at the time which saw women as the homemakers and men as the breadwinners.

McDonald (1978:49) called these post war years the 'child as a psychological Being era' as underlying the developments centred on children were the notions that juvenile delinquency and adult orientations could only be understood in psychological terms and that this was directly related to the quality of childhood experiences. This led to a massive growth in the psychological industry as psychological services were

established in the Department of Education and guidance counsellors were established in schools.

A Homogenous New Zealand: The Arrival of the Dutch in New Zealand

> Despite their heritage of maritime trade, the Dutch did not have a tradition of migrating in great numbers (Schouten 1992:31).

The presence of Dutch nationals in New Zealand before the 1950s was small and only 128 Dutch people were resident in New Zealand at the end of the Second World War (Thomson 1967:152). This changed, however, after the War and in

> … the 17 years from the end of World War II to January 1963, over 400,000 people left the Netherlands in the biggest wave of emigration in that country's history (Thomson 1967:95).

Of those who immigrated to different countries all over the world a total of 25,176 arrived in New Zealand during the 1950s and early 1960s. They found a homogenous New Zealand with a booming economy and an abundance of food. Dutch immigrants saw New Zealand as a country of 'milk and honey' and full of opportunities. Many immigrants had survived the depression years of the 1930s and famine in a war torn Europe in the 1940s. They quote many reasons for leaving the Netherlands (Tap 1997, Thomson 1967). These reasons included

> …the desire to escape the past, their families, bad memories, poor prospects, fear, insecurity, overcrowding, poor housing, stultifying bureaucracy, strict social control, as well as frustration with the slow post-war recovery (Thomson 1967:95).

On the other side of the world New Zealand was looking for more labour power and immigrant groups to fill this need as its economy expanded. Until the early 1950s the New Zealand government had offered assistance to immigrants of British origin only and at

> … the end of World War II, New Zealand was one of the most ethnically homogenous of all European settler societies (Brooking and Rabel 1995:36).

This cultural uniformity was a source of pride to New Zealanders and there was no pressure to create a more multicultural society. The 'melting pot' ideology, which was part of government policy in America and other countries taking immigrants, also influenced New Zealand.

Total assimilation was encouraged in the belief that the world was 'one big melting pot' in which racial and ethnic differences would be submerged (Schouten 1992:169).

Dutch immigrants were perceived as ethnically close to the British and were seen as hardworking, diligent and adaptable. Any desire by the Dutch to hold on to their heritage or simply seek solace in one another's company was stymied by the government's settlement policy course, says Van Dongen (1992:74) and the Dutch were not allowed to cluster settle. The assimilation process within New Zealand was reinforced by warnings not to spoil opportunities for those immigrants who followed. Continuing the Dutch nationality was frowned upon and actively discouraged and many immigrants naturalised, i.e. became New Zealand citizens, as a matter of course. Another feature of Dutch 'assimilation' in New Zealand society was intermarriage with other ethnic groups (Thomson 1970:166). A study in 1968 by Thomson (1970:157) shows that the Dutch did spread out in a pattern closely resembling the total population.

The Dutch immigrants were active participants in this process of assimilation and as Schouten (1992:169) remarks,

> ...they were determined to be the 'perfect' migrants, merging into the local community and becoming indistinguishable within a generation.

Dutch immigrants were certainly not alone in doing this and as Brooking and Rabel point out (1995:41):

> Most of the postwar arrivals gathered together in cultural associations and maintained contact with their fellow nationals, but none of the groups – with the notable exception of the Pacific Islanders – who were bolstered by continuing arrivals – established an independent community life which stood apart from the British-dominated mainstream culture for several generations.

As individuals however, assert Brooking and Rabel (1995:41), many immigrants resisted assimilation, but they did not often manage to do this as groups. Non-British-Europeans, such as the Dutch, only

> ... transferred their cultures to their New Zealand-born children in haphazard ways which varied considerably from family to family, in part because of the necessarily high rates of marriage outside the immediate ethnic community.

Thomson (1970:163) writes that the Dutch were acceptable additions to New Zealand society during the 1950s and 1960s, although suspect because of their diligence

and less ready sense of humour. He argues that their lack of concentration spatially, economically and socially reduced their distinctiveness as an ethnic group and that it was only the name and accent of Dutch people which set them apart from the host population. However, Van Dongen (1992) as well as my own Master's research (Tap 1997) shows that the situation has become much more complex and that

> After a life time of hard work, many older migrants are now turning back to their past, reverting to their language and yearning for the emotional aspects of a culture they left behind. They look back to their years in Holland with a delectable nostalgia, and try to balance what they have gained with what they have irretrievably forfeited (Van Dongen 1992:88).

The 'Younger' Dutch Immigrants

Another group of Dutch immigrants appeared from the late 1960s onwards. The Dutch parents discussed as part of this thesis on childhood in New Zealand are mainly the children of this later group of Dutch immigrants or Dutch people who immigrated in the 1980s and 1990s. These Dutch immigrants are usually described as better off and better educated, although people trained in building, agriculture and horticulture still make up a large number (Schouten 1992:251). The later immigrants came to New Zealand in much smaller numbers and for different reasons, although in the early 1980s another small immigration wave occurred with over a 1000 new Dutch immigrants arriving both in 1981 and 1982, the author of this PhD being one of those. Leek (1990:4) writes:

> The migrants of the fifties left home mainly for socio-economic reasons; the smaller numbers since the mid-sixties were a very different breed and – I am now generalizing – were mostly driven away from western Europe by ideological and ecological motives.

Dutch people who arrived in the 1950s and 1960's see themselves as quite distinct from the later immigrants and the younger immigrants are seen as having more choice than they did.

> *Je kunt het niet meer vergelijken met onze immigratie en de tegenwoordige immigratie, die kunnen doen wat ze willen.* You can't compare it anymore with our immigration and the present day immigration, they can do what they want (Tap 1997).

Hun immigreren niet, ze gaan gewoon verhuizen. They do not
immigrate, they just shift ('verhuizen' can also be translate as moving
house) (Tap 1997).

The later group of Dutch immigrants are also more aware of the need to be
flexible in a changing global world and they moved to New Zealand looking for new
ways to live for themselves and their children. Dutch society has changed rapidly since
the war and an awareness of a Dutch identity and the ethnic identity of others living in
the Netherlands is very much part of their habitus. Easier access to the 'homeland' also
means that there is the possibility of returning to the Netherlands which was a less
accessible option for earlier immigrants. Leek (1990:8) points out that:

These pampered newcomers – as our early immigrants tend to regard
them – would have relatively little problems with assimilation: most of
them speak excellent English, and have the leisure and the means to
socialize with the locals; yet, because of their economic independence,
they may well prove to be less strongly motivated than their
predecessors to suppress their 'Dutchness'.

The younger immigrants in general do not join the Dutch clubs frequented by
the older generation, however my research confirms Schouten's (1992:252), statement
that after 'about 10 years they usually become more involved with other local Dutch
people'. I found in my research that having children was one of the main reasons this
happened as they wanted to share their Dutch heritage with their children and meeting
other Dutch people was one way to do this. It also allowed them to have a sense of
family/whanau. Not having family around for themselves and their children was
something parents mentioned frequently and they talked with regret and sadness about
this effect of the immigration process (see Chapter 6 for further discussion on this).

The End of The Golden Weather

…the decade began quietly enough and the first events to engage public
attention seemed to promise continuity in New Zealand life rather than
social change on an unprecedented scale (King 2003:449).

Comfort, security and a return to normality were all that most people wanted
during the 1950s and early 1960s, argues Dalley (2005a:308), and family was at the
heart of it with government policies supporting the 'nesting aspirations' of New
Zealanders. These aspirations were sustained by relatively prosperous economic
conditions after the Second World War. However, a variety of factors changed that

during the 1960s as wool prices collapsed, television appeared and New Zealand became involved in the war in Vietnam which was the first time New Zealand pursued a major foreign policy without bipartisan political support (King 2003:252-56). This started a seven year protest campaign supported by the newly developed media of television and

> …for the rest of the decade and into 1970s, there seemed to be a superabundance of causes that would bring people into the streets ... (King 2003:454).

This included protest against the visit of an American President and Vice-President, student protests, the installation of an Omega navigation beacon, the continuing sporting contacts with South Africa and the closure of parks to public use.

> As that decade began to merge with the 1970s, it seemed to some as if the maelstrom of change was gathering momentum rather than diminishing (King 2003:457).

In the early 1960's New Zealand was a tight society; it was homogenous, conformist, masculist, egalitarian and monocultural and subject to heavy formal and informal regulation (Belich 2001: 463), however, by the end of the 1960s this was changing and:

> If, by courtesy of some time machine, New Zealanders had been transposed from 1960 to the year 2000, or vice versa, they would have encountered a land transformed (Belich 2001:463).

In the next chapter I will examine how these transformations happened and the influences these shifts in New Zealand society had on the construction and governing of childhood.

Chapter 4: New Zealand A Land Transformed

> Between 1965 and 1984 the value system that had been largely
> accepted by most New Zealanders for over half a century came under
> challenge (Phillips 2005:337).

The changes in New Zealand society from 1965 onwards, which accelerated during the neoliberal reforms of the 1980s and 1990s, profoundly shaped the way childhood has come to be governed and constructed. This chapter discusses these historical changes which resulted in the destabilisation of what was considered a 'normal' New Zealand childhood and produced new rationales and practices of childhood which include notions of risk and crisis.

In retrospect, says Phillips (2005:338), 1965 was the end of the Golden Weather, but the picture of a homogenous and mono-cultural New Zealand was already under threat as a variety of clouds gathered which challenged this narrative. The dominant rationale and its associated practices were even more challenged during the 1970s when protest movements flourished and economic conditions changed. However, the biggest transformations came during the 1980s and 1990s when, as in most other countries where it was introduced, neo-liberalism led to new 'politics of insecurity' (Smart 2003). New Zealand became a land transformed and New Zealanders have struggled to find ways to cope with the effects of the changes and the resulting 'destabilized habitus' (Bourdieu 2000:160).

The Myth of 'Pavlova Paradise'

> New values began with a vision of changing society, but they often
> ended up with a cultivation of the self (Phillips 2005:349).

Bruce Mason's book *The End of the Golden Weather: A Voyage into a New Zealand Childhood (1970)* has become a symbol for the changes which occurred in New Zealand since the 1960s. However, as Dalley (2005a:329) points out, the view of New Zealand in the 1950s and 1960s as a 'pavlova paradise' needs revising. Although there were not as many challenges to the status quo as in later decades, the weather was not as golden as is often portrayed. The 1951 waterfront[5] strike is one example that all was not always well in 'pavlova paradise'. The strike, viewed as an attack from 'the enemy within' (Dalley 2005a:314), was squashed with force by the government of the

time using the threat of communism to get the support of most New Zealanders. The public used double standards, says Belich (2001:302) as farmers and businesses were allowed to use strategic positions to their own advantage while unions were not and it was 'as though New Zealand resented privilege most when it accrued to people like them'.

Moral panics surrounding communism were also partly to blame for the responses and the conflict of 1951. They were 'was the convulsive, broad-based defensive reflex of a threatened system' (Belich 2001:306). The watersiders, although not 'exactly innocent victims' were 'crushed like scapegoats – symbols of dimly but widely scented winds of change' (Belich 2001:307). The crisis of war, the insecurities of the Cold War world and global, cultural and economic changes meant that, like 'the vagrant' in the early years of New Zealand's colony, the water strikers became the 'enemy of the people' (Belich 2001:305). They were perceived as a threat to the carefully constructed order of the previous decades (see Chapter 3 on the great tightening and the disciplining of New Zealand society) and 'focussing on a scapegoat enabled the system to reassert itself' (Belich 2001:306). This threat of force and discourses of militant unionism kept industrial unrest at a minimum until the 1970s, helped by rising wages and a booming economy (Rudd 2001:243).

Most New Zealanders, but especially middle-income earners, benefited from the booming economy and government policies during this time, but for those not fitting in the 'typical' New Zealand family category times were a lot harder. Women, for example, either had to conform to the cult of domesticity or place themselves at the discretionary mercy of the Social Security Department (Rudd 2001:243). Some younger New Zealanders too did not fit within the categories mapped out for them and they started expressing themselves through clothes, music, art and literature. New distinctive groups emerged which were seen by many New Zealanders as rebellious and deviant. These groups came under intense scrutiny and the term 'juvenile delinquency' entered the discourses. Expert knowledges surrounding this topic expanded and a special government committee was established to look into the 'youth problem'. Working mothers, insufficient healthy leisure activities, the forwardness of young women and the effects of the imported American culture were blamed for causing the problems (Dalley 2005b:5). The time of the 'pavlova paradise' and the 'Golden Weather' was therefore not as homogenous and unchanging as is often portrayed in New Zealand narratives. However, these challenges to the status quo were relatively

small compared to the challenges and transformations which took place in the following decades.

The Changing Home Front

> The suburban family was at the heart of the traditional value system.
> Social order, it was believed, required people to live in detached houses
> with gardens in the suburbs, where they were safe from the dangers of
> the city and where mum could stay at home and look after the kids
> while dad earned the living (Phillips 2005:350).

The family wage, generous family benefits, restricted divorce rates, state housing and 'own your own home' schemes as well as the institution of six o'clock closing which 'kicked the blokes out of the pub to go back home' (Phillips 2005:350) were all state policies which supported the ideal of the 'normal' middle-class nuclear family. The 'triumph' of the Kiwi male stereotype in the 1950s and 1960s was possible due to the effectiveness of that ideal (Phillips 1996:263). The hard-living itinerant frontier man was no longer a real threat to settled society as most men were now securely locked into jobs and home. Although most New Zealand men did not know 'how to tough it out in the backblocks[6]', New Zealand's dominant masculine discourses portrayed a man as

> … a giant of the backblocks ─ strong, resilient and modest, a man who
> could hold his drink and enjoyed yarning with his mates, and who
> would eventually settle down as a loyal family man (Phillips 1996:267).

However, political and economic changes taking place in New Zealand society and the accompanying social changes increasingly challenged this stereotypical male image (however despite the challenges, it has remained popular in some figurations of masculinity today). By far the most significant changes which affected the dominant form of masculinity in New Zealand were the changes in gender relations as the position and roles of women changed spearheaded by the women's liberation movement (Sinclair 1996:368).

By the late 1960s discontent with family life and politics in western society generated critiques of many things previously deemed as 'normal' (May 2001:103). The orderly ideals of postwar society were no longer seen as sustainable, and the boundaries between normal and abnormal shifted. Issues such as the rights of ethnic

minorities, colonialism and women's liberation fuelled critiques of the power and powerlessness of individuals and groups in society.

> This social upheaval, with its creativity and chaos, was a far cry from earlier postwar conformity. The language of order and adjustment was overlaid by the language of 'rights' and 'liberation' (May 2001:103).

The seeds of the 'second wave' of feminism in New Zealand were sown in the1960s, but the first radical feminist groups emerged in Auckland and Wellington in the 1970s (Belich 2001:496). The feminists movement in New Zealand comprised of different strands, but mainly operated on four fronts, more equal treatment in and through politics, greater control over their own health and reproduction, ending endemic violence against women and trying to end gender discriminations in areas such as the workplace (Belich 2001:497). Legislation such as the *Matrimonial Property Act* of 1976, an act equalising welfare benefits in 1979 and equal pay legislation implemented between 1972 and 1978, were some of the results of that lobbying and protests.

The 'second wave' feminism highlighted the inequalities and difficulties faced by women (May 1997:155). Although motherhood was still idealised as a vocation, talk of suburban neurosis and surveys revealing the unhappiness of women started to challenge those ideals. Books such as Friedan's *The Female Mystique* and Greer's *The Female Eunuch* were sold in New Zealand. The new ideas of the women's movement started to have an effect on some sections of the population and triggered debates about gender roles.

> As the women's movement spread throughout New Zealand, ordinary women as well as feminists began to speak out about the toll the traditional model of motherhood took on women (Kedgley 1996:193).

During the 1960s the post-war baby boom stopped and Pakeha birth rates declined. The arrival of the contraceptive pill in 1962 helped this downward trend as it gave women relatively easy control over their fertility for the first time. The average number of Pakeha children continued to decline over the next three decades.

> The average size of families, which had peaked at four in 1961, declined rapidly to 2.5 per family by the end of the decade (Kedgley 1996:193).

The smaller number of children gave women the opportunity to get more involved in other areas of their lives. The labour market was booming, and although women were still expected to see motherhood as their 'true' vocation, more married

women were encouraged to enter the labour market at least on a part-time basis. Many working-class women had always been part of the workforce in New Zealand and the greatest increase in women joining the workforce from the 1960s onwards was in the middle classes (Belich 2001:502-3). The times were prosperous, but there was also an increase in domestic costs as new white ware and other luxuries came on the market. The number of married women with children joining the workforce has continued to grow steadily in the last decades of the 20th century.

> In 1951 only 9.7 percent of married women were in the full-time labour workforce. Forty years later the figure was 45.8 percent, and many more had some paid work (Phillips 1996:273).

This had an enormous impact on family life and gender relations. One of the results of this increase in paid employment for women, for example, was that the family income was no longer only the man's domain. This shifted power relations. Other domestic changes also occurred as men were forced through circumstances to do more childcare, cooking and other domestic chores. A 1993 survey indicated that 94% of women felt that they had more freedom then their mothers (Belich 2001:504) and this was also reflected in my research. However, the changes have come at a cost for both women and men as they try to combine the growing demands of the home front with the increasing demands of the paid workplace (see below and Chapter 5).

The Changing Demands in Early Childhood Education

There was a growing demand for childcare as women with preschool children entered the work force. However, the idea that children might suffer emotional damage remained part of the New Zealand discourse and childcare options remained scarce. There were around 2000 childcare places available at the beginning of the 1970s and governments (reflecting the rationales of the time) were reluctant to change this. Childcare and its effect on children was the most contentious issue during the 1974 Select Committee on Women's Rights[7], but the majority of submissions supported government subsidies for childcare. The subsequent Committee's recommendation was that more child centres needed to be established, however, the government never followed this through. Norman Kirk, the minister of Social Welfare at the time, did not see childcare as government's responsibility. The Department of Social Welfare confirmed this policy by stating that it only supported childcare when a family could not perform this function itself (Kedgley 1996:258-63).

Despite the government's reluctance to make more childcare space available, childcare grew. Women started to spend more time away from their children and many tasks (formerly associated with motherhood) were now delegated to other people (Kedgley 1996:279). This shift of responsibilities was slowly accepted by a greater part of New Zealand society and this was eventually reflected in government attitudes towards childcare. In the mid-1980's early childhood education became the focus of government's policies under Labour. The aim of the policies was to improve the quality of childcare and to make it more affordable. A reform which included equalising funding between different preschool services was announced and despite continued criticisms, childcare became a growth industry (Kedgley 1996:303).

When the National party returned to power in 1991, however, it started questioning the desirability of full-time day-care for infants again and reviewed policies on early childhood education. Childcare became, once again, an area of ideological conflict and subsidies for childcare were cut in the 1991 budget (Kedgley 1996:304). A new scheme was introduced called 'Parents as First Teachers'. Under this scheme trained educators and specialists visit the home and give parents advice about the physical, emotional and intellectual development of their child. However, despite the cuts in funding childcare attendance continued to grow (Kedgley 1996:305) and has continued to do so. The average duration of weekly attendance at early childhood centres for work-related reasons increased from 15 hours in 1996 to almost 20 hours in 2006 (Adema 2006:56). Government funding and subsidies for childcare have steadily increased since Labour returned to power in 1999 and is part of the *Working for Families* package announced in 2004 (see below).

The Unravelling of Traditional Certainties

During the 1970s the unravelling of traditional certainties became part of New Zealand society as 'a maelstrom of change gathered momentum' (King 2003:457) and powerful forces came to bloom which had 'coalesced from social and ideological seeds released in the late 1960's (King 2003:459). Maori, homosexual and women's movements increasingly challenged the status quo and other forces, such as expanding airline services, television, a growing publishing and music industry and the flourishing of New Zealand painting, also contributed to the changes taking place. New Zealanders were now regularly confronted with local perspectives which were different from their

own and shown a world outside New Zealand which did not conform all the time to their dominant worldviews.

Many commentators (see for example Kelsey 1998) link the big shifts and transformations of the past decades to the neoliberal market oriented restructuring of the 1980s and 1990s. However, argues Belich (2001:424), the context for the transformations which took place is the period between 1972 and 1984 as it was during this time that the 'colonial system' mounted its 'last stand'. This stand, led by Robert Muldoon was 'gallant' but unsuccessful. A process of unacknowledged 'decolonisation' took place in New Zealand during this time which was only hastened by the post 1984 governments, but they did not cause it as 'history has no single current' and 'its tides are usually too big for a few politicians to turn' (Belich 2001:394).

The 'decolonisation process' was a product of interacting sets of historical forces which were internal as well as external. Internally there was an increasing recognition of a less homogenous New Zealand as pressure by Maori activists and continuing immigration led to recognition of ethnic diversity in New Zealand. Maori activism took new forms which included protests on Waitangi Day (established as an official day of commemoration in 1961) and claims through the Waitangi tribunal established in 1975. Claims by Maori to the tribunal were numerous. The Treaty process and other Maori political action challenged the mono-cultural worldview of many Pakeha New Zealanders. Government policies began to focus on closing the gaps between Maori and Pakeha (Dalley and McLean 2005:283) and a heightened awareness of the Treaty of Waitangi in public consciousness led to a slow, but gradually stronger, commitment to biculturalism in Maori-Pakeha relations and to multiculturalism (King 2003:466-7).

The challenges to New Zealand's mono-cultural view came in other areas of society as well, as more immigrants entered the country from a variety of countries. As I described in Chapter 3, immigrants from The Netherlands arrived in relatively large numbers in the 1950s and 1960s. Immigrants from the Pacific Islands, who also arrived from the 1950s, onwards joined them. The Pacific migrants moved mainly to the big cities, especially Auckland, where work seemed abundant (Phillips 2005:338). The Asian population grew at a fast rate from 1987 onwards when new criteria in the immigration policy broke down New Zealand's 'traditional favouritism' towards European and Pacific Island migrants (Dalley and McLean 2005:384).

A variety of foods became more readily available due to increasing demands by the immigrant groups. Growing overseas travel and easier access to overseas goods as the airways opened also contributed. Restaurants started serving more 'exotic' foods, nightlife improved and local crafts, writing and painting and a fledgling indigenous film industry all led to a greater diversity of culture and appearance (King 2003:466). This greater recognition and acceptance of diversity was also something the older Dutch immigrants commented on and Dutch immigrants have made significant contributions to this change in New Zealand society, especially in the food industry (Schouten 1992, Tap 1997).

Property speculation increased during the 1970s and Auckland suburbs especially started to look wealthier and the 'ownership of yachts, cruisers and top-of-the market cars increased' (King 2003:466). Certain parts of horticulture too did really well due to the expanding airline services opening new lucrative markets overseas. A Muldoon-devised generous superannuation scheme also contributed to a picture of a prosperous New Zealand as it gave people over 60 spending power which they had not had before. Nevertheless, despite these outward signs of prosperity and the many positive changes which also took place, the tide was definitively turning. This changing tide meant that there was a general sense of uneasiness in society at large and a widespread mood for change as the traditional system unravelled (Belich 2001:395).

New Zealand's disconnection from Britain, the rise and fall of the American alliance[8], and reconnection with Australia all played a part in the turning tides as all 'these relationships had economic, cultural and security dimensions' (Belich 2001:426). The most important change, however, was the disconnection from Britain 'when Mother Britain ran off and joined the Franco-German commune known as the European Economic Community' (Belich 2001:426) in 1973 and a revolution in terms of trade took place; New Zealand exports to Britain dropped from 50 to seven percent.

> Yet this transformation, unlike that symbolised by 1984, has had a
> curiously muted impact on both scholarly analysis and public discourse
> (Belich 2001:426).

Turning Tides and Muldoon's Last Stand

The economy, which was protected by an array of regulations, was increasingly challenged by New Zealand's integration into a global economy and New Zealand's loss of privileged access to the British export market. The resulting balance

of payments problems all contributed to growing complications in New Zealand's economy. A subsequent downturn in economic growth led to rising unemployment, high inflation, declining profitability and a cessation of real wage growth (Rudd 2001:246). However, although New Zealand's economy struggled during the 1970s this was largely ignored by a large section of New Zealand society, including the government.

The ignoring of growing economic problems was partly due to the man who led the economy for most of the years between 1967 and 1984 (Phillips 2005:359). Robert Muldoon, who was New Zealand's Minister of Finance for nearly 14 years, believed intensely in the welfare system and in a central economic role for the government. Muldoon was enormously popular and he made good use of the newly developing media of television and talkback radio. He presented himself as the spokesman for 'the ordinary bloke, the decent New Zealander, the representative of traditional Kiwi values' (Phillips 2005:360). He strongly disliked the 'protest generation', however, and

> … raved against trendy lefties, Maori radicals, pommie trade unionists, Pacific Island overstayers. His slogan in 1975 was 'New Zealand – the Way You Want It' (Phillips 2005:360).

Muldoon, who briefly lost the reign of government to Labour from 1972 until 1975, tried to tidy up New Zealand's economic problems after the first oil crisis in 1974 by increasing government charges and freezing the spending in the public services. Muldoon, like the Labour government of 1972-75, believed that New Zealand's economic problems were only temporary and could be solved by borrowing. His other solution to the problems was to give more assistance to already heavily subsidised traditional National supporters such as manufacturers and farmers. But he was less friendly inclined towards others, as we saw above, and this included the unions. Under his reign, labour relations in New Zealand were increasingly strained especially when economic conditions worsened and industrial action increased. However, allowing free wage-bargaining was not Muldoon's style and he imposed a year-long wage freeze and brought back the Arbitration Court (Phillips 2005:360).

Resistance against Muldoon's way of governing New Zealand grew by the end of the 1970s. This resistance did not only come from the left in New Zealand, but voices of opposition also appeared in interest groups such as Federated Farmers, the Manufacturing Federation and included people within his own party. Some of these

voices of opposition started pushing for more 'market economics'. Muldoon's National party became more and more divided and in 1983 property magnate Bob Jones started a new party which attracted many traditional National supporters, 'especially younger people working in business, finance and farming' (Phillips 2005:363).

Neoliberal ideas also came increasingly from Treasury where a 'think tank' of younger men started to advocate the superiority of the market in determining economic choices. Muldoon did not take up these suggestions by Treasury, but the new generation of Labour politicians which surrounded Labour newly elected leader David Lange, were much more receptive to the ideas of a deregulated economy. This group of politicians became the fourth Labour government in 1984.

The 'Fundamentally Challenged' Welfare State

> During the 1970s and 1980s the New Zealand welfare state was 'fundamentally challenged'. The traditional Keynesian welfare system, which had persisted for nearly three decades after World War II, faced pressures and demands from a variety of sources (Rudd 2003:432).

New Zealand social policies have always been very ad hoc and not driven by any single ideology or political agenda as both the National and the Labour party (New Zealand's two major parties) accepted the principles of the 1930s welfare state (Rice 1996:484). There was also a broad based consensus among people in New Zealand for a collective responsibility 'in order to protect the unfortunate and safeguard the nation's children' (Rice 1996:483). This general support for a 'cradle to the grave' welfare state remained in place until the early 1980s.

The 1970s generally witnessed an improvement in welfare services. The 'ethnic revolution' and the rise of Pakeha groups 'notably women, graduates and youths, to a new political and social significance' (Belich 2001:425) contributed to changes in social security policies. A Royal Commission of Inquiry on Social Security (established in the early 1970s) reported back in 1972 (Cheyne *et al.* 1997:39). As a result of the inquiry the *Domestic Purposes Benefit* was introduced in 1973 as well as the *Accident Compensation Scheme* (1973) and the *Disability Allowance* followed in 1975. A commitment to full employment also continued and progressive taxation remained in place. Social welfare spending grew significantly during this period (Rudd 2001:246).

Changing family structures compounded welfare spending and led to an even greater demand on welfare services. Declining marriage and increasing divorce rates led to a significant rise in one-parent families. The delivery of social welfare services, which had been based for decades on the regime of rationality of the male-dominated nuclear family and the male bread winner, became fundamentally challenged (Rudd 2003:433).

Many New Zealanders now no longer regarded the welfare state as a 'blessing', but saw it as a 'curse' and a 'threat to a nation's economic, social and moral vitality' (Boston 1999:4). This decline in general support for the welfare state in New Zealand (as happened in many other western countries) was compounded by and reflected in a significant shift in the intellectual climate and the growing ascendancy of market liberalism and neo-conservatism (Boston 1999:3). The government's role in providing welfare services came up for debate as neoliberal discourses of community, family and individual responsibility for people's wellbeing became more dominant. Criticism of 'welfare dependency' grew and new philosophies of 'user-pays' called into question the continued viability of extensive welfare support (Dalley 1998:261).

New Zealand's 'Neo-liberal Experiment'

> After 1984 the baby boomers who really shook up the pavlova paradise
> did so from the beehive (Dalley and McLean 2005:365).

If the 1960s and the 1970s were the decades in which New Zealand turned away from traditional allegiances and patterns, then the 1980s was the time when these new directions were confirmed (King 2003:488). These new confirmed directions have had a profound effect on the financial and psychological security of many New Zealanders (Rudd 2001:248).

During the 1980s New Zealand (led by the Fourth Labour Government) underwent drastic economic reforms based on neoliberal ideas which shifted the country away from a welfare state towards a more market driven economy. The intense reforms were triggered after Muldoon called a snap election in June 1984. The snap election enabled Labour to win victory without Roger Douglas, Labour's Finance Minister, ever having to spell out Labour's economic policies in detail during its election campaign. Few people therefore were informed about the neoliberal reforms Labour had planned, which were very unpalatable to many traditional Labour voters (Sinclair 1996:362).

National's policies under the leadership of Prime Minister Muldoon had led to a staggering overseas debt of $8226 million (Sinclair 1996:359-60). When Labour came into power in 1984, with David Lange as its Prime Minister, it faced an economy which was much worse than expected. A neoliberal approach, often referred to as Rogernomics after Labour's Finance Minister Roger Douglas, was seen as the answer to the problems. Douglas's approach was informed by discussions with Treasury as well by discussions with his own 'think tank'; a discussion group of academic and other friends (Sinclair 1996:362). The Fourth Labour Government consulted with different groups in New Zealand society too when it was first elected in 1984. An Economic Summit Conference was held, but its input then largely ignored. Social Policy was another area of consultation and Sir Ivor Richardson was appointed in 1986 to head the Royal Commission on Social Policy. The Commission sought input from a wide range of groups and individuals and the result of this process, *The April Report* (1988), was published in many volumes. The *April Report*, suggest Dalley and McLean (2005:368), was an attempt to hold onto the principle of belonging and participating. It was 'a last ditch attempt' to rescue the gains made in the 1970s, but the pathway Douglas and Treasury had in mind was a lot more austere. Their reforms did not have space for the sentiments in the *Report* and the result of this consultation too was largely ignored.

Rapid changes transformed New Zealand between 1984 and 1988 under the Lange/Douglas leadership, as the financial and labour markets were deregulated, the tax system was reformed and agricultural and consumer subsidies as well as export and import incentives and licenses were phased out. One of the most regulated economies in the world was swiftly becoming one of the most deregulated (Sinclair 1996:363). The reforms to get the 'economic fundamentals' right included taking a sharp knife to the core public sector. State interventions in many areas were reduced and state services, such as the Shipping Corporation, Railways, Broadcasting and Air New Zealand, were turned into commercial state cooperations. Many of these state services had combined regulatory roles with trading activities. These trading activities were first turned into state owned enterprises (SOE's) and then privatised. Staff rates were cut dramatically when the new state owned enterprises came into being.

> Downsizing, restructuring, rationalising, rightsizing, it all amounted to
> laying people off. Thousands upon thousands of them (Dalley and
> McLean 2005:371).

When local government reforms followed with similar trajectories lay-off figures increased. In 1989 almost half of the waterfront jobs went and the numbers increased as the new state owned enterprises became streamlined in later years.

> The restructuring costs fell heaviest on the unskilled and the semi-skilled, traditionally the first to be laid off when the going got tough (Dalley and McLean 2005:372)

Dalley and McLean (2005:377) state that, although a broader emphasis on individual choice and consumption 'ringbarked' the idea of universal rights to welfare, the 'revolution' of Labour's neoliberal reforms did not have a great effect on social policy. The divisions within the Labour party and its constituency, they say, prevented Rogernomics from drastically reforming social services. Rudd (2001:247) argues, however, that looking at the record of the Fourth Labour Government may give the impression that the most radical changes were in the sphere of economic policy, but that the abandonment of full employment policy, for example, and the shift towards a more regressive taxation system, made individuals, their families and their local community responsible for their own well-being (Rudd 2001:252). This new welfare rationale set the scene for the social policy changes put in place by National. The major restructuring of the Department of Social Welfare which started in 1984 and culminated in the *Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act* 1989 also had a major effect in the social policy area (see below).

Rural and small town New Zealand suffered the most as industries, such as freezing works, forestry and mining companies shut down too. Small businesses followed when people moved away from the rural areas to the cities in search for work. The declining income of farmers, who lost about a third of their income between 1984 and 1987 as a consequence of Douglas' removal of state subsidies and benefits to their sector, only made the situation worse. As a result 'traditional New Zealand society was being shaken to its foundations' (Sinclair 1996:366). Other sectors of New Zealand society, however, boomed during this time as consumer goods, property, financial services and investment companies expanded. It was especially the share market, however, which tripled in value between 1984 and 1987 (Belich 2001:406) which gave New Zealand the appearance of prosperity. It was due to the appearance of growth in these sectors that Labour was re-elected in 1987 with an increase in votes. Although Labour had lost support in its traditional voter's base, the working class, it had gained support in the middle classes as the economy seemed to boom.

The Lange-Douglas government was balancing uneasily between its traditional voter base, the middle classes, 'issues-driven environmental peaceniks and the economic liberals who favoured Rogernomics'(Dalley and McLean 2005:374), but this balancing act came to an end not long after the 1987 election.

> It took just two things – an economic collapse, and a falling-out between Lange and Douglas to derail everything (Dalley and McLean 2005:374).

The first derailment happened two months after the election when 'the nascent new age' (Belich 2001:406) of Rogernomics began to unravel as the world market collapsed. In New Zealand alone shares fell by $10 billion in a single day. New Zealand share trading had boomed during the preceding years and an estimated 900,000 New Zealanders (about 40 percent of the population) now owned shares. The bust therefore did not only affect a few speculators but hit people all over New Zealand and it 'popped the speculative bubble that had dazed the middle class' (Dalley and McLean 2005:374). The share market crash exposed the middle classes, who until that time had been protected from the pain of the neoliberal reforms, to the 'economy of the market' and:

> By the late 1980s urban, white-collar workers also found themselves on the scrapheap as government agencies restructured and as businesses closed, consolidated, retrenched or exported their top jobs to Sydney and Melbourne (Dalley and McLean 2005:375).

The second derailment was a growing resentment within the Labour Party itself over the neoliberal policies put in place by Douglas and his 'think tank'. By the end of 1987 the divisions within the Labour Cabinet and within the party over the speed of the changes and the continued sale of state assets came to a head. Prime Minister Lange, who was already hesitant about the social impact of the reforms, at first reigned Douglas in and then replaced him as Finance Minister in 1988. But the Labour Cabinet, who wanted the best of both worlds (Belich 2001:408), invited Douglas and his acolyte Richard Prebble back into cabinet in 1989. Lange resigned and a Labour party in disarray went through two Prime Ministers (Geoffrey Palmer and Mike Moore) before losing the general election of 1990 to the National party.

New Discourses on Children's Rights in New Zealand

Growing legal advocacy for children, such as the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (see Chapter 2) all led to a new awareness of the child as an individual in New Zealand society. This recognition brought a questioning of the basis of the legal status of children, their place in family relationships, and their treatment in residential institutions and the child welfare system as a whole (Dalley 1998:262). The new discourses about children and their rights as individuals developed as part of other 'rights' discourses appearing in the 1970s such as feminist and Maori rights movements. Neoliberal discourses of the self too contributed to these ideas (see Chapter 2). These new rationales of children as active agents and socially participative, as Gullestad (1997:216) argues, resonate with the kinds of flexibility and creativity needed in the present stage of capitalism.

The major restructuring of the Department of Social Welfare which started in 1984 also fits these new rationales of selfhood. A legislative review process, which began in 1984 culminated in the *Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act* 1989. The *Act* transformed children's welfare services. Its principles were to promote the well-being of children, young persons and their families in culturally appropriate ways. Its aim was to enable parents and family groups to take charge of their child protection roles.

> The Act asserted the primacy of families, Whanau and family groups in having and taking responsibility for the welfare of their members (Dalley 1998:264).

Discourses such as 'empowering' families and communities were part of the *Act* and it encouraged them to take responsibility for their children's well-being. The *Act* distinguished between issues of welfare and those of justice:

> … or between those of care and protection and those of youth offending, as it differentiated between children as victims and children as threats (Dalley 1998:265).

The 'empowerment' of the family as the prime caregiver led to new rationales which saw social workers and other professional surrounding children and their families as playing the 'role of assistant, facilitator or coordinator'. Children's rights as individuals within families were also emphasised within the *Act*.

> The legislation represented the triumph and realisation of the ideal of tending to children's welfare within family settings (Dalley 1998:265).

Family-based decision-making, in the form of family group conferences, became the dominant way of working. Cultural practices were assessed and departments developed a greater awareness of the most appropriate ways of working with different families. A 1992 ministerial review identified some problems with the philosophy and the practices of the *Act*, but argues Dalley (1998:266),

> … the legislation captured the spirit of the fundamental rethinking of children's welfare services that had occurred across the Department and in the wider community during the 1980s.

Dalley (1998:268) suggests that the 1989 *Act* embodied the wider thrust of government policies through the 1980s as the state withdrew from social services and started emphasising family and community empowerment and responsibility. The imagery of social policies was partly based on 'an imagined time', says Dalley (1998:268), in which families had taken full responsibility for their members. These new 'empowerment' policies, the rights-based language and policies and the embracing of diverse cultural practices grew out of the quests for equality and fairness, but they also coalesced with New Right ideologies of individual responsibility and the rolling back of the state (Dalley 1998:268).

'Beyond Dependency': Increasing the Burdens for Families

The political change in leadership from Labour to National did not greatly affect the direction of the reforms. The Fourth National Government led by Jim Bolger:

> … spent 1990-93 implementing its predecessor's policy even more enthusiastically – and expanded it from economics to industrial relations, social welfare and political reforms (Belich 2001:408).

Its biggest cuts were in welfare spending with the aim to shift people 'out of welfare into work' (Rudd 2001:251). The measures to redesign the welfare state were introduced by finance minister Ruth Richardson, whose 'mother of all budgets' in 1991, announced $1.275 billion worth of social welfare cuts (Dalley and McLean 2005:376). It also recreated the typical family or 'core family unit' as a basis for assessing welfare (Rudd 2001:251). The housing policy which limited the involvement of the state (which was put in place by Labour) continued and the Housing Corporation was directed to charge market rents for the remaining stock of state housing (Rudd 2001:251). National also cut superannuation, contrary to its election promises, and activist groups

such as Grey Power and other advocacy groups representing older people grew in popularity.

The National government had campaigned on a slogan of a 'Decent Society' in its 1990 election campaign and now argued that its benefit would restore 'integrity' to New Zealand society. One of its aims was to provide incentives to beneficiaries to become self-reliant through employment.

> The focus of the benefit system shifted from a degree of universal provision, based on citizenship rights, to the targeting of 'vulnerable groups' (Stephens 1999:238).

Outcomes such as 'enhanced' and 'more appropriate choices' were part of the discourses and the National government claimed that fiscal savings as a result of the cuts would restore more economic choices including new employment opportunities and cuts in interest rates.

The fiscal stringency led to an increase in the incidence and severity of poverty which forced many people to supplement their finances with food parcels from voluntary organisations (Stephens 1999:238). This placed an increasing burden on communities and families and by the mid 1990s there was growing concern about the effects of the changes on children and other minority groups. The provision for social services such as the care for children, the sick and the elderly, was mainly taken up by women who were the most likely to be placed in the position of providing such services, unpaid and unrecognised. The shift of part responsibility for welfare provision to women (or the 'core family unit', as the Minister of Social Welfare called it) was only one strand of an attempt to 'privatise' welfare in New Zealand during the 1990s (Rudd 2001:252).

The economic growth anticipated by National after its reforms took a while to come to fruition, but when economic growth did occur in 1993 this did not result in a corresponding fall in the number of people on the unemployment benefit. Other income-tested benefits also continued to grow and a second phase of restructuring the welfare state was announced by National in 1997 (Stephens 1999:238-9). It began with the strategy of 'from welfare to well-being' and was followed by the 'Beyond Dependency' conference in March 1997.

> The objective was to transform benefit dependency into workforce contribution, with a code of social responsibility and work-for-the dole schemes also on the policy agenda (Stephens 1999:238).

It was devised to encourage families to become self-reliant and contribute to society. Traditionally, asserts Stephens (1999:239), being on the benefit was viewed as a result of adverse economic or labour conditions, but the new rationale was that individuals were on a benefit due to an individual lack of motivation. The *Towards a Code of Social and Family Responsibility* released in 1998 was part of the attempts to solve the problem of 'welfare state dependency' and to encourage self-motivation and self-reliance in those individuals lacking those skills. Children as sites of investments and their families as their 'gardeners' (see Chapter 2) were a good place to start those attempts. Larner (2000:246) suggests that contemporary social policy reforms, such as *The Code,* are linked to a new specification of the object of governance, which encourages individuals to see themselves as active subjects responsible for their own well-being. The mobilisation of particular identities, such as parent, mother, father and child is a technique of governance.

> The object of these techniques is to encourage us to exercise our agency and transform our own status and manage our own risks (Larner 2000:246).

The Third Way: Changing Policies Regarding Children and Families?

In 1999 the Labour Party returned to power under the leadership of Helen Clark and has remained in government until this day in coalition with a variety of minority parties. The new Labour government was determined to distance itself from the Labour government of 1984-1990 and from the previous National Government. They acknowledged that New Zealanders were weary of restructuring and they developed what is called a 'Third Way' of governing between traditional Keynesian and neoliberalism (Rudd 2003:432). Various policies highlighted this 'brave new world under an older-style Labour', say Dalley and McLean (2005:379), as it rolled back many of the changes in the health sector and reversed National's decision to 'freeze' superannuation. Funding for science and research and industrial developments were increased and the selling of assets was stopped. Social services, education and health received some injections of funds as the economy starting growing and unemployment dropped. Paid parental leave was introduced in 2002 and government's relations with unions improved as a new *Employment Relations Act* was put in place allowing unions access to the workplace and collective bargaining. 'Voters were convinced enough to give Labour another chance in 2002' (Dalley and McLean 2005:379). However, as

Dalley and McLean (2005:381) point out, Labour did not seriously challenge the neoliberal reforms put in place during the 1980s and 1990s. Although our flirtation with being the 'laboratory of the world' ended, the principles of a more open economy started under Rogernomics endured.

Concern about the effects of the neoliberal reform on children and their families had come from a variety of groups and individuals in New Zealand society since the 1990s. The lack of support for families and the deteriorating conditions of many children:

> … brought a clamour from welfare and community groups about increasing poverty and social exclusion, while professional groups indicated downstream effects on health and education attainments (Stephens and Waldegrave 2001:78).

The Labour Party built on this growing condemnation in its Manifesto in the lead-up to the 1999 elections. It signalled its intention to 'put in place policies that ensure New Zealand is the best country in the world to be a child' (New Zealand Labour Party 1999 as quoted in Brown and McCormack 2005:187). Labour's coalition partner, the Alliance Party, too stated that children would be their first priority when elected. The development of *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* (2002) was partly in response to these intentions stated in the election manifestos, but was also a response to New Zealand's legal obligations to uphold the rights of children under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* which New Zealand ratified in 1993.

The development of the *Agenda* involved an extensive consultation process and in 2001 the Ministry of Social Development consulted with:

> … over 7500 children and young people and many interested adults about what they think should be priority areas or government action in the Agenda for Children (Ministry of Social Development 2002).

Academics, community groups, child advocates, professionals involved with children such as teachers and social workers were also consulted and a Child Policy Reference Group was assembled, constituted of academics, advocates and officials, who provided continuing advice during the development of the Agenda (Maharey 2002).

New Zealand's Agenda for Children: Making Life Better for Children was released in June 2002. A Press Release by Steve Maharey (2002), the Minister of Social Services and Employment, states that the *Agenda* puts the interests of children at the centre of government decision making for the first time. The government intention

is, says Maharey, 'to make New Zealand a great place for children again' through a range of policy and research initiatives. Maharey says that with an election only two months away the *Agenda* is a wakeup call for all parties to be clear about their intentions for positive change regarding New Zealand children and their families.

The release of the *Agenda* has been followed by other policy initiatives such as the *Statement of Intent 2005* (Ministry of Social Development 2005). This statement states that:

> New Zealand's long-term social and economic wellbeing depends on achieving better social outcomes for children and young people.

To achieve these better outcomes, says the *Statement*, children need a wide range of social services to support their needs, 'from early intervention to services for children and young people experiencing serious problems'. These services and strategies are based on what is called the 'whole-child' approach.

> The whole child approach is about focusing on the child's whole life and circumstances; taking a long-term view of what the child needs for healthy development; and working across government to improve outcomes.

Many of the rationales within the Agenda are not new and can be found in different policy initiatives surrounding families and their children since the 1980s such as the *Children, Young Persons, and Their Families Act* 1989 described above and the 'expectations' of *The Code*. Incorporated within the older rationales are newer discourses which include children's agency and voice. These discourses can be seen for example under the heading 'Seeing Results' in the *Statement of Intent 2005*. It states the following:

> The results our work aims to achieve, today and for future generations are that children and young people:
> - are loved and supported
> - experience an adequate standard of living
> - enjoy good health
> - have opportunities to build important knowledge, skills and behaviours
> - are in work, education, training, or another activity that contributes to their long-term economic independence and wellbeing
> - have lives free from violence, crime, bullying, abuse and neglect
> - are valued and have their views respected, and can take part in decisions that affect them (Ministry of Social Development 2005).

Hidden Transcripts and Neoliberal Rationales

Culpitt (1999:6) states that any valid social inquiry must challenge the watertight obviousness of the neo-liberal stance. Analysing the 'story line' or narratives of these rationales is useful to chart the range of assumptions that are part of these debates. Neoliberal welfare narratives constantly portray welfare negatively by constructing a discourse about the perils of dependency (Culpitt 1999:148). These discourses of dependency so prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s have been replaced by concepts such as empowerment, participation and agency.

Cruikshank (1999a:1) suggests that reformist and democratic discourses obscure a political awareness of how citizens are brought into being. The concepts of democratic citizenship, empowerment and self-government are part of discourses and political rationales, but they remain part of strategies of government and a way to solve political problems. They therefore should not be taken for granted. The *New Zealand Agenda for Children* (2002) and the *Statement of Intent 2005* also contain many discourses related to empowerment and agency and are part of technologies of citizenship which constitute and regulate citizens. The *Agenda* and *Statement* may be well intentioned and are the result of many people trying to find solutions to the problems facing New Zealand society. And like Cruikshank (1999a:2), I am sympathetic to the process of participatory democracy and agency, but concepts of empowerment and self-government are political and contain many power relations. The will to empower, as Cruikshank shows, contains the twin possibilities of domination and freedom and even the:

> …most democratic modes of government entail power relationships
> that are both voluntary and coercive (Cruikshank 1999a:3).

Citizens are made and not born, as Cruikshank states, and democratic modes of governance and social scientific ways of knowing reproduce citizens who are encouraged to govern themselves. Citizens, as I have argued elsewhere (see Chapter 1 and 2), are not only 'made' by the state, but are governed through what Foucault has called the 'conduct of conduct'.

> It includes but is not limited to programs conducted by the liberal state,
> for governance can also involve internal and voluntary relations of rule,
> the way we act upon ourselves (Cruikshank 1999a:4).

Participatory and democratic schemes such as the *Agenda* and *Statement,* however, are technologies of citizenship which are set up to correct perceived deficiencies in citizens and they are intended to 'help people to help themselves'. Discourses are often represented as 'reality', 'as telling it like it is' (Smart 2003:5). Notions of 'personal reflection, local action, flexibility, and choice' (Bloch *et al.* 2003:21) are interlinked with what Rose (1998:72) calls the government of 'employability' and it involves a new set of educational obligations which see education no longer confined in time and space to 'schooling', but requires citizen to:

> … engage in ceaseless work of training and re-training, skilling and re-skilling, enhancement of credentials and preparation for a life of incessant job seeking: life is to become a continuous economic capitalization of the self.

The neoliberal anti-welfare rhetoric which underlies many of the assumptions and beliefs in the above mentioned documents are premised on a valorisation of risks (Culpitt 1999:13) which has been refashioned into the more acceptable language of welfare. Risk as a 'central metaphor' (Bessant *et al.* 2003:8) has supplanted older categories such as 'delinquent' and 'deviant', but many underlying methodologies, assumptions and politics of governance have remained the same. The rationales of risk and risk management has 'percolated into the human service professions working directly with individuals, families, and neighbourhoods' (Bessant *et al.* 2003:2).

> In these agencies the talk is of 'risk indicators', 'risk reduction', and 'risk management'. Indeed, one would find it difficult these days to find a government agency or community sector organisation working in human services that does not accept the concept of risk in their daily operations.

Risk talk is associated with family status, heredity, socioeconomic circumstance and psychological disposition which are said to 'cause' the problems (Bessant *et al.* 2003:12). These dominant discourses refer to these phenomena as if they are 'actually' there, but the complex social and intellectual processes which allow these phenomena to fill up the discursive space needs to be questioned (Bessant *et al.* 2003:14).

Money, time and energy at national and global levels are currently invested to bring children 'in need' up to a 'normal' standard. These discourses positions adults as mediators between children and the rest of society (Wyness 2006:47) and children's needs' discourses have become a way through which different adult groups compete for

resources in the political arena. However, as Wyness argues, within these new rationales children's sense of self, their commitments and expectations are still regulated by adults even when the rationales surrounding childhood suggests otherwise. The new rationales have shifted the paradigms of childhood, but they continue to categorise children in separate categories from adults (see Chapter 2). This contradicts the 'whole child' approach advocated at present in New Zealand policies and continues the duality between adults and children.

Working for Families or Overworked Families?

The *Working for Families* benefit reform package, which was the centrepiece of the 2004 budget, was a response to the problems parents are facing in contemporary New Zealand. The package is targeted at low to middle-income families with dependent children. One of the core aims of the package is to reduce child poverty and it is part of the implementation of the strategies set out in the *New Zealand Agenda for Children* released in 2002 (Perry 2004:19). Child poverty is back on centre stage in the economically developed nations, states Perry, and this renewed focus was driven by mounting evidence that a disadvantaged childhood leads to poor outcomes in later life. The *Working for Families* package key goals therefore are: to 'make work pay'; to improve income adequacy for families with dependent children, especially as a means of tackling child poverty; and to improve take-up rates of social assistance (Perry 2004:20). The package also includes measures to help parents with accommodation and childcare costs. The package, argues Kelsey (2006:1), was a long overdue compensation for low and middle-income families for the hardships of the past 20 years and will make significant changes to those eligible. Yet, says Kelsey, the package is fundamentally flawed as it is only available to parents who do not receive any benefits 'reflecting the presumption that work is the solution to poverty'.

> So Working for Families is not simply about family support. It is also
> an incentive to change the behaviour of parents on welfare benefits'
> (Kelsey 2006:1).

The package is not only an incentive to parents on benefits to change their behaviour but is also an attempt to set the norm for all parents in New Zealand. It will also mean more competition, as Kelsey (2006:2) states, and lead to intense competition between workers and will intensify pressures for more 'labour market flexibility'.

Recent research has indicated that New Zealand has one of the highest proportions of workers putting in long hours of paid work (Messenger 2004 as quoted in Callister 2005:160). These increasing working hours for both parents have had an effect on families and children. Families with children under five have been especially affected, as the growth in employment of both parents has been particularly strong in this group. Although there are still gender-based differences in work patterns, overall women's patterns of paid work have been changing and are now much closer to that of men (Callister 2005:167). Research into the working hours of couples with children showed that overall parents in 2001 were putting in much longer hours in paid employment than their counterparts in 1986. Many fathers in the research had increased their working hours, but most of the changes in working hours have been due to changes in women's employment. As women as a group become better educated with resulting higher levels of employment, their hours are likely to increase even more (Callister 2005:171). This increasing involvement of women in the workforce can be seen as a positive trend, but may also put increasing pressure on both men and women, especially when they become parents. There are a variety of reasons to work longer hours, says Callister (2005:172), such as job security as longer working hours are often related to job insecurity and high unemployment rates. The housing market is also a potential incentive to work long hours as rapidly rising property prices might make owning a house only affordable when both parents work longer hours.

Laila Harre (a former politician and the architect of New Zealand's paid parental leave and now a senior union official) is quoted in a *New Zealand Listener* (February 17 2006) article as saying that it is hypocritical to suggest that governmental policies give parents genuine choices (Black 2006:14). Politicians 'dutifully' say that this is about choice, states Harre, but we don't develop our workplace and social policy to do that.

> What we really mean is we want to reduce the cost to the state of supporting single parents, and we want to boost productivity by putting more women in the workforce. At the same time, we've got this whole sort of confounding thing which is philosophies and values saying we really don't think mothers should be working at all (Black 2006:15).

Fulbright scholar Nick Johnson says in the same article (Black 2006:16) that after studying the *Working for Family* package he thinks there has been a missed opportunity. The package is really for families, argues Johnson, who are scratching

their head saying, 'Should I participate in the paid workforce more or not?' (Black 2006:15). The increasing participation of women in the workface has had multiple ramifications for the family as members struggle under the complexity of their commitments.

From a family perspective, argues Adema (2006:54), the limitations of public support over the past decades have made it more difficult for parents to sustain family income and to provide the best for their children. The ensuing juggling act of trying to reconcile care, education and work commitments has forced families:

> … to reduce working hours (and accept correspondingly lower family income), engage in 'shift parenting' (parents organising their individual work schedules in tandem to ensure continuous parental care), and/or draw on relatives, friends and neighbours.

An article in the *Weekend Herald* on the Saturday the 25th of November 2006 suggest that parents may not have a lot of choice but to continue this juggling due to financial restraints. The article states that 'a massive shift of women into the paid workforce has left the average New Zealand family no better off'(Collins 2006:1). The article quotes sociologist Peter Davis whose research has found that:

> … the median family income, after adjusting for inflation and family size, was just over $37,000 a year in 1981 – and was still just over $37,000 in 2001.

Families on middle and low incomes, says the article, have ended up merely holding their own since the 1980s. This merely 'holding their own' is reflected in my research in the New Zealand Pakeha and Dutch middle classes. Contemporary parents are carrying on a 'double burden' as they try to deal with the increasing hours and demands of paid work with their 'responsibilities' as a parent placed upon them by the new rationales and practices of childhood. The effects of this double burden on parents and children will be discussed in the following chapters.

Chapter 5: Complicated Categories of Class

Anthropology's strengths in long-term ethnographic study, combined
with qualitative and quantitative approaches, and its comparative and
cross-cultural perspective make it particularly well suited to
understanding the content, character, and contours of the middle class
today (Overbey and Dudley 2000:249).

Discourses and practices surrounding childhood, as I described in Chapter 2,
are not only about everyday practices and regimes of rationalities conducted in the
privacy of the home (Luke 1989:30), but they are also an interplay of understandings
about other aspects of life, including the meaning and practices of parenthood, the
family and the self (Luke 1989:17). These figurations develop in a particular cultural
place and time and are to a large extent shared by members of a cultural group
(Harkness and Super 1996:2). Class, ethnicity and gender constructions are part of
these figurations and will be discussed in this chapter.

One of the most persistent myths in New Zealand society has been its lack of
class. Class discourses in these narratives of classlessness are seen to be inaccurate
representations of 'things as they really are' and foreign to the New Zealand way of life
(James 1987:77). However, in the past few decades there has been an increasing
acknowledgment in New Zealand that class does exist. An article in the *New Zealand
Listener* (May 28 2005) written by Joanne Black states that 70 percent of New
Zealanders now believe that class exists in their society (based on a poll of a 1000
people nation wide). Class, say most of the participants in this poll, is mostly based on
money, but education, where you live, ethnicity, occupation and family background also
play important roles.

In the article the historian Erik Olsen is quoted as saying that the early English
settlers did not want to reproduce the class system they left behind. These equalitarian
aims of the early settlers have been fulfilled 'reasonably well', states Olsen, because
New Zealand is a fluid and less traditional society where people have a sense of being
able to do and be what they want. However, the narrative of a reasonably fluid and
equalitarian New Zealand society is questioned in the same article by Don MacRaild.
MacRaild, another historian, states that he was surprised when he first arrived in New
Zealand a few years ago. New Zealand proved to be a more hierarchical society than he

had expected, says MacRaild, and he was shocked by certain key indicators. These included:

> … how expensive houses are against average wages and average family incomes, how difficult it must be today to be a young person trying to enter the housing market in Wellington, how expensive things are here if you imagine earning $20.000 or $30.000 and trying to raise a family on that.

MacRaild suggests that New Zealanders mistake 'being flat' with being equalitarian. New Zealand's has small power networks compared to many other western countries, he argues, and this means that most New Zealanders have access to those in power which 'gives Kiwis comfort'. However, MacRaild does not totally dismiss ideas that New Zealand is still quite fluid. There are still opportunities for social mobility, he says, and there are only a:

> … few things that would hold you back from significant success if you have a decent education here. But, then, that's also true of Britain, with its obvious class system.

Class Talk

Talk of class 'naturally' brings to mind Karl Marx, however, Karl Marx did not invent the concept of class (Zweig 2004:17). The language of class first emerged in England and France at the end of the 18th century. Discussion regarding classes and the ideas that capitalist profits originate in the labour of workers started in the 18th century when 'founders' of modern economics' such as Adam Smith started describing the processes of capitalism and the newly emerging groups surrounding the newly developing factories. These groups were in contrast with the previous ranks, castes and estates of the feudal era which were part of 'an organic hierarchical whole, defined by law and legitimated by custom' (Lustig 2004:47). The new classes, however, were individuals who became a group through their employment. They did not have the customary right and claims of feudal groups. New discourses of self, which included the notion of the equal citizen, released public officials from any obligations to or responsibility for the misery and degradation of these new groups (Lustig 2004:47). The socialists took up the plight of the new working classes and the conditions they worked in. Karl Marx (1818-1883) was part of the new class analysts who emerged as part of this socialist movement.

Although Marx may not have been the first to write about class, his ideas have remained crucial in many contemporary understandings of class. Most of Marx's work was concerned with the developing capitalist society and his work on class was therefore not fully developed (Levine 2006:3). Marx's work explains classes in terms of the social relations of production and peoples' relationship to the means of production. Classes for Marx were seen as relational categories because capitalists could not exist and make profit without the workers and the workers could not exists without the capitalists (Levine 2006:3). What distinguishes the workers from the owners is, however, is that they do not own capital or the means of production. They can therefore be exploited by the owners of the means of production to add surplus value to their capital. The production of wealth in capitalist systems (through the oppression of the workers by the owners of the new factories) lead to a simultaneous production of poverty (Lustig 2004:47). For Marx, argues Levine (2006:3), the process of exploitation is the root of inequality in capitalist society. It is this inequality which eventually will lead to class conflict and struggle.

Marx (as quoted in Lustig 2004:47) argues that workers live under economic conditions which separate their modes of life, interests and culture from the other classes. This, says Marx, leads to the development of different social values, the creation of alternative institutions and new political organizations. These new political organizations will eventually be able to create a society in which no one had the power to systemically exploit others. Marx believes that conflict drives history and

> … that the working class in particular will become the revolutionary
> force that brings capitalism to an end (Zweig 2004:17).

Although the revolutionary force of the working classes has not eventuated as predicted by Marx, his theoretical framework still makes a significant contribution on class analysis in all the social sciences.

Max Weber added to the ideas and concepts put forward by Marx. Weber (1864-1920) lived at a time when the class structure had already developed further. He therefore was able to extend and modify Marx's class model. Weber argued that during the 19th century new economic developments, increased education and the expanding nation states meant that the stratification structure became more complex (Beeghley 2005:27). This complexity was the result of more and more jobs which did not involve manual labour. This led to a split between a growing middle-class who did not do

manual jobs and the working class who did. Weber's critique of a Marxist analysis is that class can not solely be defined in terms of production relations. Productions relations are only part of one's standing in the social structure. Weberian conceptions of class divisions and the conditions for class self identity are primarily understood in terms of life chances (Levine 2006:5). For example, says Levine, education and not only ownership of economic capital, may lead to certain occupations with high incomes and a certain lifestyle.

> One's market situation depends to a greater extend on the resources one possesses, such as certain skills, education, or even inherited wealth, and how these resources translate into purchasing power (Levine 2006:5).

It is Weber's discussion of status groups which is the greatest departure from Marx work (Levine 2006:6). Status groups are collectivites of people with similar lifestyles. These status groups and lifestyles often overlap with class positions, but are not mutually exclusive. People often act according to their status group, not necessarily their economic class. This can also be seen in my research. An example of this is the parent in interview 1 (see below), who although a single mother on a benefit, sees herself as middle-class due to her habitus and acts accordingly.

Marx and Weber's theoretical frameworks are the foundation for most contemporary discussion on class. Both Marx and Weber put emphasis on the importance of the ownership of the means of production and the constraints this puts on people who only have the 'ownership of labour power' (Wright 2006:156). However, as Wright argues, the pivotal difference is captured by the way Weberians stress the concept of life chances and Marxists stress the concept of exploitation. Both 'exploitation' and 'life chances' identify inequalities in material well-being that are generated by inequalities in access to resources of various sorts (Wright 2006:157).

Bourdieu's work has been shaped by both Marx and Weber's ideas regarding class. Brubaker (2004:31-2) argues that Bourdieu obtained from Marx especially the primacy of class as a unit of analysis and the emphasis on the practical activity involved in the production and reproduction of social life. The notion that social being determines consciousness, which was part of Marx theoretical framework, is also an important part of Bourdieu's work.

> … Bourdieu's substantive theory, like the vast theory Marx envisioned
> but never constructed, is premised on the systematic unity of practical
> social life (Brubaker 2004:32).

However, the real significance of Bourdieu's work, argues Brubaker, lies in his attempt to extend Marx work through the study of the symbolic and the material dimensions of social life. Bourdieu, says Brubaker, tries to 'round out' the Marxian system with conceptual tools derived from Weber. Bourdieu extends Weber's conception of lifestyles and develops this into a theory of the relations of lifestyles and 'their attendant marks of distinction to material conditions of existence' (Brubaker 2004:31). He also includes Weberian concepts of charisma, legitimacy, symbolic goods and symbolic practices to develop his theoretical framework regarding symbolic power and its relations to economic and political power.

Although Bourdieu's conceptions of class draw on Marx and Weber, he also critiques their ideas, especially the Marxist perspective. Although Bourdieu acknowledges the influence of the market and the means of production in regard to class formation, his theoretical framework sees class defined by

> …differing conditions of existence, differing systems of dispositions
> produced by differential conditioning, and different endowments of
> power or capital (Brubaker 2004:46).

Bourdieu (1984) argues that economic capital (e.g., income, wealth) is important but by no means sufficient for our understanding of social class. Bourdieu's concepts of different forms of 'capital', habitus and distinction (see also chapter 1) helps explain how social class is reproduced from parents to their children. Bourdieu's analyses of social class, as Aschaffenberg and Maas (1997:161) point out, provides an understanding of class not as a 'position' within a stratified society but as something that is lived, embodied, performed through various social practices, and judged against expectations for such social performances.

Class Research in New Zealand

Overbey and Dudley (2000:1) argue that when policy makers, government analysts, and journalists attempt to address the challenges which face middle-class families, they do so without a clear conception of the social bounds and cultural reach of this amorphous population.

While social scientists have always taken an interest in Americans of 'middling conditions', only rarely have they been encouraged to grapple directly with the problems and dilemmas that beset those who claim to constitute the 'moral center' of U.S. society, the middle class.

Historically and currently, say Overbey and Dudley (2000:2), influential anthropologists have been and are working on the near and 'ordinary', but this has been overshadowed by an interest in geographically distant and culturally 'exotic' peoples. As a result, policy makers, journalists, and disciplines other than anthropology have largely shaped the national conversation about work and family issues. However, anthropology has much to offer to the study of middle-class families as it can lead to a greater reflexivity and find the unfamiliar within the familiar (Goldschmidt 1995:18).

In New Zealand's post-war settled, ordered, homogenous and monocultural society, class analysis was almost totally absent as a result of the 'relative cosiness of post-war affluence' (Wilkes 1990:75). This lack of class analysis, says Wilkes, and the myth of classlessness was a failure to understand post-war trends as 'simply moments in history'. Issues of class were part of less dominant discourses during these times in academic writing and union movements (see for example Bedggood 1980, James 1987, Jones and Davis 1988, Pearson and Thorns 1983, Pitt 1977), but these did not seriously challenge narratives of classlessness within dominant New Zealand discourses.

The less dominant discourses of class, however, did add to other voices in New Zealand society (such as Maori and women's movements) and contributed to the 'maelstrom of change' (King 2003:457) which increasingly challenged dominant discourses of equality. From the end of the 1960s onwards inequalities which had been glossed over during the times of 'the golden weather' were slowly exposed. The neoliberal pro-market policies of the 1980s and 1990s brought economic and social differences even more in the open again (see Chapter 4). This led to the increasing use of class in neoliberal discourses as welfare policies 'targetting' low-income families were put in place for those who were 'really in need' (Sinclair 1996:364). The concepts of the middle-class and middle New Zealand became part of government strategies as they tried to make individuals, their families and their local community (rather than the state) responsible for their own well-being (Rudd 2001:252).

The increasing acknowledgements of economic and social differences and the use of the term class in New Zealand society, however, have not been reflected in an increase in class research in the academic disciplines. Instead there has been a distinct

'paucity' of class research in New Zealand' (Hayes 2005:41). Surprisingly this has worsened in the last two decades despite growing and more widespread inequality in New Zealand society. Hayes argues that this 'paucity' has been a result of a shift in the conceptualisation of class by academics 'in many cases culminating in a challenge to the relevance of class analysis in the advanced societies' (see Chapter 1).

Discursive frameworks in which 'distinctions' are conceptualised and constituted are central issues to anthropology (Shore 2002:3). In this chapter I will discuss some of these central issues and unravel some of the taken-for-granted assumptions underlying contemporary New Zealand class narratives 'by describing the experience of class in everyday life' (Liechty 2003: 8). I will use Bourdieu's model of class (see Chapter 1) which sees class as an arbitrarily imposed definition with real social effects (Skeggs 2000:8).

Motivational Landscapes: Myth as a Changing Phenomenon

Wilkes (1990:80) argues that the myth of classlessness is a changing phenomenon which is very much part of New Zealand's understandings of itself as a nation. He suggests that the myth has to be seen as:

> An invaluable part of the motivational landscape which lead people
> here and, once here, drove them to seek material improvement.

Also part of the motivational landscape is the way New Zealanders think of themselves as having a rural way of life. 'Kiwiness' or 'New Zealandness' is associated with rural living and the outdoors (Park and Scott 2002:528). These discourses persist even when the majority of New Zealanders have lived in towns and cities since the end of the 19th century (Wilkes 1990:71-2). These discourses of 'ruralness' and 'classlessness' allow a contrast with the 'old world' which means that New Zealand's identity and image as a nation is far removed from the over-industrialised world and its problems of 'over-crowding, poor health, conflicts between boss and worker, centuries-long battles between the haves and have-nots' (Wilkes 1990:72).

However, New Zealand was never planned as an equal society, despite its 'egalitarian ethos' (James 1987). Influential people in the settlement of Pakeha New Zealand expected that New Zealand would be a successful capitalist society which produced the inequalities of private property more successfully than Britain. As Wilkes (1990:73) argues:

> … there is little doubt that New Zealand in the nineteenth century offered a class structure that was unequal in terms of wealth and income, which grossly disadvantaged the indigenous people and discounted the contribution of women.

Nevertheless, although New Zealand was planned as a class society, its structure remained reasonably fluid and open during the early decades of the new colony. Immigrants often did have a chance to escape the conditions they were used to in 'the old world'. Many were able to climb higher on the social ladder with almost half of the adult male population making it onto small, but not always self-sufficient, farms (Toynbee 1995). Discourses of a classless nation were sustainable due to this fluidity and class conflicts, which were part of international trends, developed fairly late in New Zealand (Belich 2001:136).

Increasing urbanisation, deteriorating living conditions, an emerging organisational working class and a more settled and tightening society in the beginning of the 20th century, meant that issues of class could no longer be ignored and it 'remained part of the national debates until the Second World War' (Wilkes 1990:80). A pre-requisite for the development of a tight working class, argues Belich (2001:143), is that workers expect to remain in their class for their whole life time. If social mobility is a common expectation, as was the case for many immigrants at the start of the colony, it becomes much harder for a class community to develop. When these expectations became harder to fulfil at the end of the 19th century, resentment grew. A stronger class conscious developed which found a voice in the Labour party in 1910. Class and the acknowledgment that inequalities existed in New Zealand was now part of political discourses. This led eventually to the welfare reforms put in place by the first Labour government in 1938 (see Chapter 3).

The growth of a strongly organised working class was accompanied by the development of 'a new class, the middle class' (Wilkes 1990:72) in the urban centres as businesses increased, bureaucratic institutions grew, schools multiplied and new professions emerged. These new middle classes grew even stronger after World War II and this rise was 'accompanied by changes in the way we viewed ourselves as a nation' (Wilkes 1990:75). It was during the two decades after World War II that the myth of New Zealand as a classless, rural nation was at its strongest and during this time the stereotype of the New Zealand male as the 'frontier man' (Phillips 1996) was also at its

peak despite the fact that most men only returned to the 'frontier' as part of their yearly family holiday (see Chapter 4).

However, despite dominant discourses of a classless homogenous New Zealand, resistance discourses continued to be part of New Zealand society. The 1951 waterfront strike is seen by many historians as the greatest industrial conflict in New Zealand, says Belich (2001:300), and the government used immense state power to crush the strike. Public antagonism towards the watersiders was huge and squashing of the strike was 'a sharp defeat for New Zealand's hard left'. Concepts of class disappeared from the motivational landscape of New Zealand society for many decades. The waterfront dispute and the subsequent crackdown on its 'unruly elements' helped with the continuation of the disciplining and tightening of New Zealand society. It enforced 'moral, racial and social harmony' during the 1950s and 1960s (Belich 2001:306-7).

Around the 1970s this 'harmony' began to fall apart, as I described in Chapter 4. In this 'era of protest' the normalising norms of the 1950s and 1960s slowly disintegrated as abortion, homosexuality and Maori rights became part of the landscape and 'traditionalists had plenty to panic about' (Belich 2001:514). The protests in the 1970s and 1980s often involved two groups, trade unionists and the radical left, who had been traditionally willing to hit the streets with their grievances (Belich 2001:515). But what gave the 'era of protest' force, says Belich, was the intersecting of new groups. These groups included the 'escapees from Nappy Valley[9]: the liberal section of the growing middle class'.

> It was these groups, the rank and file of protest movements, not their activist leaders, old or new, who turned the protest era into a kind of liberal middle-class revolution (Belich 2001:516).

When the 'liberal middle class protest revolution' came to a head in the Springbok Tour of 1981[10], concepts of what it meant to be a Pakeha New Zealander were contested by both the anti and pro tour factions. Pakeha narratives of New Zealandness such as equality, good race relations, the 'Kiwi Bloke' and discourses of 'ruralness' all came under attack (Belich 2001, King 2003, Phillips 1996). This contributed, with many other factors (see Chapter 4) to the defeat of the National Party in 1984.

The core of National's support until then had come from farming and business, but also from the middle classes in rural areas and towns (Belich 2001:402). National

was favoured until then, says Belich, as there was a 'widespread sense that farming was the backbone of the economy, even the nation'. The 'era of protest', however, meant that a 'post-materialist' generation of university-educated professionals was more inclined to:

> … pick their party on issues such as Vietnam, nuclear weapons,
> feminism and environmentalism rather than on the economic advantage
> of their class (Belich 2001:404).

Many shifted from National to Labour and by 1984 the Labour Party leadership had become more middle-class (three-quarters of Labour MPs were middle-class compared to a quarter in 1957). Labour Party policies shifted accordingly even when this led to the alienation of some of its working class support.

> The need to spread the Labour vote to the middle class, as well as
> increase it overall, was a factor in the 1984 revolution in Labour policy
> – and, according to some, in revolution in New Zealand history as a
> whole (Belich 2001:404).

Under Labour, argues Wilkes (1990:79), discourses of class became 'respectable' again and 'a pillar of government policy' 'rather than hidden behind an apologetic denial of class'. But although class discourses became part of neoliberal rationales and 'respectable' they were not seen as part of a class struggle (Richards 2003:115). During this time the voices of class resistance (which had been growing during the 1970s) became muted again. Neoliberalism arrived in New Zealand via a 'Trojan Horse', states Richards (2003:130-31), as the support of the union movement allowed a successful introduction of neoliberal policies by the Labour Government which reversed many of the gains made in the post-war period.

Class and the Media

Class, as argued by Wilkes (1990), has become more 'respectable' in contemporary New Zealand which is also reflected by the use of these concepts in the media. From the late 1980s onwards the use of the word class has been on the increase in newspaper and magazine articles. In the past few years this increasing trickle has become a stream with many stories now using concepts of class and inequality.

The neoliberal reforms and the refocusing of policies towards 'those in need' and the economic insecurity and declining wealth of New Zealanders have been topics discussed in articles over the last 15 years. However, in recent years there has been a

marked increase in media coverage of the middle classes showing their declining fortunes and increased anxieties.

In November 1988, for example, the cover story in *North and South* was titled 'Bleeding White: Middle Class and Carrying the Can' (McLeod 1988) which discusses the dropping living standard of the middle classes due to the neoliberal reforms. An article in *The Sunday Star* in March 1994 (Chapple 1994) titled 'Losing the Middle Ground' focuses on the declining wealth and increasing hardship of the middle classes. A *Listener* article in August 1999 (Welch 1999), called 'Middle Class Burden', explains the middle-class squeeze and describes how most of the working population are now earning less that they did at the start of the 1980s.

In recent years the number of articles appearing in New Zealand magazines, such as *North and South, Metro* and *The Listener*, discussing middle classness in New Zealand has increased considerably. Some examples of this include the *North and South* articles published in 2004 titled 'The Great Baby Famine: Why Middle Class Families Can't Afford More Kids' (Larson 2004a) and 'The New Middle Class Curse: Why Earning More Can Make You Poor' (Larson 2004b). Both these articles focus on the financial situations of middle-class families in New Zealand. Another article was published in *The New Zealand Listener* with the heading 'Show a Bit of Class' (Black 2005). It debates whether New Zealand has a social class structure despite historic national beliefs to the contrary (see introduction). Class is not the same as status, says Black (the author of the article), but 'since New Zealanders believe wealth is the main determinant of class, 'it is logical that there will be some overlap between class and expensive status symbols'.

Auckland's newspaper the *New Zealand Herald* too has increased its discussion of middle classness in the past couple of years. In April 2004, for example, they published an article which examines 'concerted cultivation' (Lareau 2003). An article titled 'A Star is Born' (Black and Loates 2004) looks at the growing popularity of books like 'Your child can think like a genius' and of 'hot housing' children among middle-class parents. It also describes and investigates baby education programmes on offer around New Zealand. In the beginning of June 2005 another article appears in *The Herald* titled 'In search of the Middle'(Hewitson 2005). It describes the author, Michelle Hewitson's, visit to Havelock North to talk to politicians, sociologists and residents of the Hawke's Bay town in order to locate 'Middle NZ'. Two weeks later this is followed by an article titled 'Tough Times for the Middle Class' (Catherall

2005). The reader meets a professional couple with three children who are struggling to get by. Due to their income they are disqualified from any government assistance and they are 'feeling hard done by'. The article notes that they are not alone in these feelings. This could be seen in an article published a year before in the *Auckland Sunday Star* (Laugesen *et al.* 2004). This article started with an open letter written to Prime Minister Helen Clark by a middle-class couple which outlines the financial difficulties the family has. The article then describes the problems of being a middle-class family today with increasing student loans, job insecurity and the growing demands of parenting.

Parental discussions during my research reflected many of the themes in the media. The increasing use of the term class in the media and in government strategies also has led to an increased awareness and use of the term among middle-class Pakeha New Zealanders.

Parental Discourses of Middle-Classness

Middle classness as I discovered during my research is a complex issue in New Zealand and characterising the middle-class as a social and cultural entity is a challenge, as Liechty (2003:21) points out, because the more one looks the more the boundaries dissolve and become blurred and hazy. In the 1980s James and Saville-Smith (1989:10) argued that due to New Zealand's equalitarian ethos many people in New Zealand saw themselves as living in a 'classless' society with relatively little inequality. A decade later when I started my study, however, I found that many of the Pakeha and Dutch parents did use the concept of class and acknowledged that inequality existed, but this did not necessarily mean that they saw themselves and others as part of a class system. Although the self-classification in class terms by many New Zealanders confirms that there is a certain level of class-consciousness. New Zealanders, like the Australians discussed by McGregor (1997), often do not recognise that class is an important organising principle of modern capitalist societies and 'the mechanism by which power, privilege and inequality are distributed and institutionalised' (McGregor 1997:18). This has led some theorist to argue, says McGregor (McGregor 1997:137) that there is no such thing as a middle-class and that those who regard themselves as such are simply victims of a 'false consciousness'. However, this ignores the 'folk' classification which exists in society and the growing self-identification of a majority of people especially within the middle classes.

Although the concept of class has become more accepted in New Zealand in the past decades, some New Zealanders still downplay or deny their status in certain contexts as Carolyn Morris (2002:29) found in her research in the high country where 'labelling a person or group elite can be something of an insult'. This denial of class status was illustrated to me one day at the beginning of the PhD process when I had distributed information to early childhood centres in which I asked middle-class Pakeha and Dutch parents to participate in my research. One of the mothers in one of the centres had read my invitation to participate and rang to tell me that 'being Dutch (referring to my accent) you may not understand this, but you do not divide people into classes in New Zealand' (telephone conversation 1). She continued the conversation by asserting that this is the way they do things in England, but

> … that is not how it works here because people would not even know what class to put themselves in, I wouldn't even know which class to put myself in; lower or middle-class has no meaning here (telephone conversation 1).

Julie Park (1982a) points out that it is not always easy in New Zealand to study the middle classes as mainstream New Zealand is seen as a known entity and a majority group. Anthropological research, however, is seen as studying ethnic minorities or 'deviant' groups. The woman in the telephone conversation also reflected this view, as she suggested that instead of looking at the middle-class I should study Maori or Pacific Islanders.

The assertion that New Zealand was a classless society was sometimes also reflected in my interviews and during participation observation. One mother in one of the interviews, for example, was also very reluctant to use class as part of everyday life.

> I do not know how you define middle-class and upper-class and lower- class, umm, I guess it is associated with economics, but I don't actually see that as being relevant to any childhood. Well, maybe, I can see it being relevant to childhood in terms if you have no money you don't get a lot of things or don't get exposed to different things but, umm, I don't think I classify myself as upper-class, middle-class or lower-class (20).

Although the existence of class was denied in the quotes above, it is now more commonplace for the majority of New Zealanders to see themselves as middle-class. People who classify themselves as middle-class, suggests Ortner (1998:8) (describing the middle-class in the USA) believe in a 'decent life of work and family', the 'individual' and the importance of 'freedom' as well as a moderate amount of material success. One of the parents I interviewed articulated these ideals of middle-classness quite clearly when asked to describe it.

> Umm, professional people with probably at least the average income, umm, some aspirations towards, they have a quite high aspiration, I think; they expect their children to do well educationally. They have an interest in education and they, they umm, they have reasonably high standards when it comes to probably to dress and to, and they would be law-abiding. Umm, probably, you know, drive a reasonable car which is warranted and registered. Yeah and umm, there are some associations as well that they are probably quite inflexible, quite limited in their … they work quite hard to stay where they are and status is quite important to maintain the position that they attained (13).

The slippery category of middle-class, says Ortner (1998:8), often includes everybody except the very rich and the very poor. This classification of middle-classness is reflected in New Zealand concepts surrounding 'the middle' and 'the centre'. The following quote is how one mother described her middle-classness when I asked her why she had classified herself as middle-class.

> Umm, I think, I explained this to my son yesterday actually, he heard it on the TV and he said 'what is middle-class? And I said there were three categories, somebody had decided, that there were three categories of people and umm, there was poor, middle and rich. And I said we weren't rich and we weren't poor, you know, we had just enough to go around with. NO disposable income, you know and that's how I see, you know, it's like I have to sit down and look at the accounts and figure out how I am going to pay the things I bought (5).

One of the fathers also expressed these ideas when asked what he meant by his self classification of middle-class

> I suppose comfortable, not excessively wealthy or, umm, I wouldn't call it poor or, but yeah, just sort of a comfortable type of life style sort of, yeah …so if one of your plants had died, you go out and buy another one at the garden centre, that sort of thing (15).

This man was quite aware of class issues due to his father 'being English'. This greater class awareness was also reflected by his partner who stated 'there is definitively, I do think there is a class system in New Zealand' (9). This woman described herself as having had a working-class childhood; 'Yep very, very common!' (9). Both partners in this couple relationship discussed how the 'distinctions' of their childhood habitus still affected their lives. It continued to influence relationships with the extended family as they both had moved into 'different directions and lifestyles' (15) from their family of origin. This had led to greater class awareness.

The woman discussed how she was brought up in a family whose parents had tried to escape their own working-class upbringing and their quite 'dysfunctional family'. Her parents, she said, had decided to:

> … break free from their, their whole basis of life; we sort of had a blank slate.   So we
> created our own traditions, we, anything we did, everything we did was new. NO ONE
> had done that, no one had done ballet, no one had done music, no one had been to
> university, no one. So everything was new … (9).

Being working-class, she said, affected her childhood, but her parents had a good work ethic which they passed onto the children. Her parents broke the cycle of their own upbringing when they bought a family business in which 'we all worked hard':

> … so my parents were right out of their, their own lifestyle and raised children totally
> out of their … their own lifestyle (9).

Education of the children was part of the breaking free process and led to quite different lifestyles for the children. Both the person interviewed and her sibling are tertiary educated (while her parents left school early) which has resulted in an increased awareness of the 'distinctions' of class as she is 'definitively classed as middle-class' now. This belonging to a new class led to quite different tastes between the generations. Bourdieu (1984) argues that the taste for classical music is socially acquired and this participant agreed.

> My parents, umm, for example, music style, my parents like country, anything breezy,
> my brothers and I, my brother and I are into classics, umm, rock (9).

Class awareness increased for this is woman even further 'when I met my husband to be, because he was from the next level up'.

> His father was an upper middle-class English man, so he brought his class system with
> him. Umm, I mean, I noticed (laughs), oh my goodness; we don't live the same as they
> do (9).

The 'distinctions' which the woman noticed were confirmed by the husband who, although happy with the choices he made, was still at times having difficulties in trying to balance the ideals of his family of origin with the different habitus he had created with his wife. This sometimes caused him anxieties and stress which especially came to a head when visiting his parental house as his mother and his wife have very different approaches to life and 'do not always get on'. The result of this is that they do not spend as much time with the extended family as they both would want especially for the children. However, the scarcity of 'time' was another reason that family visits did not happen as much.

Education had been an important part of the ideals of the man's middle-class family too as it can lead to having the 'right material things'. These were seen as important

by the man's father who wanted to be more 'English upper-class than middle-class' which 'underpinned a lot of the decisions he made'.

> Umm, things had to LOOK socially right, umm, so we had to have a nice car, we had to have a nice house, and I think we probably somewhat struggled financially to do all these things. Umm, yeah, so certainly things had to look right … I still struggle with some of these things myself (15).

Having a good education for their children remains an important ideal for this couple too as it gives the children the opportunity to reach 'their full potential' (9). It would lead hopefully, says the father, to more choices and enjoyment of life.

> I would like them to have jobs that they really enjoy, umm, preferably, and I know this is fairly idealistic, but preferably something that is not going to stress them too much, I suppose. It would be nice if their lives were not as stressful. I suppose I want them to ENJOY it and look back and say, hey, I really enjoyed it … (15).

Middle-Class Childhoods and Concerted Cultivation

> Social wealth is not only a financial matter. At least as important is the presence of psychological and cultural capital to feel and function well as child, mother, and father in a family unit of whatever composition under present-day western circumstances (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:85)

Bourdieu (1998:19), discussing the middle classes in France, has argued that families invest more in education when strategies for directly passing on economic capital become more problematic. Middle-class parents in New Zealand too use formal and informal educational strategies to pass on cultural capital to their children. The New Zealand middle classes, like the middle classes in America, face the prospect of 'declining fortunes' (Lareau 2003:5) due to the changes which occurred in the past decades (see Chapter 4). To stop this decline middle-class parents have adopted new regimes of rationality and practices of childrearing in the home which are founded on current professional standards and knowledges. Lareau (2003:3) describes these new regimes as 'the concerted cultivation of children'. Through this 'concerted cultivation' middle-class parents try to stimulate their children's development and foster cognitive and social skills. These new rationales and practices may eventually contribute to their children's advancement.

Lareau (2003:6) shows for America, that different philosophies and approaches to child rearing between the classes leads to the 'transmission of differential advantages'. These advantages can, for example, be seen in the education system in

New Zealand where middle-class children achieve better than working-class children (Nash 1993, 2004). Education has always been an area of social reproduction, but today's parents give a lot more thought to this. The demand for educational competence on the whole has increased for everybody, not only the middle classes. Having a 'good and proper education is also part of lower-class regimes (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:77). Education as the main pathway to success in children's lives has also been a parental strategy in past decades.

However, as Van de Werfhorst and Anderson (2005:322) point out, in contemporary society it is often not enough to have the same level of educational credentials as the previous generation to achieve the same social class. This is due to the devaluing of educational credentials as more and more people become better educated. People are therefore trying to minimise the risk of downward mobility by applying different educational strategies than was the case in previous generations (Van de Werfhorst 2002:410). Education, already important in middle classes for many decades, has therefore taken on a new emphasis, as it is now the 'right' education which has become the top priority. Other areas of distinction, such as leisure activities, are also cultivated to achieve that goal (see below).

These new strategies are reflected in an article in the New *Zealand Herald* (Phare 2006) in September 2006 which states that anxious middle-class parents are so desperate to send their children to private schools that they are prepared to work long hours, have two jobs, sell their homes and forgo luxuries to be able to pay private school fees.

> Raised in a competitive job market, parents say that if there is one thing they want for their children, it is a good education (Phare 2006:20).

The article, which explores the growth of private schools in the Auckland area, quotes middle-class parents who are 'happy' to struggle financially so their children can go to a private school. They offer a variety of reasons for their choice of a private school over a state school which includes smaller classes, better subject choices and impressive facilities. Private schools are also an opportunity for their children to:

> … rub shoulders with other high achieving students from families who will form an important social and business network in the future (Phare 2006:20).

Education was also an important feature in discussions with parents during this research. Most parental couples spend considerable time talking and thinking about this

issue. One mother explained that she had thought about education a lot and had taken it 'on board' (1) more seriously 'than my parents did when I was a child' (1). This parent made what she considered informed choices through her own education as a teacher, her university education and through 'reading a lot' (1).

Good academic performances in school have stayed an important part of the reasons why parents decide to send their children to certain schools. However, as Van de Werfhorst (2002) shows, an all-round upbringing is also seen as an advantage in today's competitive employment market. This is reflected in parents' school choices. Choosing a school for your children is a 'life decision in a way' (1), stated the mother quoted above. She had chosen an education for her son, she said, which gave him the possibility of 'a rich childhood' (1). The ability to live in a 'natural, imaginary fantasy world' (1) for as long as possible was also important to her, because 'like the allegory of the tree, I want him to have very healthy roots of the tree' (1). Academic knowledge and skills are important, she said, but she also wanted him to have 'quite a holistic education, I don't want it to be predominantly academically driven (1)'. However, one of the reasons she had sent her son to the private Steiner school was that most people she knew with a Steiner education 'did quite well' (1).

There are big differences, stated this parent, between herself and her parents' generation as 'we now have user pays and a much more competitive school environment' (1).

> So parents have to, really, really, you know, really consider where they send their children now, it is not just necessarily the local school down the road, you know, there is a more competitive educational market out there now. So in that aspect, now parents ... are perhaps more, you know make themselves more informed of what, what way they want to go for their children (1).

Parents in my research, as was the case for parents in the *New Zealand Herald* on Sunday (Phare 2006), saw spiritual values, manners and discipline as an important feature of education. Smaller classes, more resources and the quality of teachers were also important reasons.

> … at the moment I 'm thinking of sending P. to a Christian school, because I love the, the smaller classes, I love the one on one. There is more of that, and the teachers actually, they actually really care, they get a spiritual input as well as the educational and I think that is very important, because at the end of your school you may have an empty spiritual life or an empty soul, you know, which is really important, to have a belief system …(4)

Although her oldest child was going to the local primary school, she and her husband would really like their children to go to a private school 'as I don't really like the political correct attitudes that are coming in'. There was almost no right and wrong anymore,

said this mother, no clear lines. Things have 'gone all fuzzy' and if 'you don't agree with all those things, umm, you are sort of frowned at' (4).

In another conversation one of the parents said that she knew (because she had been to university and worked in the education system) that some schools gave you a better education than others.

> So D. will go to a private school, because that's really important to me. He's got social skills, he can make friends, so I don't have an issue with that, but I do have an issue with him having a good education, because he has a good mind. I think everyone has the potential and it's a shame to waste that on poor teaching (5).

To be able to send their children to the school of their choice (private schools or schools in areas which are 'better') many parents in my research, like the parents in the *New Zealand Herald* article (Phare 2006), are willing to make sacrifices. Several families, for example, had moved into the Titirangi area, because they saw this area as having better quality schools than the surrounding suburbs. Sometimes, said one parent who had moved from nearby Glen Eden into the Titirangi area, the move felt like 'a bit of a mistake' as moving into the area had come at a cost. House prices in the area were high and this caused anxiety. However, said this mother, despite the sacrifices they had to make she wanted to stay living in the area for the sake of the children's schooling. When asked what the sacrifices were that they had made, she answered:

> Umm, well, I have to work, I don't have a choice and I work at night in order for my husband to look after our children. That is a choice we have made. Umm, and I have been doing it for six years and I hate it. And we have a boarder, umm, and that is also not really a choice anymore (8).

Contemporary parents are aware of the shifting discourses regarding education between themselves and their parents. In past generations education was seen as a way to move up the ladder and to have a 'good and secure life' (15). One parent stated that both his parents 'always wanted something better for us' (20). 'Something better' for the children has remained an important ideal for contemporary middle-class parents and they too want their children to have a good and secure life. But the 'something better' has taken on new forms which are not so much focussed on material bettering, but now include a further betterment of self. This includes notions of fulfilment, happiness and reaching one's full potential. Education is seen as leading to more flexibility and choices and is therefore seen as a way to reach these goals.

One father expressed this clearly when he said that he saw education as very important for his children and it was an area of life he worried about 'a lot'. This father

saw a good education as crucial to his children's ability 'to enjoy life' and 'not having too many worries'. Education, he said, leads to a better financial future and this will give children the ability to make choices in the future.

> Good choices I think are quite important, that they CAN make a range of them, that they don't feel that they're stuck (15).

The emphasis on choices is partly a reflection of parents' own feelings of ambiguity and stress. They hope that a good education will give their children the ability and skills to have more choices than they have and will relieve at least some of the angst and anxieties contemporary life brings. I will discuss these parental feelings of stress and ambiguities further in Chapter 7.

A Feel for the Game: Communication and Social Skills

> Well, I think it's, a more, a mass marketed driven society now. And I think, more and more people need to have, umm, credentials that really prove that they can do this or that, you know. It's not necessarily you go into an apprenticeship and you evolve into a life long career. Now there is such a competitive market out there and I think, parents are trying to ensure that their children will succeed as adults in, in such a competitive world … so there is this kind of assumption that we start them REAL young, that's going to give them a head start (14).

Middle-class children are encouraged to develop a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu 1998:77) from early childhood onwards. Developing good communication and social skills are important parts of the contemporary game in a society in which good vocabulary, knowledge and reasoning are highly valued. Communication skills and social skills therefore become an important part of concerted cultivation and start at birth in the home and are extended through early childhood education and leisure activities.

Extensive discussions between parents and children 'are a hallmark of middle-class childrearing' and through this children learn to develop and value an individualised sense of self (Lareau 2003:241). Contemporary regimes and practices of childrearing in the middle classes emphasise the eliciting of children's feelings, opinions and thoughts. Through this approach middle-class children develop great verbal agility, a large vocabulary and a familiarity with abstract concepts. These communications teach children from an early age to question adults and to address them as relative equals (Lareau 2003:2). Adults in a middle-class environment generally respond positively to such interactions and children learn that their opinions are valued

and that their ideas are considered important (Lareau 2003:129). Their comfort with authority figures, such as their parents and teachers, teaches these children that they have a right to pursue their own individual preferences and to actively manage interactions.

> I think that, I just want to pass onto the kids that always, never be afraid to ask for help that is the other thing we teach them lately, especially with the camp that is coming up. Never be afraid to say: Can someone help me? Never be afraid to say: I can't do this! (14).

This, says Lareau (2003:3), leads to a sense of entitlement in children and it teaches them how to make rules work to their advantage. Reasoning, negotiation and the ability to find evidence to support their position become an important part of these children's habitus. Middle-class children, however, are often not as conversant with other social skills such as the ability to organise their own time or ways of hanging out with adults in a non-obtrusive way.

These good communication, negotiating and reasoning skills of middle-class children were also apparent when I visited parental homes during my interviews and participant observation. Although parents often told children to play for a while by themselves while they 'talked to this lady', the children in general found it hard to occupy their time without adult company. They also displayed 'a sense entitlement' to be part of the conversations. Both mother and interviewer reacted mainly positively to the child's questioning, reasoning and negotiations. Rules set by the parent at the beginning of the interview were often re-negotiated with skill even by the younger children. When 'learning opportunities' presented themselves through children's play or when a child was interested, for example, in the tape recorder used in the interview, both mother and middle-class interviewer answered children's questions or gave more information.

All children in my research received some form of early education through public and private kindergartens or Playcentre[11]. Many also attended more informal playgroups organised by Plunket, the church or privately in peoples' homes. Middle-class parents see childhood as an opportunity for play, says Lareau (2003:249):

> … but also as a chance to develop talents and skills that could be valuable in the self-actualization processes that take place in adulthood.

Parents in my research too saw formal and informal early childhood education as a place were children did 'lots of different activities' and 'generally had a good time' (14). It was

also seen as a place where parents, especially mothers, received support and information and the networks established there were often extended to the home front. However, extending children's communication and social skills was in general mentioned as the main reason for these attendances. As one mother said:

> It is such a competitive market out there and I think, parents are trying to assure that their children will succeed as adults in, in such a competitive world' (14).

Parents saw communication and social skills as important to children's future attendance at school. It was not enough anymore, as was the case in the past in the past like when they were children, just to send them to school when they turned five. Children were seen as needing good communication, social skills and habits before they entered their primary school years to succeed.

> Like how to socialise with the children, how to do mat time and pay attention to the teacher, how to join in. I mean it is just the basic things, colours, numbers, but I don't think there needs to be as much pressure as some people expect from pre-schoolers (14).

Another mother said that she could provide many of the activities supplied at Playcentre in her own home, 'but then they don't get great social skills' (8). This was also reflected in the answer of a mother who, when asked why she had chosen Steiner education for her child, said:

> I think for social interaction particularly, because he is an only child, umm, I wanted him to have that, you know, to rub up against other children (5).

A parent, whose children attended a public kindergarten, also mentioned social skills as the most important reason to send her children to preschool. Academic skills alone, she said, are not enough, because you can be very academic:

> … but if you can't relate to people you are a very lonely person. It is a bit to me, I can consider it a bit like, umm … having a handicap in some way (2).

The Concerted Cultivation of Leisure

Organising, supporting and stimulating a wide variety of leisure activities for children have become very much part of the new regimes of rationality. Parents see many advantages in the skills these activities bring to their children. They are opportunities for their children to develop their full potential. Some commentators have criticised the 'overscheduled' lives of contemporary children and they 'long for the days when most children had unstructured lives, filled with informal play' (Lareau

2003:245). This is a romanticised view, says Lareau, as most children played an economic role in family life until the recent past and it was only for:

> … a relatively brief historical period that children were granted long stretches of leisure time with unstructured play.

Contemporary parents in New Zealand had their childhoods during that time. This is reflected in their discourses of the time of the 'Golden Weather' (see Chapter 6). Parents talk with nostalgia about this time while at the same time contributing to the recent developments in the area of children's leisure. Leisure time has no doubt become more hectic in recent times. However, as Lareau (2003:247) points out, just because leisure time has increasingly shifted from unstructured play to organised activities this does not mean that families no longer have fun during their leisure hours.

There is nothing new in the use of leisure as a way to govern children. I described in Chapter 3, how leisure activities and team sports were used to build character and good health in children. During this period:

> … recreation was widely perceived as an agency reflecting and encouraging discipline and group solidarity in the interests of industrialisation, imperialism and nationalism (Watson 1998:27).

In recent decades, however, leisure has become increasingly more based on individual performance. It has also become part of the self-definition and aspirations of the individual (Phillips 1999:227). Leisure times have come to be seen as a time when peoples' lives are 'really' or most 'authentically' taking place. This is due to a regime of rationality which sees leisure time as being defined in opposition to the world of work (Bennett *et al.* 1999:87) and education. However, work, school and leisure activities are not independent, but interrelated (Du Bois-Reymond *et al.* 2001:6).

> Certain key qualifications such as competent time management and the learning to work in a team as well as the ability to communicate with many different people are acquired in structured leisure activities.

When our ideas of work change, concepts of leisure change too. The contemporary rationale of work, concepts such as scarcity of time, flexibility, efficiency, improvement of self, can now also be found in our perceptions of leisure. These are reflected in childhood concepts of leisure.

Contemporary parents actively stimulate their children's leisure agenda, says Lareau (2003:247). The scheduling and encouragement of leisure activities are seen as an essential aspect of good parenting and have become part of the concerted cultivation

of children. Family life has thereby become more systematic, predictable and regulated than they it has been in the recent past as middle-class children, especially, increasingly participate in a wider variety of activities. Participation in a variety of leisure activities is seen to improve children's social as well as physical skills. It teaches them, says Lareau, how to push themselves, to develop good training and work practices as well as giving them the opportunity to reach their full potential as an 'all-round person'. This provides them with advantages in education and work environments.

Dutch and Pakeha parents also saw leisure activities as improving social and physical skills as Lareau describes above. However, leisure activities were also perceived as giving children skill on a personal level when the stresses of life become apparent. It was a way, said some parents, to give children discipline which would help them in their teenage years. One Dutch parent, for example, said that parents needed to supply their children with a framework which would help them in difficult times such as the teenage years when children often fell of 'the railing' (7). We have to help them, she said, and we must 'carry things to them'/ 'dingen aandragen' which may give them a passion for something like sport or music. This may help them, 'through that difficult period'/'door die moeilijke periode heen' (6). This, she said, will give them an advantage over people who do not have these skills and ideals to work with.

Parental regimens of rationality and the practices associated with increased leisure activities come at a cost. This includes often very high monetary costs for equipment, joining and lessons fees, transport costs as well as a social cost. The combination of work (especially if both parents have paid employment) and children's increasingly busy school and leisure schedules leads to families who are ruled by the calendar.

> Month after month, children are busy participating in sports, music, scouts, and playgroups. And, before and after going to work, their parents are busy getting them to and from these activities. At times, middle-class houses seem to be little more than holding places for the occupants during the brief periods when they are between activities (Lareau 2003:35).

This trend, as described so well by Lareau in terms of America, has also changed family life in New Zealand. Many parents in this study commented on the pressure of this hectic life style and the stress it has put on their time and relationships.

One mother commented on how different this was from the past. Although she too played a lot of sport, she said, and her parents always dropped her off and picked

her up, 'they never watched' (14). This is part of a different approach to parenting today, said this mother, as my parents 'just wanted me to be happy' (14). But they did not really get involved, she said, my parents were 'pretty cruisey' (14).

Life for this mother was certainly less than cruisey. Her three children were involved in many activities and she saw her role as 'the cultivator' of her children as the highest priority at this time of her life. She therefore had given up paid work and did many hours of volunteer work to be around her children and stimulate their schooling and leisure activities. This meant giving up on some luxuries such as dinners out and the movies, but 'we just make do for now' (14). Another reason for giving up work was to support her husband who works in a demanding job and also studies part-time at university.

Most Pakeha and Dutch parents talked about the importance of extending their children through a variety of leisure activities. They saw parental support in these activities as an important part of their role as parents. However, parents also saw the disadvantages of these busy schedules and regretted not being able to spend more time doing 'outdoor' activities such as going to the beach. Most parents felt that there was an increasing pressure put on parents to 'extend' their children through scheduled leisure activities. As one mother reflected, 'I feel like a bad parent when I do not do all these things' (12) and 'sometimes I feel like I'm a failure, because I'm working and I'm not achieving all those things you are supposed to' (12).

Leisure and Cyber Space

The individualisation of leisure time has increased with the development of electronic technologies and entertainment in recent decades. It has transformed the way New Zealanders in general, but children and youth especially, spend their leisure time. Communication technologies such as the internet (which arrived in New Zealand in 1986) took off in the 1990s. By 2001 New Zealand was 'among the top 10 webbed countries' in the world (Dalley and McLean 2005:381) which makes the rest of the world, 'the best and the worst', for most New Zealanders 'only a click of the finger away' (Dalley and McLean 2005:382). This increase in computer use, especially by the young, is contributing to the new discourses of risk surrounding childhood (see also Chapter 7 and 8).

Cyberspace, as Watson (1998:30) notes provides individuals with a range of choices in information and entertainment:

… which those in authority are finding difficult, perhaps impossible, to control and censor.

The discussion on the role of 'cyberspace' and computational technology in children's lives has become increasingly polarised (Cassell 2004:121). On the one hand there is the push for computers in schools and children's home life based on the belief that computer skills will give children a better chance in the job market. On the other hand there is the containment of computers based on the belief that they have a negative effect on children (see for example Armstrong and Casement 2001). Middle-class parents in New Zealand too are affected by the polarised discourses about the new technologies. However, the answer as Cassell (2004:121) states, lies somewhere in the middle. Recent new research which acknowledges some of the disadvantages of media such as television and computer, but also shows parents how to use the electronic media constructively (Singer and Singer 2005), may be able to supply that answer in the middle.

Contemporary parents acknowledge that the new technologies are part of modern life for themselves as well as their children. As one Dutch parent said, when discussing the influence of computers on the life of her daughter's life, that they 'will of course become reality for her'/'dat wordt natuurlijk voor haar werkelijkheid' (6). What that 'reality' will look like in the future, she said, she does not know, but it will be as it is for adults today 'but then a lot worse'/'maar dan wel erger' (6). Another parent said that the question of technology:

> … is where I get stumped, because I mean, I SEE the negative side of where our society is heading. But that is a reality and there is a side of me that just wants to …, I want to be able to see the positive of that change, that children … that they can engage in this, ah, technological world in a positive way …(1).

Changing Meanings of Parenthood

Gender is an important organising strategy of subjectivity and embodiment in western societies. Discourses of gender therefore play an important part in the shaping of the self. There is agreement that gender roles have changed dramatically over the course of the 20th century (see for example Du Bois-Reymond 2001, Kedgley 1996, Lupton and Barclay 1997, May 2001). This has lead to a renegotiation of the meanings of parenthood which is based on the interrelationship between motherhood and fatherhood (Lupton and Barclay 1997:1). The categories of motherhood and fatherhood

draw their meanings at least partly in alignment with, as well as in opposition to the other (Lupton and Barclay 1997:4). Changes within western societies mean that these categories have shifted and are now often conceptualised as a site of competing discourses and desires. Subjects in contemporary society therefore have to move back and forth between different and often contradictory subject positions even within the context of a single day (Lupton and Barclay 1997:12).

Park (1991:13) states that it is hard to establish if 'ladies a plate' is a prescription or a description, because it suggests both a lack of choice and a taken-for grantedness. It assumes, she argues, that women provide people maintaining services and assumes women's exclusion from the market place.

> The cultural construct of 'wife and mother', with the attendant tasks of house-and husband-keeping and childcare, influence women's participation in the paid work-force and in other areas of public life (Park 1991b:207).

This construction of women has dominated New Zealand discourses and has affected women's choices and their construction of self. Men in New Zealand too have been affected by dominant discourses such as those surrounding the 'typical' Kiwi male stereotype (Phillips 2005). However, political, economic and social changes (as I described in Chapter 4), have challenged these dominant gender roles and the associated ideas of self.

In previous times in New Zealand history worsening economic or social conditions often consolidated family life. In the 1930s, for example, it led to a revaluing of women's work in the home and an increase in discourses surrounding the family man (see Chapter 3). New Zealand discourses involving 'womanly skills' such as 'making do' and 'good management'(Phillips 1996) increased during these times. They remain part of New Zealand discourses as, for example, can be seen in the high country narratives (Morris 2002). These discourses of 'making do' and good management' were also found in the narratives of 'stay-home' mothers in my research. One mother said, for example, that not going into paid employment to earn more money for the family was not always an easy decision, however, 'You just make do with what you've got! (14)'. As a couple, she said, they have made a choice to have less money until the youngest child goes to school. Although part of her 'would LOVE to have more money and more income for things' (14), this is not a priority right now. 'I have been able to give in other ways' (14), states this mother, like helping at kindergarten, school and as a netball coach. Her

children sometimes feel left out due to not having Barbie or Play Stations because 'we don't have money for that' (14). But this lack in material things is outweighed by the benefits of her being at home as they 'see lots of friends, they socialise, they do heaps of things, they're pretty happy kids! (14).

For many families, however, one parent staying home is not an option. Women have fought hard in the past decades to have more choices and to be able to remain in the workforce when they became mothers and wives (see Chapter 4). However, changes in New Zealand society over the past decades have led to a situation where the 'choice' to stay home or go to work has been removed. This has led to a situation where women feel caught between their roles as a parent and the requirements of paid work. Women are still socialised to anticipate having children and many aspects of their lives are structured around that expectation (Jones and Brayfield 1997:1243). However, new discourses also expect contemporary women to reach their own 'potentiality' and develop the self through paid work. The choices fought for by feminism in the 1970s and 1980s were seen to give women more options. However, in today's economic condition the option to work or not to work when children are born has added extra stress to many women's lives.

Having children 'changes everything' (8), said one mother. Nobody, she said, ever tells you how hard it is going to be. This sentiment was reflected by many parents and is encapsulated in the following quote.

> …it affects everything, it affects where you live, how you live or what you eat, whether you can afford to buy a pair of new shoes, or you know. It affects ABSOLUTELY everything (13).

Both men and women acknowledge the enormous changes children have brought to their lives. But there are definitely gender differences here as one father stated clearly, 'I probably see it as changing S. (wife's) life more dynamically than mine because she's had to give up work' (15). Women are overall still more involved in the day to day care of children. Some of them stopped work, at least for a while when the children were young, worked part-time or put their career aspiration on hold to accommodate the needs of the family. Different families made different choices regarding work and the day to day care of children. One woman (who works part-time in the evenings when her husband can take over the care of the children) reflects on the choices she made in the following way.

> It depends on how you choose to parent, because my kids could be in day care and I could be out working full time, but that is not how I choose to parent (5).

Other women who were trained professionals whose skills are in demand, such as teachers and nurses, chose to work part-time. One of the mothers said that she was lucky that there was a shortage in her profession as it means that she could 'choose' to do shift work at weekends and an occasional evening. This worked well for her family, she said, as they only sporadically needed to use a baby sitter when her husband was busy.

> Yeah, that does work well; the only disadvantage is that I'm not present for twelve hours in the weekends (13).

This means family time together is limited and leads to other compromises regarding childrearing. Differences in ideas between her husband and herself, said this woman, mean that the children 'stay up later than they should do and he does not check things before they go to bed'. But, said the mother laughing, 'That's the price you pay, but it's a small price! (13)'. Part-time work by this mother had made 'a few lifestyle choices possible' (13) in this household which her own parents were not able to make 'like paying a lot towards education' (13). This is a priority for them, she said, because as professional middle-class people they have an interest in education and 'expect their children to do well educationally' (13).

Perceived gender differences lead to quite different expectations regarding childcare in this family. Although the father is self-employed he only is expected to take time off work to care for his children when the mother is not available due to her work.

> I've never expected him to take any time of his business day to look after the children. It doesn't work and he is not capable. He doesn't find he can work at home with a child around; it doesn't work for him, he needs to completely focus. So no, umm, no my job has always supported his job. I have always considered, even when his business was not going very well … we always tried to manage so he was available to work and I worked outside these hours (13).

This woman felt nevertheless that working part-time had given her more options and independence than her mother ever had as she did not have to think or ask whether she could 'spend the money or not' (13) and:

> … if I decided I'm going to do something, unless it's a big issue, I usually carry it through without umm, thinking about whether I should check it with my husband (13).

Although this woman supported the male breadwinner like her mother did before her, she perceived herself as having more independence and choices than her mother.

> She was NOT independent in any way, it was just, she couldn't have managed without him. While I feel now, if, whenever we had difficulties within our marriage, and I mean what marriages don't, I DO, because I am able to, to work. I feel, I am a more equal partner and I choose to stay and we choose to do it this way (13).

Her mother who was never in paid work was very dependent on her husband, she said, as her mother never learned to drive, pay the bills or make any of the important decisions. This meant that her mother could not leave the relationship even if she wanted to.

> I've never had to stay BECAUSE I'm depended on him; I stayed because I've chosen to stay. And I DO have the option of being able to, umm, if things got really bad, umm, OR I was in an abusive relationship or not the boss of my children, I could walk away and we could cope (13).

However, as in most of the interviews I conducted with women who were mothers, this woman too felt that the choices and independence had come at a cost and the demands of contemporary motherhood in regards to time and stress was sometimes high.

> I don't have as much time as my mother, my life's much more stressed, I got sick at Christmas, I got pneumonia (13).

Some of the mothers I interviewed had mothers who were in paid employment full-time. 'She worked more than I did, she was a full-time teacher' (14), said one of the mothers referring to her mother's paid job. This woman, who had chosen to be a 'stay- home' mother, felt that the changing role of motherhood meant that she was still at least as busy in her non-paid work. Children take much more time nowadays, she said, as parents are expected to spend more time with them. Although she herself participated in Girl Guides and St John's[12], music and sports, they were 'much more local then as they are now …now things are so much more spread out' (14).

Fathers too are struggling with their changing roles and the issues of time and stress as they try to combine the demands of work with the changing discourses of fatherhood. Balancing these changing images of the gendered self often leads to feelings of ambiguity and stress. One father expresses this clearly when he said that, although he did like the changes which had occurred in his role as a father, they also meant that, 'I worry a lot more, I worry' (15). This father saw himself as being involved with

his family in very different ways from his own father. His father, he said, was the main breadwinner and disciplinarian, who 'either was always working or quite tired and he only worked normal hours' (15). This parent said that he has mixed feelings about being the main income earner in his family as it put pressure on him to stay employed despite the circumstances. However, he also would not have liked to be home full-time (like his wife), as he saw his job as important for his self image.

> I see jobs as quite important, I suppose that comes from my father's, yeah I suppose he had a drive, to succeed in the employment area, cause that gives quite a social standing as well (15).

Having a job with 'social standing', however, leads to a continuous struggle for this father between his roles as a parent and as an employee in a job where working 'normal' hours (as his father was able) is not an option.

> I worry that I do not do well in my job, that is always concerning because in some way it's because I want to do my job well … so I'm quite conscious that I sometimes bring work home which goes into the kids time and into S. (wife's) time plus into my study time (15).

The concept of the scarcity of time came up regularly with most fathers. Most fathers said that they wanted to spend more time with the children or as a family, but that they found this hard due to work pressures and study.

> I'm so conscious every time I say to the kids, 'Oh I have to go and study'', I am actually saying to them… What I AM saying to them is NO! Then I think, in 10 years time they are not going to be around and I would hate to think that they are going to think dad studied all his life. So I am quite conscious of that (15).

Other things too stopped this family from spending time together as, 'We do a lot of busy things'. This included children's school and leisure activities (the children all played a variety of sports) as well as his own and his wife's study. There was not much time left after that to just 'hang out' (15). This is something this father regrets.

> My concerns are with things such as the holidays we do not do much of for a whole, yeah, for a whole variety of reasons really… so for me that is a real concern for us because it is a time I enjoyed, yeah I have really fond memories of, yet I am conscious we haven't done it! (15).

Not having time to take their children to the 'typical' places of New Zealand childhood, namely the beach and the outdoors (places which played such an important part in parents' own memories) was one of the things most mentioned and worried about by New Zealand parents. This New Zealand 'ideal' of the time of the 'Golden Weather' and its related narratives will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

Dutch Middle-Class Childhood

Assimilation regimes of the 1950s and 1960s (see Chapter 3) in which the older generation of Dutch parents were active participants meant, argues Schouten (1992:169), that Dutch children brought up during this time became almost 'indistinguishable within a generation'. Although this has been the case to a large extent other research in the Dutch community (Leek 1990, Tap 1997, Van Dongen 1992) shows that the picture is more complicated. Although the Dutch were great assimilators in the outside world, they continued many aspects of their Dutchness in their home life. Dutch concepts such as *'gezelligheid'* (see Chapter 6), for example, remained an important part of their lifestyle and childrearing regimes which were passed on to their children. This is reflected in my research with Dutch parents of the second generation. One woman said, 'There are lots of little things that you do, that you don't often realise that are Dutch' (5).

The Dutch parents discussed in the following section are the more recent immigrants who came to New Zealand from the 1980s onwards. This group, who generally were better off and better educated (Schouten 1992:251), immigrated for ideological and ecological motives (Leek 1990:4) as well as economic reasons. These newer immigrants, as I described in Chapter 3, do not necessarily regard the shift to New Zealand as a permanent one. Passing on 'Dutchness' to their children is therefore very important, not only for personal reason (see below), but also to keep the possibility of a future return to The Netherlands open. One mother reflected on this when she said:

> We already have been here now for sixteen years, but it could be that we say at a given point: we like it here, but let's go back to The Netherlands. I don't see that as going back, more like we are going on. Umm, and then it is important of course that she speaks the language (6).

> Wij zitten hier ook alweer zestien jaar, maar het kan toch best dat we op een gegeven moment ook zeggen van, we mogen het hier, maar ook we gaan weer terug naar Nederland. Ik zie dat nooit als teruggaan, maar dan gaan we weer verder, maar we gaan in Nederland wonen. Umm, en dan is het natuurlijk belangrijk dat ze die taal spreekt en kan (6).

Travelling Discourses of Dutch Childhood

If you ask European contemporary parents what they want for their children they see happiness, independence and social responsibility as their main goals (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:64). These guiding principles in the upbringing of children are only

recent, says Du Bois-Reymond, as the previous generation was still guided by very different regimes which included a sense of duty, respect for elders and the goal that the child became a 'decent' member of society.

> The child, later the young person, was supposed to learn to accept prevailing social values as they were represented by socializing institutions: family, schools, leisure clubs, and so forth, by churches, and the state (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:63).

During the 1980s and 1990s Dutch society, as in New Zealand, altered at a rapid rate due to economic and social changes. During this time Dutch dominant regimes of childhood too changed from regimes of obedience and conformity to a new form which stresses the individual personalities of people (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:77). These shifts from authoritarian to egalitarian and from collectivist to individualistic regimes (Pels *et al.* 2006:9) were partly due to an increasing competition in the labour market, the risk of downward mobility and the devaluing of educational credentials (Van de Werfhorst and Anderson 2005). Dutch parents therefore applied new educational strategies (Van de Werfhorst 2002:410) to increase their children's life chances.

Shifts in regimes of rationality of gender during the 1960s and 1970s freed Dutch women and men from their restricted roles, as it did in New Zealand, and married women entered the workforce at a rapid rate. Increasing levels of education and a higher level of professional jobs for women led to more couples having children at a later stage in their lifecycle and a dropping birth rate. This shift challenged personal relationships and changed family structures.

> A relatively stable – one might say rigid – family structure has made room for a much more flexible (some culture critics say unstable) family structure (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:67).

As part of the new regimes of flexibility Dutch households shifted from a 'command household' to a 'negotiation household' (Du Bois-Reymond 2001:68). In negotiation households children are increasingly expected to be independent and equal (see also Gullestad 1997, Prout 2005). This increasingly child-centred behaviour has produced more autonomous youngsters in The Netherlands (Pels *et al.* 2006:9).

Education forms an important part of Dutch middle-class regimes of childhood too (as is the case in New Zealand). Eighty percent of men and women in The Netherlands born after the late 1960s obtained at least some form of specialised

schooling (Van de Werfhorst 2002:409) which has led to a highly competitive employment market. Having the right qualifications therefore has become only one of the criteria among many by which employers select their employees. Choices about what and where to study have consequently become increasingly important in The Netherlands (Van de Werfhorst 2002:431). The possession of other combinations of symbolic, social and cultural capital through leisure activities also produces clear advantages (Schijf *et al.* 2004:473).

The concerted education of children therefore starts young in the Netherlands and Dutch parents provide their children with learning activities at home from birth. The attendance at early childhood centres, as in New Zealand, is also seen a necessary part of development for children. Good communication and social and personal development are also seen as essential skills which a child needs to learn before attending school (Eldering 1997:340).

Dutch parents who immigrated in the 1980s and 1990s brought these new regimes of childhood with them to New Zealand. They reflect the more global regimes of concerted cultivation which are now part of New Zealand middle-class childhoods. Leek (1990:8) points out that the younger Dutch immigrants have relatively little problems with adapting to New Zealand society. They speak excellent English and have the leisure and the means to socialise with the locals. But, says Leek, because of their economic independence, they also are less strongly motivated than past Dutch immigrants to suppress their 'Dutchness'. Dutch middle-class parents carefully balance the more global regime of concerted cultivation with New Zealand local regimes as well as their Dutch childhood repertoires to make sure that their children are not excluded from any opportunity.

Class or Ethnicity?

Lareau (2003:4) argues that in America contemporary parental repertoires are more influenced by class than ethnicity. Although there are some key differences among ethnic groups, she says, it is class differences which shape contemporary childhood most. My research with Dutch parents in New Zealand supports Lareau's statement. Dutch parents in New Zealand do not see themselves as having different approaches to childrearing from their Pakeha counterparts due to their 'Dutchness'. Most of them see class, gender and individual upbringing as the reasons why their approaches may differ from those of others. When asked if she saw differences in

childrearing between herself and her New Zealand friends, a mother answered 'Mmm, I don't really believe that is so'/'mmm, dat geloof ik niet zo (6). She continued by stating that she believed that the differences between herself and some of her friends were more due perhaps to their 'social class'/'sociale klasse' (6) rather than the 'language culture'/'taal kultuur' (6).

> I was suddenly thinking of a friend of mine who lives nearby with a little child, who has three children and yes, they do not have the financial space and perhaps other things different too. They are more casual in their upbringing, much more in the direction of my parents than I am, but I think that has more to do with social class. Because the other girls that I know, they are well off too or what I think well off. Umm, they do give more attention to those sorts of things (6).

> Ik zat ineens aan mijn vriendin te denken die hier erg dichtbij woont met een kindje, en die heeft van drie kinderen en ja, die hebben die ruimte finacieel niet en mischien andere dingen ook anders. Die zijn meer casual in opvoeding, veel meer richting mijn ouders dan ik, maar ik denk dat dat ook met de sociale klasse te maken heeft. Want dat andere meisje dat ik ken, die hebben het ook wel echt goed, of wat ik dan denk goed. Umm, die geven wel weer meer aandacht aan dat soort dingen (6).

These sentiments regarding differences between Pakeha and Dutch childrearing rationales and practices were reflected by other Dutch people. No, said one of the other parents, 'I have many New Zealand and Dutch friends', but no, I can't really say, yes THIS I do totally different, because that is very Dutch'/'Ik heb vele Nieuw Zeelandse en Nederlandse vrienden en vriendinnen, maar nee, ik kan niet echt zeggen van, ja DIT doe ik nu helemaal anders, want dit is nu heel Nederlands' (7).

Dutch middle-class parents, like Pakeha, used the term class to describe themselves and others without hesitation. They saw New Zealand as more relaxed in class terms then The Netherlands where class distinctions are more distinct. The Dutch 'box mentality'/ *'hokjes geest'* through which people are categorised was something frequently mentioned by most Dutch immigrants. The greater lack of this 'box mentality' in New Zealand and its associated lack of the use of certain distinctions was something most parents liked about New Zealand. In New Zealand, said one of the fathers, people get to know each other even when they don't have a nice car in front of their house or a good job. In The Netherlands, he stated, when you are from the middle classes, than you live in a middle-class street and 'your children also go to a middle-class school'/ 'je kinderen gaan op een midden klasse school' (21).

The greater flexibility regarding class in New Zealand is frequently mentioned by Dutch parents as being pleasurable/prettig (3). Norms surrounding clothing are also frequently mentioned as something Dutch people enjoy about New Zealand

> There are really things in New Zealand that I do enjoy. Just being easier with clothing for example, well, that I find really 'delicious', that they are like that (7).

> Daar zijn echt wel dingen in Nieuw Zeeland ... Net als gewoon wat makkelijker zijn met kleding enzo, nou dat vind ik gewoon HEERLIJK dat ze in Nieuw Zeeland zo zijn (7).

Parental couples of mixed Pakeha/Dutch ethnicity saw differences between partners in regard to childrearing more in terms of individual differences rather than ethnicity. One parent said, 'Everybody is different'/'iedereen is anders' (7). These differences were often seen as being based on differences in 'upbringing'/ opvoeding (3) or 'character'/'karakter' (20). This was not seen as related to ethnicity, but 'just'/'gewoon' (7) the way people did things. Sometimes the differences were also described in gender terms. One of the Dutch fathers, for example, thought that the differences in upbringing between him and his wife were due, not to him being 'een Hollander' or her being a 'Kiwi', but to women being unable to give children enough 'freedom'/'vrijheid' (21). Other couples too, described differences in terms of gender, as men and women doing things in a different ways.

Pakeha parents also used gender and individual differences to account for varieties in childrearing, but they placed a greater emphasis on ethnicity than the Dutch. They regularly pointed out that New Zealand was a multicultural society where there were many differences. They frequently described differences in reference to Maori concepts such as the family. One woman said when asked to describe her family, that it was 'definitively different from the Maori Whanau (9). Another parent saw the way she brought up her children as opposed to what 'my experience is with Polynesian people' (13).

A Dutch Mengelmoes

In my research into the older Dutch community (Tap 1997) people often commented that 'a Dutch person really stays a Dutch person'. Older Dutch immigrants saw themselves as having a Dutch identity when comparing themselves with other New Zealanders. However, when comparing themselves with people at 'home' in the Netherlands, they realised that their 'Dutchness' had changed and had become een mengelmoes/ a mixture. Younger Dutch immigrants too often commented that they had become such 'een mengelmoes'. One Dutch mother expressed this by saying that she had become 'very New Zealandish'/'erg ver-Nieuw-Zeelands' (7). One of the Dutch fathers also explained that he was still Dutch, but having lived and worked here for years, he now also had become partly 'like a Kiwi'/'als een Kiwi' (3). This would affect his children too, he

stated, although they pass on the Dutch language and many Dutch habits at home, they too will become 'more Kiwi' (3).

Most Dutch parents see the passing on of 'Dutchness' as one thing which makes them different from other New Zealanders. This cultivation of Dutchness happens mainly at home and the Dutch school. Language especially was seen as important, 'because we still have much family in The Netherlands'/'omdat we in Nederland veel familie hebben' (6). Grandparents especially are an important reason why the Dutch language is taught to children as they often do not 'speak English at all'/'spreken helemaal geen Engels' (6). You also never know, said many parents, as they or the children may want to return to the Netherlands in the future to study or to live. Dutchness is also important as part of the self, as one father said;

> …if my child does not speak Dutch, then she is not really my child, but becomes a foreigner, that's my feeling (21).

> ... als mijn kind geen Nederlands praat, dan is ze gewoon niet mijn kind, maar een buitenlander, zo'n gevoel heb ik (21).

Other parents saw sharing their Dutchness as it as an opportunity to communicate something of their own childhood to their child such as the celebration of 'Saint Nicholas/Sinterklaas' (6). This sharing is important, said this mother, 'because if she gets a TOTALLY different childhood, then she is, yes, a totally different child/ 'want als ze een TOTAAL andere childhood (sic) krijgt dan is ze, ja, een totaal ander kind (6).

Despite the similarities described in this chapter there are key distinctions between Dutch and Pakeha childhoods, as is reflected in the above, which lead to a different childhood. These differences between Pakeha and Dutch childhoods will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Conclusion

New Zealand Pakeha and Dutch middle-class parents are determined to make sure that their children are not excluded from any opportunity. They therefore have adopted concerted cultivation as one of their childrearing strategies. These strategies in the middle-class habitus provide middle-class children with certain dispositions which produce difference (Bourdieu 1998). However, they have also led to an increased surveillance of children and more stressful and scheduled lives for the Pakeha and Dutch families.

Economic resources, as well as cultural capital, are necessary to achieve the goals set in the new childrearing rationale of concerted cultivation. This and a changing New Zealand society, as I described in Chapter 4, means that both parents are frequently required to increase their hours of paid work as well as maintain the busy schedule of concerted cultivation. This causes anxiety and stress and leads to parents who are becoming like high-wire dancers (see Chapter 7).

Chapter 6: The Indelible Mark of Childhood

> Through cultural narrative people learn who they *are;* through cultural
> narrativity people learn who they should *become.* It is through
> narratives and narrativity that groups of people transport ideas about
> meaning and value from the past into the present, where these stories
> then stake claims to the futures of those who tell them (Liechty
> 2003:24).

In May 2004 Sue Farley wrote an article in *North and South* in which she
remembers 'the indelible mark of a Northland childhood' (Farley 2004:122). Farley
starts her reminiscences by describing how one had to travel the winding, dusty metal
road 'which climbed inland from a wide, sluggish, orange river and wound up round the
base of a solitary volcanic cone'. The journey ends at a gate to the family farm 'with
the old cream-stand that held a couple of mailboxes and a lot of spider webs'.

> … and throughout my 1960s childhood I lived and grew in a Narnia-
> like world behind that cream stand.

Her Narnia-like 120 hectare childhood world was bordered by 'sturdy
boundary fences' and the 'Cow Hill up the back'. Farley describes her adventures as a
child exploring the outdoors barefooted and with hair flying. This was a world, says
Farley, where she knew every 'sheeptrack, boggy pennyroyal patch and gurgling creek'
and this world was:

> …enough to feed a most fertile childhood imagination and mould a
> spirit that soared when the west coast was roaring in a storm or when
> the warm air was thick with cicadas and summer bees.

Although she attended school, she does not include this in her Narnia-like
world, as it 'was only a daily interlude between wanderings around this utopian
domain'. Her memories of her childhood life are full of adventures and exploring the
land, warm milk, fruit-picking and sleepy enervating summer days with the family.
Sometimes there were family visits to grandfather's orchard where fruit trees were big
and the fruit was plentiful. There were also days it would rain which filled up the
gullies and creeks. When it rained for too long the roads would be blocked which led to
adventures as the tractor would take them to and from the school bus. If the roads were
rained out altogether Narnia-land was blocked for a few days from the distractions of
the outside world such as school. These things, says Farley, 'made an indelible print on

my childish mind'. However, despite these nostalgic and indelible memories, she has never been back to her Narnia-like land of childhood.

Gittins (1998:2) refers to the concept of childhood as an adult construction and a myth which has become symbolically central to our western culture and to our sense of self. Myth as described by Barth (1987 as quoted in Gittins 1998) is depoliticised speech which does not deny things.

> … on the contrary, its function is to talk about them; simply, it purifies them, it makes them innocent, it gives them a natural and eternal justification.

Part of the childhood myth, argues Gittins, is that children live in a vacuum and that they are separate from the rest of society and culture. Childhood in that sense can be seen as representing an idyllic, carefree life that comes to an end at adulthood. This conception of childhood can clearly be seen in the description by Farley of her own childhood.

Myths, as Barth argues above, do deny complexity and organise a world without contradictions. In Pakeha middle-class New Zealand we also find such an image, interpretation and social construction based on the time of the 'Golden Weather' (see Chapters 3 and 4). In this myth New Zealand childhood is seen in terms of an idyllic, carefree life based on endless summer days, beaches and an outdoor life style. This narrative of childhood in New Zealand is indicative of the stories told by many parents in this research and is also reflected in media accounts such as the one described above.

In this chapter I trace this narrative of the 'Golden Weather' and its associated 'discursive constellations' (Luke 1989:19) which complement and support this dominant discourse. Middle-class parents in New Zealand are struggling to combine ideas of this more 'traditional' construction of childhood, as described in the article by Farley, with its notions of a free, timeless, 'wild' childhood full of summers days and explorations of the landscape with constructions of a 'suitably modern' childhood (Liechty 2003). These contradictions lead to ambiguities and anxieties about the construction and governing of modern childhood. These ambiguities and anxieties will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 7. In this chapter I discuss Pakeha narratives of an 'ideal' and 'typical' New Zealand childhood. Dutch parents in New Zealand have taken aboard some of these New Zealand middle-class narratives, however, their narratives also differ. Dutch narratives of a good childhood focus more on relationships

with people, especially family and friends, rather than on nature as is the case in the New Zealand narrative.

The Use of Stories in Anthropology

There is nothing new about the use of stories in anthropology (White 2000:173), however, there has been a renewed interest and an enhanced appreciation of the complexities involved in representing and analysing stories (Garro and Mattingly 2000:4). The governmentality approach, Beck's risk theory (1992, 1998) and Bourdieu's ideas of habitus (1984)and de-stabilised habitus (2000), which are the backbone of this thesis, are a very useful way to examine the governing and construction of childhood.. They draw attention to power, conflict, change, inequality and the fluid nature of the relationship between structure and agency. However, they do not highlight the 'human dramas' which I encountered in my participant observations and interviews. It is the highlighting of these 'dramas' which has made narrative analysis popular again (Garro and Mattingly 2000:8).

Narratives, says Liechty (2003:25), 'carry the momentum of the past into the present and into dreams for the future'. They offer a way to analyse the every day sociality, because social life is 'storied' and people construct their identities by locating themselves or by being located within a repertoire of emplotted stories. These individual stories are constructed in relation to collective narratives even when they are counter-narratives of rebellion (White 2000:177). They therefore offer an important means to examine the contradictory regimes of rationality and practices present in contemporary New Zealand.

White (2000:181) (discussing the indigenous people of the Pacific) points out, that the analysis of narratives is a way to reveal the ambivalence which surrounds people's own negotiations between traditional identities and modernity. The stories of lives today, says White, are stories of movement, relocation and dislocation and

> … such stories of moving between worlds easily become parables of
> larger historical narratives of modernization (White 2000:180).

The changes which occurred in the New Zealand concomitant of neo-liberalism have left many parents in New Zealand with feelings of ambivalence too. They try to negotiate their 'traditional' identities and ideas of a 'good traditional' childhood with the demands of today's world and the new subjectivities expected of them. Fulfilling

contemporary identities of a 'good' parent and 'good' partner' on the contemporary home front is not easy. Contemporary 'elective biographies' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) ask of parents to make active contributions, face difficult decisions and dilemmas by continuously creating, planning and managing their own and their children's lives.

Metaphors of Childhood and Children's Places

Adult moral values about a cherished past and a desirable future, clothed in commonsense notions about children's best interests, often define children's places (Olwig and Gullov 2003:2-3). This may reflect an adult's idealised view of children and it provides 'a source of identification and rootedness for adults' (Olwig and Gullov 2003:2). The place of childhood is often a metaphor for childhood (Gullestad 1997:293). There is a close connection between the emergence of the concept of childhood and the construction of particular places for children (Olwig and Gullov 2003:6). Exploring where children are allowed to be and what kinds of meanings children and adults attach to these places can therefore lead to a better understanding of how children and childhood are conceptualised in a particular society (Olwig and Gullov 2003:8). Places are cultural constructions and:

> ...conceptions of place are continuously negotiated and reformulated in the context of ongoing social life and from different social positions, in the light of the exposure to and intrusions from the wider world that particular people experience (Olwig and Gullov 2003:7).

The taming of the 'wild child' was part of the increasing disciplining and governing of New Zealand society from the 19th century onwards. This taming, states Belich (2001:367), was substantial but incomplete. 'Wild' childhood persisted deep into the 20th century as can also be seen in the story by Farley described above. Parental narratives in this research also confirmed this.

> Even urban New Zealand was considered a safe place for children to wander alone in until the 1960s, and it still had considerable unpoliced space ─ the reserve, the empty section, the bush, the beach (Belich 2001:367).

Stories of a 'wild' childhood are very much part of New Zealand childhood narratives and despite middle-class risk anxieties about children roaming free in uncontrolled spaces there are still many 'liminal, informal and potentially 'subversive'

spaces of childhood' (Olwig and Gullov 2003:2). Many contemporary New Zealand children still have relative freedom and independence to explore these unpoliced spaces. Nieuwenhuys (2003:99) argues that a western adult middle-class definition of children's places as safe, supervised and controlled has informed the anthropological gaze. This means that children's unsupervised spaces have not been investigated. Although this is an area which will not be explored in this PhD thesis, it is a topic worth exploring further. The cultural repertoire of 'concerted cultivation', so prevalent in the middle classes in New Zealand today, however, has curtailed middle-class children's opportunities to be the 'wild child' dramatically since the 1980s. Most middle-class children are now under adult supervision most of the time; at home, at school and through the organised leisure activities they participate in.

Jackson and Scott (1999:87) point out that there are historical continuities between the generations. However, they say, a new climate surrounding childhood and a heightened risk awareness coupled with a nostalgia for an imagined past developed at the end of the 20th century. This heightened awareness and nostalgia for an imagined past can also be detected in New Zealand parental narratives.

Parental Memories of their own Childhood: That was Then!

The regimes and practices surrounding childhood today are seen by contemporary Pakeha and Dutch parents as being very different from those of a generation ago when the previous generation did not have such a range of 'elective biographies' available to them. Although parents observed some continuity between themselves and other parents in previous generations, they also perceived a significant change from their own upbringing in the late 1960s and 1970s. One mother, reflecting the sentiments of many parents, states, 'Things were different back in those days' (18). Another parent expressed it by saying that it is now 'quite a different world' and 'quite a different era' (2).

The changes were often seen as having led to improvements in some areas and to losses in others. Discipline and physical punishment were one area of improvement mentioned by many parents. Most parents in this research, both Dutch and Pakeha, described their childhood as good or average within the practices and rationales of the time of their childhood. The difference between a good and an average childhood was often based on the strictness of the disciplining regimes at home. People who were punished as an obvious consequence of breaking the family rules generally did not see discipline as a problem. As one parent said

> We had our, the usual, you know, stick on the bottom thing. Umm, but that was normal
> I think in those days … but I don't feel that I am any worse for having that at all (4).

Some of the parents, however, discussed how there was no regularity in when or why they were punished. This insecurity they said was the biggest problem. It had led to a low self esteem for some parents who now were struggling to find a different form of disciplining their children. Having children of their own, however, made parents reflect more about the difficulties their parents faced which led to new understanding of their childhoods. One parent, who described her childhood as 'average' due to a strict upbringing, now reflected back on her parents childrearing practices by saying 'but things were different then and they only did what was right back then' (18).

A more settled life style was seen as a positive part of the 'that was then' time. Many parents reflected on their settled life during childhood. They described how they lived in one house for most of their childhood, went to the same school and had the same friends.

> I grew up in one house where my parents still live and I went to the kindergarten that
> we all went to and the primary school my mother taught at … So I was pretty lucky
> really, you know, I was not moved around, it was completely stable. We grew up with
> friends I went right through school with (14).

Although contemporary parents had mothers who worked, as in the quote above, Dutch and Pakeha parents mainly lived their childhoods in households which conformed to the more traditional gender roles with the mother as the caregiver and the father as the breadwinner. As discussed in Chapter 2, there were good reasons for thinking of stability as a norm or a guiding model until the 1970s (Lee 2001). Many contemporary Dutch and Pakeha parents also still see this as a norm which is challenged by a changing society. Although there are many advantages, especially for women (see below), the changes in stability also caused stress and anxiety in many families.

Parental identities and relationships in the past were seen as having much clearer boundaries, as there were fewer choices. Although contemporary parents do not want to exchange their lives with that of their parents, they also look at the 'that was then time with a sense of nostalgia and jealousy. One parent, comparing her own worrying and angst about her children with her mother's childrearing said, 'she never thought about that, she just went along and did what her mother did…you know (5). Another commented:

> You know, my mother says she never thought about it. She never thought about
> ideals, she never, umm, she never thought about how we would be, perhaps it was just

> fleeting, but she never thought what it would be like when we were teenagers, she didn't worry about that (4).

These comments were repeated in almost every interview, especially by women, and were also part of many discussions during participant observation. Dutch parents too reflected on this in similar ways as the following mother expresses.

> We have become, of course, much more aware of the psychological effects of all sorts of things, so I, you ask yourself, has that child no trauma later on from this or that (laughs). You are, of course, much more conscious of other things, because you have the room, the time to think about it. They probably did not have that at all, am I hurting her with this and does she now have a scar or something? I don' think they thought about that, but now you do that (6).

> Wij zijn natuurlijk veel meer bewust geworden van psychische effecten van allerlei dingen, dus ik, je vraagt je af, heeft het kind geen trauma later, van dit of dat (lacht). Je bent je veel meer bewust van andere dingen, omdat je ook die ruimte hebt, daar heb je tijd voor om na te denken. Dat hadden zij waarschijnlijk helemaal niet, van kwets ik haar hier mee en is zij nu voor het leven lang gescarred ofzo? Ik denk niet dat zij daar bij nadachten, maar dat doe je nu wel (6).

There is a sense of nostalgia for the past in the narratives of contemporary parents as they talk about this much 'simpler' life in which to bring up children. Parents in the past were seen as dealing with different issues such as having enough food on the table, clothing their children and keeping them clean and well mannered.

> Mum's ideal was to have us fed, well fed, and clean and ironed, you know … (5).

> I think THEN it was just taking care that we had a roof over our head, clean clothes, good food and perhaps, once want in a while, an outing (6).

> Ik denk TOEN was gewoon zorgen dat we een dak boven ons hoofd hadden, schone kleren, goed te eten en af toe misschien een vertiertje (6).

Parenting in the imagined past of 'that was then' was seen as more 'natural' (1) and there was 'kind of more of a feeling of perhaps what was healthy for a child, you know' (14). Norms and values about what was 'right' and 'normal' were seen as much stricter and easier to discern in earlier decades. Doing the 'right thing' (15) was often focussed on outward distinctions. Being a good parent was seen as being more connected to material goods and how things looked in the eyes of others. One father described it as following 'Umm, things had to LOOK socially right, umm, so we had to have a nice car, we had to have a nice house' (15). Dutch people too commented how their parents were more concerned with 'what the neighbours thought'/wat de buren dachten (21). A Dutch mother said that her parents were very

much into appearances and that everything had to look right. 'I don't know if that is Dutch or just that my parents are like that'/'ik weet niet of dat Nederlands is of dat mijn ouders meer zo zijn' (7).

Another theme which emerged as part of the ideals of childhood was having good morals and values. These morals and values were something previous generations had passed on to them. They were seen as restricting, but also more clear-cut and therefore easier to enforce. 'And they taught us about morals and values, to tell the truth and we don't steal and you be honest and I think those are good values (14)'. Honesty, work ethic, truthfulness, respect and the importance of a good education were often seen as community values in the past which were reinforced in their own homes as well as in their friends' houses, at school and in sports teams. Many of the middle-class parents still believe in those and they try to teach them to their children. Having good morals and values is seen as leading to a happier childhood with friends and a better adulthood. Morals and values are seen as not being 'stressed enough today' (4). Although contemporary parents acknowledge that many values and norms have changed for the better, certain things, they said, remain the same, such as honesty.

> You look at school and what happens and what gets stolen at school and you think there are lots of dishonest kids out there and that comes from home and not being taught good values (4).

Contemporary middle-class parents see many advantages in the new regimes of rationality and practices they have adopted, however, there is also a longing for another way of life. For them parenting skills in previous generations appeared more 'natural' which is something today's parents feel they lack.

> Umm, as far as parenting skills goes ... it seems that parents have lost almost, are losing more of an instinctual orientation towards what is helping in terms of parental principles, you know (1).

Their own parents were seen as having this 'instinctual orientation' because they could build more on the continuous childrearing practices of the generation before them. Contemporary parents saw their own parents as being able 'to just go along and do as their parents did' (8). Middle-class parents often notice that certain groups in contemporary society also still have this 'that was then' ability and instinctual orientation. As one mother said:

> I mean, I've got friend in our Plunket group she is twenty five, just popped her second baby out at home and ah, two days later she is bringing the baby to group. And we're all going 'huh!' You know, I didn't take D. out until he was six weeks (laughs cheerfully), because of 'GERMS', you know. And we do, yeah, we kind of over worry about germs, but she's not worried about it and there she is twenty five, Maori, but not worried about it, sort of 'she'll be right' attitude, that Kiwi attitude... (5).

Lareau (2003:3), in her description of American class differences in childrearing, describes the 'that was then' regime as the facilitation of the 'accomplishment of natural growth'. This regime of childrearing, says Lareau, still often prevalent in contemporary working classes, does not see organising children's activities or eliciting children's feelings, opinions and thought as a crucial aspect of good parenting. Within this childrearing repertoire there is a much clearer perceived boundary between adults and children, says Lareau, and directives rather than persuasion and negotiation is used to talk to children. Children who are brought up with this regime have much more control over their own leisure activities and more freedom from parental control.

A Typical New Zealand Childhood: Beaches and Holidays

> I don't have a lot of memories of my childhood. I do remember, I do remember that umm, we always went on long holidays at Christmas time, we always tented and things like that and that was a lot of fun! (15).

This father's statement about his memories of his childhood was reflected in many of my conversations with Pakeha New Zealand parents. Most Pakeha parents started their own childhood story with this myth of the 'Golden Weather'. One of the parents started her description of her childhood by saying:

> ... it was a typical New Zealand, I don't know, I think the opportunities were typical. You know, the beach opportunities and there is so much to do. And we did lots of stuff! (5).

When prompted further about her 'typical' New Zealand childhood the mother stated: 'Yeah, I think a New Zealand childhood is based a lot around the outdoors' (5). Activities such as going to the beach and travelling around New Zealand to spend time in outdoor places had been very much part of her childhood. Although she acknowledged that 'perhaps I was a little bit fortunate', she still thought that the opportunities she had had as a child were 'typical New Zealand' (5). This parent had worked as an early childhood educator in an area where many children did not have the kind of childhood she described and

she explained that she had organised trips to the beach and the bush to give these children the opportunity to experience the outdoors.

The interviewee came from a big family and was one of the younger children. Her older siblings often took care of her and she did not have that much to do with her parents (especially her father) during the year, '...except that they used to take us on holidays a lot' (5). These holidays were a time of happiness and involvement with the adults in her life.

> We just go camping and ...we packed the car up and we go for six weeks, you know, a six week holiday and dad would join us for three weeks, so that and, we just had a really lovely summer, walking on the beach, swimming, my grandparents would come up in their boat and we go out fishing on the boat ... (5).

Other Pakeha parents too (in contrast to Dutch parents) emphasised the importance of the outdoors and how typical this was of the New Zealand lifestyle. One mother, asked about her childhood, said the following:

> ... the seventies typical New Zealand outdoor kind of lifestyle, you know, the Para pool[13] in the backyard, the barbecue at night, going to school barefoot you know. Really, I loved the lifestyle (1).

This emphasis on the outdoors and the 'typical' New Zealand was repeated again and again at different times during conversations with Pakeha parents. Especially when talking about the difficulty of supplying this 'typical' childhood to their children today. Holidays were often described like the Narnia-like world written about by Farley (see introduction to this chapter). It was a time to explore the landscape, have limited timetables and above all it was a time of safety and security with adults available at a distance when needed.

> There was probably a lot of freedom on our holidays, where what we were doing was quite safe and we could just run round and do and there were not such set timetables and things like that and it was quite laid back (15).

The holiday and beach narratives also often contained stories of 'hardships' which made the holiday even more memorable. One father said we 'always had to travel long distances, always getting there late' (15). The intention was always to leave early in the morning, 'but we tended to leave about 2 in the afternoon. So anyway, often sleeping overnight in the car, umm, which wasn't easy with all, with eight, yeah eight of us in the car'. The long and arduous journey with a car full of children and 'a trailer that was absolutely loaded, overloaded probably by today's standards' ended at the place by the beach. At the end of the journey more work needed to be done 'having an extremely large tent, taking a couple of hours to put it up in the end'. In

the end all the effort was worth it as 'we were always by the beach and so that was a lot of fun! We had three weeks by the beach (15)'.

Freedom at times too did have its setbacks, for example when children got sick from eating too many wild berries or they got lost and had to walk long distances to return to the safety of the campground. And sometimes the 'Golden Weather' was not that golden or disappeared altogether. At times the weather even took over the safe space of the tent and 'our tent would get blown away' (5). Even this event, however, added to the spirit of the holiday narrative.

> That was WONDERFUL! Mum and dad would be holding the tent and they'll go like, 'don't let the children get wet', standing outside in the rain … (5).

Most of the Pakeha parents I talked to recognised that not everybody had these holidays or outings into the outdoors and that there were also costs attached to these trips into the outdoors. But despite this knowledge there was discourse that a 'typical' New Zealand outdoor life was attainable for all children.

> Going to the beach for the day is not costing you, but going camping, you are there; you've got fees overnight and things like that. Although going to the beach, a trip to the beach is anybody's, any class. Day trips are ANY class and going to the park and there are lots of things you can do that don't cost money, but there are also lots of things that do cost money that you can do (9).

One of the parents, who emigrated from England when she was young, said her family was surprised about the emphasis on camping when they came here in the 1970s. Everybody went to the beach and camping, she said, while she did not know what it was.

> CAMPING, what was this camping, you know? CAMPING!' Going on holiday or going camping, we just didn't do that in England, you know!

She said that the family tried it once, they hired a caravan and went camping, but it was not repeated. We did not really do that in my childhood, she states, but my husband's family did, because it is a 'REAL New Zealand thing to go away for a month every Christmas and, umm, to some beach no one's ever heard of and have a ball' (9). This has been quite a 'tricky thing' in the relationship with her husband, she says, 'because I don't, I don't feel the need for it, I don't! (9). This couple compromises, because her husband is a 'Kiwi' and does have 'a need for it' (9), by having 'sort of longish weekends' (9). It is therefore the father's role in this family, says this mother, to push for holidays as the kids need it, because, 'It's a good thing to go on holiday and bum around (9).

Memories of summer days at the beach did leave an 'indelible print of childhood' on the mind of most of the Pakeha parents I talked to as was also recognised by the woman quoted above. This indelible print is something contemporary Pakeha parents would like to pass on to their children too.

> I have good memories of family holidays and that is what I want for my kids just to make good memories like that, cause I feel like I had a really good childhood (2).

Outdoor memories do not only involve time away from home, but also involve the space around the home. Here there were childhood spaces which could be explored with the knowledge that safety was not far away and mother was at home when needed.

> Umm, I always think I had a happy childhood, I felt like I had a happy childhood, although we did not have a lot of things, you know, ... yeah, and we always had the wonderful family outings and, umm, mum was always home for us after school and um ...we had the bush in Titirangi and we played a lot in the bush and on the beaches (4).

Many parents discussed the lack of material resources during their childhood and made comments such as, 'We did not have a lot of things' (18) or 'We did not have much money' (14). However, the different era and world children lived in then made up for this lack of resources as they had a whole outside world in which to play and to explore:

> ... we were brought up in the street, so we meet and play together, played games and things together ... We, we could cycle everywhere and we could, umm, we would all meet up and play together every evening, before we went to bed, BBQ or whatever, there was a stream close-by and all that (2).

Narratives of 'Bad' Childhoods

Narratives of a bad childhood were often interwoven with the stories about a good childhood. A bad childhood was generally seen as a lack of the ingredients of a good childhood. The ingredients for a 'typical' New Zealand childhood were mainly described as beaches, holidays, good memories, time, love, support, security, good values and morals and a good education. Having enough money was seen as important as it allowed people to give their children a good mixture of all of these ingredients. A 'good' childhood which contained these typical ingredients leads to a real sense of self, good self esteem, an ability to fulfil one's potential and the opportunity to have choices and to be happy.

The parental narratives about a 'bad' childhood were generally less clear cut as different parents stressed different issues depending on their own childhood. However, the issues were in general related to a lack of the ingredients necessary for a 'typical'

New Zealand childhood. Lack of love, security, self esteem, parental time, values, morals, good memories, summer holidays, time in the outdoors and a good solid education were seen as leading to a lacking sense of self and a lack of self esteem. This was seen as leading to problems in the future and the child not being able to fulfil her/his full potential.

More extreme forms of a 'lacking' childhood included sexual, physical and mental abuse. Many parents mentioned physical, mental and sexual abuse as part of a bad childhood. As one mother said:

> I come into contact with a lot of hurting people who have had that happen to them in their childhood and they are screwed up now. Ah, you know, I am not, I am nothing great, fantastic, but I don't have those hang ups, of having, umm, you know, been neglected or having the sexual or the physical abuse, the verbal abuse, that they have had. (4).

However, despite childhood abuse narratives being strongly reported in the media at the time, most parents only mentioned these bigger issues in passing. Other themes such as lack of money, love, security, health, education and time were discussed much more frequently and in depth. One mother described a 'bad childhood' as a childhood where there is little time given to the child, 'that they don't actually feel there is quality time for them' (1) or they feel that they are not wanted or really loved. This solo mother struggled with the lack of time her child had with his father. She was also worrying about her decision to go studying again. She saw her son's limited time with his father and her study time away from him as causing a 'lack' in her son's childhood.

Another mother said that she though a bad childhood was when children are raised in a family but they are lonely 'THAT is terrible!' (8). This parent too mentioned physical abuse briefly, but lists not being listened to or valued as a big part of a bad childhood as, 'I think all children need to be valued' (8).

Being valued, loved and listened to were major themes in most discussions. A lack of this in childhood, said many parents, means that children do not have the opportunities to develop a good sense of self. This lack of self and self esteem may lead to a damaged adult self. 'I think children, umm, eh, can't grow properly if they haven't got that, that basic, umm, self esteem that basic sense of self which, I think, you know, you develop from love' (5). This mother stated that this lack of self means that children 'develop a façade' (5) which they adjust according to the circumstances. These children become 'split' (5) as they do not really know who they are and therefore they may become easily misled and 'lost' (5). Children being 'lost' was also mentioned by one of the other parents due to a lack of a

good formal and informal education. She said, 'Where they're not given a good education, I think, that is a really sad childhood (14). This woman then went on to describe her brothers' family, where the children were lost, due to not receiving a good education at school or in the home which led to a lack of sense of self and good values.

A lack of good memories was also frequently mentioned as being part of a bad childhood. One parent expressed this clearly when she said, 'You know where the kids can't really look back and think: Well that was great! (4)'. This emphasis on good memories ties in with the anxieties of Pakeha parents about the loss of their children's Kiwi self.

The Risk of Losing the 'Kiwi Self'

Risk discourses have led to 'new activations of hopes and fears'(Rose 1999a:132) and these new activations of hopes and fears can be seen very clearly in New Zealand discourses surrounding the end of the 'Golden Weather'. Beaches and 'nature', as Clark (2004:6-7) argues, symbolises for many New Zealanders what they are really like and who they really are. The New Zealand parents in my research described beaches and the outdoors as representing freedom, timelessness, safety, laid-backness and a time when families could be together.

The 'foreshore debate'[14], for example, highlights this deep emotional involvement of New Zealanders with beaches. Risk discourses surrounding Maori claims to the foreshore were a major part of Pakeha public and private debates during my research and came up regularly during my discussions with parents. Pakeha New Zealanders see access to beaches as their 'birthright'. An article in the Sunday Star Times on the 14th of January (McCarroll 2001) titled *Seasons in the Sun* highlights this birthright through McCarroll's description of what is happening to 'the Great New Zealand Holiday'. She argues that:

> Campgrounds, aluminium and canvas towns away from town, are part
> of our **birthright** (my emphasis). Come mid-December we pile the kids
> in the back and head for the ocean in a line of likeminded holiday-
> makers. The basics haven't changed since we did the same thing with
> our parents. Or they did with theirs (McCarroll 2001:1).

The 'foreshore issue' has led to a perceived risk of loss of this birthright and it has caused anger and distress among many Pakeha New Zealanders. The end of the 'Golden Weather' narrative, already a symbol for a typical New Zealand childhood

under threat, has been joined by narratives of 'the foreshore issue'. It is not only the endless summer holidays and days at the beach that are under threat but the 'Kiwi self'.

In my discussions with parents the potential future loss of access to these places of 'happy memories' was a hot topic of discussion and reflection. Although many parents understood the Maori position regarding this issue, they also saw a potential loss to the 'Kiwi self' for themselves, their children and grandchildren. One of the mothers expressed these Pakeha rationalities quite clearly. Her narrative surrounding her sense of self was based on being an informed and conscientious Pakeha New Zealander. Her discussion about the importance of nature, her connection to the land and the importance of this connection to the 'Kiwi self' was reflected by other parents too. She said about her own place in this debate:

> I am a six generation New Zealander, so I consider myself to be a person of the land...
> not Tangata Whenua, but Pakeha to me is a New Zealander. And that is who I am ... I
> am not a European (5).

She stated that she understood how the past had affected the decision-making of today and how 'Maori have been disenfranchised and disposed from their land, I understand all that!' This understanding, however, is not a reason to feel guilty. This, she says, 'is the place to go forward from', because:

> I know in my heart that my ancestors did what they did out of integrity, because we are
> a family of integrity. I believe that, that's, yeah. So I just feel; it just makes me feel that
> I belong here! (5)

This feeling of belonging which her parents instilled in her through family holidays and outings is very important to her, she says, and something she wants to pass on to her children. One way to do this is for her children to have the same sort of 'typical New Zealand childhood' (5) she has had 'based a lot around the outdoors' (5) and 'going to the beach' (5). Doing things outdoors is part of the New Zealand pioneer spirit, says this parent, as settlers coming out from England were adventurers. This has led to a 'Kiwi self' (5) and 'culture which is quite distinct' (5).

> And I believe that is something that Kiwi's are; they are very adventurous and, umm,
> will give it a go. That is a very Kiwi 'give it a go' attitude. Umm, we are very outdoorsy
> people and umm, and umm, 'she'll be right, we can do it' that's the sort of thing (5).

This 'give it a go' attitude was echoed by many parents as being very 'Kiwi' (13) and linked to a New Zealand childhood of freedom and adventure. One of the people interviewed, who emigrated from Scotland as a child, also described this 'adventurous Kiwi self' (13) as quite distinct. She said that Kiwis in general were more willing to 'go out there'

(13) and 'do things' (13). She saw this adventuring in the outdoors as leading to an ability in New Zealanders to deal with risks better. These risk management skills, she said, have a flow on effect in other areas of life. It leads to a greater sense of sense of self-reliance and knowing what is important.

> I was brought up with traditional English aspirations, but I think happiness, being happy...it's is something I have come to realise that is something you have to work at and I think people in New Zealand are generally better at finding whatever it is that makes them happy! (13).

'Nature', as Clark (2004:6-7) argues, helps New Zealand people define who they are. Clark suggests (2004:8-9) that 'in getting away from it all' Pakeha New Zealanders remind themselves what the country is 'really like – and who we really are'.

> We tended to go places that were quite isolated, certainly in those days they were quite isolated, like ah, some beach you could go to with permission of a farmer, so there was hardly, generally they were isolated areas. So the water had to come from the creek and it was an hour or so drive to the nearest dairy and it was quite adventurous and I quite like sort of eh doing adventurous things (15).

The way New Zealanders connect to nature is bound up with concepts of belonging and the task of building a nation. Nationhood, argues Clark (2004:11) rests on deep-rooted and timeless connections to the land. People who are born on another soil have to find new connections with the land they adopt. New Zealanders have therefore developed a notion of 'nature' that is uniquely theirs.

The beach (so important in New Zealand narrative) can be seen as a liminal zone, argues Matthewman (2004:36-7), a coast between nature and culture. It is positioned as a site of escape, leisure and new identity formation. The New Zealand beach is constructed as a site of equality where liberty is gained by 'doing nothing' and 'the ordinary practice of beach-going illuminates our very being'. A transformed society, new developments in coastal areas, foreign investors and the 'foreshore issue', however, have challenged and continue to challenge this New Zealand 'being' and the way New Zealanders define who they really are.

The ideal of the 'Golden Weather' remains very much part of New Zealand childhood discourses today as middle-class parents try to give their children the same sort of holidays and memories they had as a child. And it still there for many New Zealanders as is reflected in the following quote:

> We LOVE it, you know! You see you often go as a family, so you are there and you have an absolutely great time and you are away from home in an environment where you can just run free. I guess it is a sort of freedom thing for kids in New Zealand, you know, like hanging around the beaches and doing a bit of this and just going back to get food and out again. And my kids are doing exactly the same thing, except for R. because he is a bit little. But our big kids are the same; we don't see them for dust when we take them. They come back for food, for food time and that's it really, which is very nice! (14).

The boat, the bach, the beach and the barbecue, as Belich (2001:527) argues, are sites of Pakeha culture. Baches[15] in contemporary New Zealand can be expensive and they therefore tend to be owned by the middle classes, in the 1950s and 1960s they were also accessible to the working classes. The mix of Kiwi urban-outdoor living (boat, bach, beach, barbeque) is very popular in Auckland, says Belich (2001:528) and 'represents a modern populist engagement with the landscape' which determines 'Kiwiness'. 'Engagement with the landscape' also can be seen in the 'classic Kiwi holiday' which started in the 1920s for the middle classes and extended to the working classes in the 1930s and 1940s. New Zealand totally closed down over the Christmas holidays until the middle of the 1980s and 'free weekends and holidays were seen as a God-given right' (Belich 2001:528). Belich questions if this particular 'Pakeha tradition' can survive the reshuffling of work, holidays and shopping hours. And the following quote reflects these fears.

> My concerns are with things such as the holidays. We do not do much for a whole, yeah for a whole variety of reasons really, eh … so for me that is a real concern for us because it is a time I enjoyed, yeah I have really fond memories of, yet I am conscious we haven't done it! (15)

The survival of these traditions and the associated ideals of a Kiwi childhood, have indeed come under threat. This is also reflected in an article in the *Listener* in the week of January the 19th 2002, which carries a cover page headline stating: 'End of the Golden Weather: Why the Great Kiwi Bach is an Endangered Species'. The article titled 'Home Away from Home' shows New Zealanders taking holidays at the beach 'outside the Kiwi bach'. Television commercials depicting summer, writes Bruce Ansley (2002:20) the author of the article, do not show the new wave of mansions build in recent years, but traditional baches. This trend is also reflected in other parts of the media. So what is the attraction of that traditional bach, asks Ansley, who then quotes a number of people to answer this question. Reasons given are that it reminds people of a time in their lives that they really loved and that it represents a lifestyle free of

regulation where people make do. They evoke nostalgia for a simpler New Zealand ,
says Paul Thompson author of *The Bach* (as quoted in Ansley 2002:20).

> New Zealanders think of themselves as practical, pragmatic do-it-
> yourselfers. And they don't like being told what to do. So baches are
> great examples of what it is to be Kiwis – bugger the council, we can do
> anything with No 8 wire.

Dutch Narratives of Self and Dutch Childhoods Constructions

Anthropological work on The Netherlands remains scarce (De Jonge 1997,
Van Ginkel 1997) as Dutch anthropologists mainly study the 'other' (Van Ginkel
1997:75). Although there has been a small increase in Dutch anthropological research
since the 1970s the focus of these studies is predominantly directed towards 'at risk'
groups in Dutch society such as ethnic immigrant minorities (Van Ginkel 1997:100).
Rob van Ginkel's book *Notities over Nederlanders* (Notes about Dutch People) (1997)
and an edited book by Huub de Jonge, *Ons Soort Mensen: Levenstijlen in Nederland
(*Our Sort of People: Lifestyles in the Netherlands) (1997) have been two exceptions to
this trend.

The renaissance of Europeanist anthropology in the US since the late 1980s has
added some research by overseas anthropologists to the small number of
anthropological studies available on Dutch society. The 'spirit of reflexivity' which
questioned the study of the 'exotic other', says Kepley Mahmood (1990:69), has meant
that the study of a more anthropological middle ground was established. This led to an
increase in American studies of groups who do not differ that radically, but

> ... whose members share certain key assumptions and attitudes while
> differing in certain others.

A study by Peter Stephenson (1989) is part of that new interest. Stephenson
(1989:232) argues that the Dutch concept of self is simultaneously intensely equalitarian
and highly individualistic. This is related, he says (1989:240), to the high density of the
Dutch population which is one of the highest in the western world. The Netherlands has
also a high degree of urbanisation and this makes escape from others almost impossible.

The Dutch have therefore developed concepts of self which make this density a
positive notion (Stephenson 1989:241-2). The concept of *gezelligheid* is one example
of such a positive notion. *Gezelligheid* (often inadequately translated as cosiness or
conviviality) has associated meanings of intimate surroundings especially among family

and friends, but can also refer to work spaces or towns for example which have a special atmosphere. *Gezelligheid,* says Stephenson, is the Dutch idealised version of social life. However, *gezelligheid* is not always positive, as Driessen (1997:70) argues, but can be also normative as it requires that people participate according to culturally determine norms. Not participating can lead to social exclusion and people being seen as *ongezellig*/uncosy.

The concept of *gezelligheid* is also an important concept in the Dutch culture in New Zealand (Schouten 1992, Van Dongen 1992). It is seen as something which binds Dutch people in New Zealand together and separates them from others (Tap 1997). Rituals such as those surrounding the Saint Nicholas event and Dutch Christmas celebrations are seen as part of the 'cosy times'/'gezellige tijden' which you share with your family and friends. Dutch rituals surrounding these times are quite distinct (Rooijakker 1997). Special food, personal rhymes which accompany the presents, and the setting of 'the shoe'/'de schoen' with food for the horse, for example, make the Saint Nicholas event special to Dutch people. Dutch Christmas celebrations too have distinct rituals which are very different from New Zealand celebrations. This 'Dutchness' is something Dutch parents like to share with their children. This sharing is important for Dutch parents, as I described at the end of Chapter 5, because otherwise children become 'totally different' with a 'totally different childhood'.

Another important concept of the Dutch self, states Stephenson (1989:243-4), is the concept *samenwerken* or cooperation. The importance of being a cooperative person is very widespread in The Netherlands, he argues, and the Dutch self is formed among others (unlike in New Zealand where it is seen as formed in nature). The concepts of *gezelligheid* and *samenwerken* are constantly stressed in the dominant discourses surrounding family, friends and work. These discourses can also be found among the Dutch in New Zealand where the need for *gezelligheid* and cooperation are frequent terms used in Dutch voluntary organisations (Tap 1997).

Day to day relationships with family (or lack thereof for their children in New Zealand) played a big part in Dutch childhood narratives elicited by this research. Although family was an important part of the discussion with New Zealand parents too, it entered the narratives at a much later stage or after I asked questions relating to the topic. Dutch parents started to describe their 'good', 'bad' or 'average' childhood depending on how they had experienced family relationships when they were young. One Dutch mother, for example, describes her childhood as good. She then told the

story of how as a child she had been part of a very big family. I always enjoyed the fact, she said, that there was 'life in the brewery'/'leven in de brouwerij'[16] (6). She describes with nostalgia her extended family and the 'birthday celebrations'/'verjaardag feestjes' of family members which were such a big part of her childhood memories. The lack of family in the life of her own child here in New Zealand is something she regrets very much. This lack of interaction with family due to the immigration experience is seen with regret and as a loss by most Dutch parents. They therefore try to visit The Netherlands regularly to establish children's bonds with family and vice versa. Frequent visits from The Netherlands by grandparents are also made as this bond was especially seen as very important. Time off work and money is a reason this can not happen as often as they would like. To compensate for this loss, Dutch people build up 'replacement' families in New Zealand, which give them and their children support and a sense of family.

> … therefore I try to create a situation of an auntie or something such as C. or H., who are friends. They look after her sometimes, or she goes for a sleepover sometimes. That is such a family occasion I think (6).

> Eh, dus ik probeer hier wel een situatie te creeren van en tante zo als C. of H. die vriendinnen zijn. Die ook wel eens op haar passen, of ze gaat daar eens logeren. Dat is dan wel zo'n familie situatie denk ik (6).

New Zealand parents often describe an ideal Kiwi childhood as one of freedom. Many Dutch people, however, commented that in certain ways Dutch childhoods have more freedoms. Parents discussed their childhood memories of biking or walking to and from school. This, said many parents, gave Dutch children (even today), more freedom than most children in New Zealand have on a daily basis. The distances here between home, school and other activities mean that most children travel in cars. This time in Dutch childhoods, between school and home, was seen as a time of interaction with friends and people in the neighbourhood on almost a daily basis. One Dutch mother expressed this by saying that she had the best memories of her childhood by thinking about:

> The walking from home to school and back taking my time, that I always enjoyed, and the, ah, room to think for yourself and to do things (10).

> ....het wandelen van huis naar school en terug lopend op mijn gemak, dat vond ik altijd leuk enne, de ruimte om zelf na te denken en dingen te doen (10).

People in the street knew each other, said one father, and this is very different here. This man had friends all over Auckland, but, he said, 'I do not know anybody here in the street'/ 'Ik ken hier helemaal niemand in de straat' (3).

Narratives about nature, holidays and beaches played a less prominent role in Dutch parent's narratives surrounding childhood. Most of the participants went regularly on outings in their childhood such as walking, biking, swimming and sailing, but this did not feature in most Dutch narratives until specifically asked about. Many also went on family holidays in The Netherlands as well as abroad at least once a year and sometime more often.

> We always went camping, we belonged to a tent club, at a camping ground with very many tents, in a group ...I have always been outside a lot (10).

> We gingen altijd veel kamperen,we behoorden tot een tenten club, op een kamping met een heel veel tenten, zo in een groep. ... ik ben altijd wel veel buiten geweest (10).

However, when asked further this woman stated, that despite her time outside, and the fact that she also went for regular swims and walks in the forest, she saw her childhood more as a time inside with family and friends.

Holiday participation in The Netherlands has steadily increased since the 1950s and is one of the highest in Europe at present (Dahles 1997:159). Many Dutch who grew up after the mid 1960s, however, do not see a beach holiday or the very popular bike holidays in The Netherlands themselves as 'real holidays' (Dahles 1997:174). Dahles argues that the generation growing up in the 1960s and 1970s moved over the borders at an increasing rate. It therefore, became so much part of life that it is often taken for granted. One of the Dutch parents, when asked, described how her family often went on holiday three times a year on a boat, climbing mountains in Austria or camping in France. However, she did not discuss these as part of her childhood memories until asked and even then it did not have emphasis. Although both Pakeha and Dutch parents enjoyed outdoor holidays and regularly did similar activities in their childhood, the relevance of holidays to identity differed.

Although there are differences in the narratives of Dutch and Pakeha parents, discourses of beaches and nature have, to a certain extent, become part of Dutch parents narratives. Many of these younger Dutch immigrants, as Leek (1990:4) points out, moved to New Zealand for ideological and ecological reasons. Discourses of 'nature' were therefore already part of their regimes of self. While discussing some of the

positive reasons for living in New Zealand (compared to the Netherlands) one mother said, that New Zealand's way of life was more 'spontaneous'/'spontaan' (7). This was reflected by other Dutch parents who saw the New Zealand lifestyle as much more relaxed in many ways than that of The Netherlands. Access to 'nature'/'de natuur' here was also considered to be more spontaneous.

> I mean, we went walking in The Netherlands too etcetera, umm, but now we are five minutes away from the beach, so in summer, now not so often any more because L. goes to school, but before that …well we would go for example to the beach almost every afternoon (7).

> Ik bedoel, wij gingen in Nederland wel wandelen enzo, umm, maar wij zitten nou vijf minuten wandelen van het strand af, dus in de zomer, nu kun je dus niet meer omdat Loiuse op school zit, maar voordat ..., nou dan gingen we bij wijze van spreken bijna elke middag naar het strand (7).

But despite the 'assimilation' of certain New Zealand narratives and the appreciation of what their adopted country had to offer in regard to natural space and beauty, Dutch parents, in general, did not regard the outdoor environment or holidays as vital to their children's sense of self. One Dutch mother expressed this when she said:

> Children always find something to play with, no matter what, if they have a square meter or a forest, I think. Children always find things to play; we played a lot on the street, but also at home and inside (6).

> Kinderen vinden altijd iets om te spelen of ze nou een vierkante meter hebben of een heel bos denk ik. Kinderen vinden altijd dingen om te spelen, wij speelden heel veel in de straat, maar ook thuis en binnen (6)

This woman said, she did like beaches and the bush she lived in very much and it was a reason to stay in New Zealand. However, she stated, 'I can imagine that your child later says do we have to go to a beach again, I'd rather go to the city'/'ik kan me voorstellen dat je kind straks zegt moeten we weer een beach, geef mij maar een stad' (6). This she said, will definitely happen because at 'a certain age they get that'/'op een bepaalde leeftijd krijgen ze dat' (6). My husband, she continues, did grow up in The Netherlands with more space, nature, biking with his father and all these things. She herself had grown up in the city, 'but you all grow up and I can't say that it made very much difference to my life's happiness'/'maar je wordt allemaal groot en ik geloof niet dat ik nou kan zeggen dat het heel erg verschil maakt in mijn levens geluk' (6).

'The Rough Guide' to the Kiwi Self

While I was revising this chapter an article was published in the *New Zealand Herald* (19th of October McLaren 2006) called the 'Beguiling Land of the Long White

Coffee'. This is a name play on the Maori name for New Zealand (Aotearoa or the Land of the Long White Cloud). In this article Esther McLaren reports on the just published *The Rough Guide* travel book's depiction of New Zealand. McLaren starts the article with the following: 'New Zealand is a nation of bad trains, great hostels and plucky, tolerant, coffee-loving beachgoers'. The article then describes *The Rough Guide's* depiction of New Zealand; its cities, transport system and food including its excellent coffee. New Zealanders are described as tolerant and open-minded people who welcome visitors with open arms. McLaren writes (quoting *The Rough Guide*) that holidays are 'a major part of the relaxed New Zealand lifestyle'. This, says *The Guide*, may be the reason that the locals are such good hosts.

> Kiwis identify strongly with the land, and perhaps even more so with the sea. During summer holidays swathes of the population decamp from the town and cities to baches or camping spots by the beach (The Rough Guide 2006 quoted in McLaren 2006).

The country's rugged beginnings has also played a big part in shaping the national psyche, says the article, and at the core of the Kiwi personality is a desire to make a better life 'in a unique and sometimes unaccommodating land' (McLaren 2006:7).

Chapter 7: High-Wire Dancers, Risk and Anxiety

> In the most public and the most private ways we are helplessly
> becoming high-wire dancers in the circus tent. And many of us fall
> (2002:215).

Risk became a central metaphor in New Zealand's discourses as part of the neoliberal reforms in the 1980s. Since then the rationales of risk and risk management have percolated through society. Risk anxiety, as Beck (1992, 1998) argues, has become a lens through which life is viewed, outcomes are imagined and futures are predicted. These risk anxieties are a pervasive and a constant feature of everyday consciousness managed through everyday practices (Jackson and Scott 1999:88)

The construction of childhood as a time of 'specialness' and as 'a cherished state of being' helps to define the boundaries of childhood and therefore the specific risks from which children must be protected (Jackson and Scott 1999:86-7). Today's middle-class parents are trying to combine Pakeha beliefs and values that children need space and freedom to achieve their full potential self (see Chapter 6) with the challenges of contemporary childhood. Keeping children safe, innocent and protected in a world which is perceived as much more dangerous then it was even a few decades ago leads to a 'tightrope' dance for parents which causes stress and anxiety.

Beck (1992, 1998) has argued that contemporary risk anxieties are part of an increasing questioning of the project of modernity and its expert knowledges (see Chapter 1). This, argue Jackson and Scott (1999:87), has led to a climate of heightened risk awareness:

> … coupled with a nostalgia for an imagined past in which children
> played safely throughout a carefree innocent childhood.

This higher risk awareness, suggest Jackson and Scott (1999:88), is part of a general sense that the world is less stable and predictable. Feelings of instability have been part of western societies at previous times when rapid changes occurred, for example during the industrial revolution in the 19th century (see Chapter 2). However, the cause of this instability was frequently seen as being located in certain populations such as the lower classes or unruly groups such as 'vagrants', for example, in New Zealand (see Chapter 3). Although these groups were perceived as threatening to the social order and 'respectable' groups and neighbourhoods, they were also seen as

potentially containable (Jackson and Scott 1999:88). In contemporary society many risk discourses still remain to some extent associated with particular populations, but risks are generally no longer seen as containable. New risks, such as the internet, are seen as all pervasive. They have the potential of affecting every group in society, including the children of the middle classes.

The 'individualisation' and 'de-traditionalization' of western societies has created a context in which greater parental investment in children occurs within a regime of risk talk. These newer discourses of risk (and its associated practices) have been superimposed on an older discourse in which children live in a sheltered and innocent world protected from the dangers of the wider society. This fusion has led to a parental preoccupation with prevention of risks and a need for constant vigilance surrounding children.

> Ideas about children's competencies (or lack of them), their specific vulnerability and their (im)maturity, inform adult decisions about the degree of surveillance children require and the degree of autonomy they are permitted (Jackson and Scott 1999:90).

Neoliberal discourses of self and the increasing availability of risk knowledges through experts, books, television and the internet has led to regimes of rationality in which people think of themselves as exercising a high level of control over their lives and the risks associated with it (Lupton 1999:4). This approach to risk and responsibility is particularly 'the case for people with significant cultural and economic capital, such as members of the well-educated middle-class' (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:29).

The rapid transformations which have taken place in recent decades in New Zealand and the rest of the world, however, mean that Pakeha and Dutch parents find it increasingly hard to control their personal lives. Concerted cultivation of their children by middle-class parents (see Chapter 5) is one way parents deal with the 'not knowing' which surrounds childhood today. Nostalgia for a time when life was simpler and children were safe from the risks of today (see Chapter 6) is also a response to parental insecurity about a world which is changing rapidly.

Risk Society and Tightrope Biographies

> The theorization of risk and risk anxiety has, so far, paid scant attention to issues of gender and generation. In particular, there has been little

work on childhood in this area, despite the pervasiveness of public anxiety about risks to children (Jackson and Scott 1999:86).

Risk Society, as Beck (1998) argues, begins when traditional certainties can no longer be taken for granted as has recently happened in New Zealand. The new demands, controls and constraints which are being imposed on parents in contemporary society leads to a constant planning and shaping of the future (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:2). The less people can rely on traditional securities and categories, the more risks they have to negotiate and the more decisions and choices they have to make. Transformations in New Zealand society have meant that parents constantly have to negotiate situations in their lives. Changes in gender, parental and work relationships, for example, lead to more potential choices. Parental choices, however, are full of risks and lead to risk anxieties. These anxieties affect social relationships and everyday practices (Douglas 1992, Jackson and Scott 1999).

Understanding risk anxieties and risk management is therefore crucial to the understanding of the construction of childhood in New Zealand. Risk management is very much part of being a 'good' middle-class parent. Finding a balance between the contradiction which sees children on the one hand as active, knowing, autonomous individuals and on the other hand as passive, innocent dependants (Jackson and Scott 1999:91) is not always easy.

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:3) argue that peoples' biographies are now often seen as 'elective', 'reflexive' and 'do-it-yourself' biographies, because people are able to 'choose' how to live their lives. However, the circumstances people find themselves in may mean that these choices do not always succeed. These 'chosen' biographies therefore can turn into risk and tightrope biographies, say Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, and this can lead to feelings of a permanent state of endangerment.

Tight-rope biographies are full of risks and demand an active contribution by individuals to create, plan and manage their life while constantly adapting to the changing conditions which are part of contemporary life today. Opportunities, dangers and uncertainties, which in the time of 'that was then' were to a large extent predefined within the family or the local community through categories such as class, gender, ethnicity or age, must now be perceived, interpreted, decided and processed by individuals themselves (Beck - Gernsheim 2002:4). If individuals make the wrong choices this may lead to 'a downward spiral of private misfortune' in the present and in the future.

Contemporary New Zealand parents are also very much affected by these new regimes of 'elective' biographies. They are forced to examine many opportunities, dangers and uncertainties, not only in their own life, but in that of their children as well. Children, said Pakeha and Dutch parents, have changed their lives in ways they had never really anticipated. 'Tight-rope biographies' therefore become part of their lives. They must adapt to change, organise and improvise, set long term goals, recognise obstacles, accept defeats and attempt new starts (Beck - Gernsheim 2002:4). This has become increasingly difficult in a society in which risk can no longer be predicted and controlled through rational processes (Beck 2000b:215). Parents therefore often feel like high-wire dancers trying not to fall (Beck - Gernsheim 2002:215).

Parents in my research dealt with the transformations in New Zealand society surrounding concepts of the self and childhood differently, depending on their personal biography, habitus and context. However, Dutch and Pakeha narratives of parenting did have common threads which showed the wider regimes of rationality and practices associated with risk society, as discussed above and in Chapter 1.

In the next section I will tell the story of one mother whose narrative shows the themes of contemporary risk talk very clearly. It illustrates the anxieties and angst most contemporary parents face as they try to negotiate the transformations which have taken place in New Zealand society. I chose to describe this mother's story in more detail, because it clearly reflects many of the themes which emerged during my research on the changes of childhood in New Zealand. Within most Pakeha and Dutch parents' narratives the themes discussed in this story were less dominant, but they all contained the main ingredients. I will expand on some of these themes further in the chapter.

The High-Wire Dancer

The story of the mother began with the telling of the tale of a 'very rich childhood'. She had a 'typical' New Zealand childhood, she stated, with opportunities that were 'typical' and based 'a lot around the outdoors'. She did not see a lot of her parents, she said, when she was young, 'except that they used to take us on holiday a lot'. These holidays were filled with adventures with parents, grandparents and brothers and sisters. They went camping, walking on the beach, swimming, fishing and out on the boat; 'we just had a really lovely summer'.

'I believe', said the mother, 'that we didn't have a lot of money as a family, umm, but we owned our own home and mum had a garden'. Mum's ideals were to have them 'well fed, clean and

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ironed'. Her mother grew vegetables and fruit, baked and sewed clothes to do this. Although there was not a lot of money, 'we always had a pair of shoes on our feet and plenty of food'. They were clean, she said, 'and, you know, loved and cared for'. Her mother 'didn't have any time' to think about childrearing and apart from that 'it wasn't acceptable, you know, you just got on with it'. My mother therefore never had the opportunity, she reflects, 'to dwell upon too much'. However, she now thinks about her grandchildren more then she ever did about her own children.

This mother classed herself as middle-class, but described her father as 'definitively from working class background' and, she said, 'my mum was from landed gentry'. As a child, she stated, she saw herself as 'from the working class', because her father was not an educated man but worked as a labourer most of his life. He was not stupid, she said, 'it was just that he had to leave school at fourteen to help support his family'. Her mother looked down on him and his family, 'so to me, I always felt like I was from a working class family'.

It wasn't till later on that I realised that, my god we owned our own home, you know, how many people own their own home?

But her father certainly had the working class ethos or belief system, she said, that education was a waste of time: 'You know get out there and make a living and get on with it. Stop bludging, he told me, when I went to university'.

This woman was reflective about her belonging to the land. She saw herself as Pakeha, 'not Tangata Whenua, but Pakeha to me is a New Zealander'. This Pakeha identity was 'very outdoorsy' and linked to ancestors which were 'adventurers'. Kiwis, she stated, have a 'give it a go attitude' linked to being adventurous and the outdoors. Her childhood, she said, reflected that attitude and the outdoor New Zealand life style.

The narrative changed when asked about her own child. The mother described how difficult it had been to have children as she did not try to conceive until she was older. Circumstances, such as work and a later marriage than anticipated, meant that she did not have children at an earlier stage of the lifecycle. She always wanted children, she said, 'because I was socialised to have children'. Family, she said, was very important to her as she came from a close-knit large family in which her brothers and sisters all had children.

However, despite always wanting children, this woman felt an enormous sense of shock when her first child was finally born. Trained as an early childhood worker and with a degree in psychology, she had access to a variety of information relating to children and childhood. She was also very skilled in her job and considered an 'expert'

in early childhood. As a consequence she was very confident, determined and clear about what she wanted when her child was born.

> From, umm, I guess from university, from all the work I have done in psychology and in child development and from kindergarten, I have seen it happen, how I like it to happen.

However, after the child was born that sense of 'control' and the way she imagined it would happen disappeared as her struggle between her professional identity and her identity as a mother became very conflicted and contradictory. She started realising that her responses were often a contradictory mixture of her professional identity and the often inarticulated and taken for granted assumptions which were part of her upbringing.

> I wasn't AWARE, how we were socialised to be a mother, but it was very subtly, throughout my childhood …

This socialisation, she said, you can change, 'you can change it, but it takes a great deal of effort, it's not something that you can just change overnight'. The socialisation process and the influence of habitus was reinforced when, during the first few months after the baby was born, 'mum came and lived with me'. Her mother continued visiting for two or three days a week in the months after that. As a new mother she needed help, she said, as 'there were a lot of decisions to be made' and, she said, 'there are still decisions to be made aren't there?'.

Contemporary parents are encouraged from the moment a baby is conceived to plan, understand and make choices due to new demands, controls and constraints which are imposed on them through a 'network of regulations, conditions, provisos' (Beck - Gernsheim 2002:2). Parents, especially the mother, are expected to prepare themselves even before the child is conceived with healthy regimes of food and exercise. In recent years fathers have more and more been included in these regimes.

The array of information surrounding the lead up to childbirth and childbirth itself are often bewildering. This does not improve when the child is born. There are decisions and dilemmas to be solved on an everyday basis. It is often a shock to parents, especially mothers, who saw life as controllable. They are confronted with enormous changes and uncertainties when the child is born which feel outside their control.

> You know as a teacher, as a pre-parent teacher, I was very judgmental of parents and their parenting techniques. I had a clear-cut idea about what I didn't want to do and I think that changes drastically when you have your own child and you realise that actually there is not as much choice there as you think.

This mother discussed how she and her husband had decided not to give their baby the vitamin K injection, which most children receive straight after birth in New Zealand. They researched vitamin K use and planned for their child not to have the injection after birth. After an unplanned caesarean birth, however, the new parents were confronted by a paediatrician who:

> … just put fear into us and I, ah, and ah, in the, in the end, because I, I'd just been to caesarean and I was drugged to the max and D. was, you know concerned for me, we just said, oh, just do it and, ah, he did.

It was not until later, said the mother, that she realised that this decision was motivated by fear.

> And the doctor motivated that fear and I felt resentful that he had, umm, come down to that level and that people, when you have a new baby, do use fear to get you to do things, like the immunisation whole debate is based on fear. 'IF YOU DON'T GET THAT DONE! You know, you know, you are not doing the BEST for your child!

Parents have become increasingly reliant upon expert knowledges, but the choices parents make based on those knowledges, are full of risks. Parents are aware that these 'experts' too make choices and that they are often selective about the information they give out.

> People give you selected information. I read, I mean I decided I was going to breastfeed. My doctor said, 'he has some allergies, it would be really good if you could breastfeed him until he is eighteen months at least'. So, I said, all right then, I commit myself to that, because I wanted to do the best for him.

This mother chose what she considered 'the best for him' on the advice of an expert. However, the choice she made came with a consequence.

> And then he gets ...ah, cavities in his teeth ... so he has some tooth decay on his front teeth from the lactose in my milk, I'm breastfeeding him at night and not brushing his teeth afterwards ... and he had teeth at four months … and those are the four top teeth that have been affected. And I was really upset when I took him to the dentist and she said, 'well you, know it's YOUR' breast milk. And I went, well, why didn't somebody tell me that!

This parent felt that she had tried to get all the information; that she had actively planned and assessed what needed to be done with the help of experts, but in the end she still 'failed'. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:4) suggest that the acceptance of expert knowledges has increasingly become part of the regimes of self in contemporary risk societies, but when people 'fail' it is the individual who is made to lie 'on the bed they made for themselves'. This mother felt like this too, she was made

to feel that she failed and ultimately also saw it as her responsibility to make the 'right choice' from the array of choices available.

> … you have to make a lot of decisions, that perhaps you weren't prepared to make. That you didn't know. You know, daily decisions, can he have this or can he have that, or should we go there, you know, lots of, yeah, even about the type of cup to use.

Concerted cultivation, as in other middle-class families, was also an important part of the narrative of this mother. Decisions regarding the issue of education were frequently discussed between herself and her husband. This mother said that she firmly believes in the role of the parents as 'the child's first educator'. However, early childhood education is also a priority as 'I think, it is important to equip children and if that's our role to equip them, then that includes socialising, being involved with other children'. This mother has chosen Playcentre as it is a way to socialise her child while still being involved in his learning. Teaching him values such as sharing and being gentle are important, she said,

> … so I try to encourage him to be gentle with other children and so I am gentle with him most of the time and umm, you know, offer toys and I like the idea of him offering toys to other children.

Education, as I discussed in Chapter 5, has taken on a new emphasis in the middle classes and it is especially the 'right' education which has become important. This mother too saw good educational strategies as a priority for her son. She said: 'I know definitively that my ideas for D. are that he will not miss out'. Although she had had a good childhood, she said, she felt that she had missed out on some opportunities regarding education. Being in the education system herself and having returned to university recently had made her aware, she stated, of the quality or lack of quality in certain schools. Therefore her son would go to a private school, she said, 'because that's really important to me'. He has good social skills and can make friends, she declared:

> … so I don't have an issue with that, but I do have an issue with him having a good education, because he has a good mind. I think everyone has the potential and it's a shame to waste that on poor teaching.

Many parents turn to family and friends for a 'lay' person's view on many of the issues they struggle with such as decisions on education. This woman used her mother and other family members such as her niece who had children only a few years older than her own, 'so it is good to talk to her about decisions she's made'. She also used her brother and sisters and their partners to discuss issues such as 'if I should circumcise him'. Another 'huge discussion' with the family was about food, 'what food to feed him, umm, how to wean him'. Her mother too continued to be there for advice and she 'gave me lots of advice on

the food to eat while I was breastfeeding'. This advice was important to this mother and often followed. She said:

> I do take it on board, I listen to everything, I'm, I'm very sensitive to criticism, especially from my family. Other people I can brush it, brush it aside, but …I feel very perceptible of my extended family's perceptions of what I'm doing.

Safety and the physical risk to children came up in the conversation with this mother many times. She wanted to give her child more space, said this mother, but she could not do that because she worried too much. In an ideal society, she reflected, there would be the freedom:

> … for him to go down the road and know that he will not be hit by a car, because people drive slowly around places where children are. You know that would be the ideal.

However, she said, this was not an ideal society and she was worried that he will get hurt. 'That is a real FEAR and that anxiety, umm, wears me down. I just go blub!' This woman's fear was intense compared to other parents, but other men and women in my interviews also described their anxieties about physical risks to their children although there were gender differences in that regard (see below). The father of the child, said the mother, saw dangers for his child too, but he saw them more as being part of his boy growing up and learning to live a life which included risk. This perspective gave her a feeling of anxiety as she saw herself as the only person really able to protect her child.

> You know (the father) would say, well I'll take him, you know, you go out and leave the boy with me. Well that was nice, but I couldn't stop thinking about him when I was out. Is he all right?

The mother saw her husband as 'just very laid back'. She saw this as a general trait in his character, but also as part of a lack in parenting skills. Although he was getting 'much more in tune', she said, he did not have as many opportunities as herself to interact with his son as he had to go to work and was therefore unable to learn the new skills necessary.

Risk-taking, say Tulloch and Lupton (2003:35) is fundamentally associated with emotion. To be confronted with risks that are not of ones own choosing, they argue, is to experience fear, nervousness and discomfort. This mother felt fear, nervousness and discomfort as she contemplated being confronted with future risks out of her control. She said that, although it would hard for her to cope if her child got physically hurt, any injury would mend. The 'REAL issue', she said, would be that 'he gets hurt mentally, because that may take a lot longer and that would be really sad'.

The media, said this mother, showed only a glamorised version of motherhood, 'you know, go and get a Pumpkin Patch (brand name of upmarket New Zealand children's clothing) out and put your kids in it and they look pretty'. However, said this mother, life as a mother was not like that:

> Too bad, when they scream and spew up over everything and you have to change them and, you know, you're tired cause you haven't had enough sleep and you've haven't had enough sleep for two years.

This mother loved her child and said that he 'is wonderful', but 'you know the reality is that I can never stop thinking about him again in my whole life, shocked me'. 'I didn't realise it was like that', she said, before she had children and 'perhaps people don't tell you because it is no big deal for a lot of people, but it was a big deal for me'. This anxiety and fear, she said, was partly caused by the 'REAL CHOICE' becoming a parent had become today.

Pakeha and Dutch Risk Narratives Extended

The narrative I described above was a very clear 'tight rope' narrative by a parent who felt very much in control of her life until she had a child. She had been able to balance quite well on the high-wire and had dealt with the transformation in New Zealand society very well until her child was born. The responsibility of a child in her life and the associated loss of control she experienced show some of the stresses contemporary parents feel. This mother has since regained much of her sense of balance and the 'permanent state of endangerment' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), that took over her life for awhile, has disappeared. However, many of the issues in this narrative are part of other parental narratives.

Risk, as I described in the introduction to this chapter, was seen as being more containable in the past. It belonged to certain groups and although it could threaten 'respectable' families and neighbourhoods, it was mainly 'out there'. This idea was also discussed by other parents in this research. One mother, for example, described how she grew up in a safe and caring neighbourhood where 'you could leave the house open and didn't think twice about putting your bag down and walking away and coming back' (14). She stressed that she was 'lucky' (14) to be able to grow up in a suburb which was very safe and 'people taught their children values' (14). A state housing area was nearby, she said, and some of these children were taught by her mother at the local school, but they were not part of her childhood or nor intruded into her neighbourhood. Now things have changed, she said, describing her childhood neighbourhood where her parents still live:

> Well, the area they live in, I mean in the 40 years they lived there, they watched it go down, down, down. There are a lot of people who turned pretty bad (14).

These new risks, from a world which is no longer containable, had intruded into her own extended family too. She talked about her brother who 'is not the best person in the world' (14). He now lived in another neighbourhood which had gone 'bad' (14). This was 'so sad' (14), she said, as the children of her brother were now at risk too. 'What chance have they got?', she asked, and answering her own question, she said, 'not a hope in the world!' (14). The extended family had tried to help and the grandparents looked after the children for a while 'to get them out of the neighbourhood' (14), but to no avail and things since then had become worse. This parent and her husband had therefore carefully chosen the neighbourhood they lived in. The mother said, 'I am very glad I am bringing my children up in 'The Park' (14). The Park being an area in which 'bad' had not yet entered.

Symptoms of social disorder, as can be seen in this narrative, continue to be associated with certain 'abnormal' groups in society. However, 'bad' has become less predictable, identifiable and locatable and therefore has the potential to 'disrupt social life at any time in any place' (Jackson and Scott 1999:88). Due to this potentiality risk anxiety has become a constant and pervasive feature of everyday consciousness.

The situation with her brother meant that the above quoted mother had become very aware of the dangers and risks that could enter her children's lives. Choosing what she considered a relatively safe neighbourhood curtailed some of these dangers and was an effort to make everyday living less risky for her family.

> We had friends over here who said come and have a look. And we had a look and we fell in love with it. It is a lovely area; we do not regret moving here at all. And it is so friendly; it is a real community, quite different to other places in Auckland. So, yeah, I love it, I would move to a different house, but I would not move out of the area (14).

However, even in this community, this parent needed to remain vigilant as even in 'The Park' there was the potential for 'bad' to intrude which could lead her children astray. This mother therefore carefully monitored her children and the company they kept. She said referring to one of her children's friends, 'I put a bit of a control on there, I said no, you can't go with them' (14). Some children, she said, 'if they link up with the wrong child, they do some awful thing. And it happens! (14).

This mother was involved in many of her children's activities as a sport coach and a parent helper. This gave her some control over the situations her children are facing as she felt that children needed to be watched, guided and shown how to make the right choices. This parent also attended children's sport and other leisure activities

because it was 'a safety issue now' (14). Her parents, she said, never really watched her games, they just dropped her off and took her home, but 'nowadays' (14) this was not possible as 'you have to watch your children' (14). This watching of children does not only include physical safety, but includes moral and emotional safety too. Children, she argued, have to be encouraged to see possibilities, to problem solve, to negotiate and make the right choices.

> I teach them good values about lying, not lying and being honest and being helpful and I encourage them into doing sports, to do the healthy things with their diets and things, I encourage them to eat healthy meals and be healthy (14).

As discussed in Chapter 6, contemporary Pakeha and Dutch parents do not see their own parents as worrying or 'dwelling' on their upbringing very much. This has changed considerably. Many parents commented that they worried 'a lot'. One mother, for instance, described herself as 'a worrier by nature' (18). She worried, for example, about her own and her husband's childrearing skills and how this would affect the child's self esteem. This woman also saw many risks for her child 'where someone might hurt her' (18). She said that, although you did your best as a parent and tried to 'bring them up the right way' (18), this hard work may all be undone through 'bad company at school' (18) or through other adults her daughter may meet.

> I worry about physical things, I suppose, there are so many nutters out there, you know. …You can't be with them every minute of the day! (18).

This constant worry about what may befall children when they are not supervised was perceived by parents as being very different from the time the time of the 'Golden Weather' described in Chapter 6. In this dominant New Zealand Pakeha narrative children were allowed to spend considerable amounts of time as 'wild' children, out of the control of adults.

One mother described her own childhood in which she and her siblings were allowed to play on the street, go down to the neighbourhood stream and have picnics in the local park. The dog was their only companion on these trips, she said, as her mother had 'faith in the dog to do everything' (2). When asked if this had changed, the mother of two girls answered:

> Yes it has, because I don't really leave my children exposed to anything. Because often we get faxes about creeps in cars cruising around areas and how vulnerable you are and …it is very easy to spirit someone away. And you are far more informed about this sort of stuff, I am sure there were just as many murders per head of population in those times, but umm, you know ... I think there are a lot more pressures on you (2)

Women and men seemed to view risk differently which sometimes led to debates within the family. Pakeha and Dutch mothers talked a lot more about the day to day risks.

Worry, as Park (1982b:251-2) states, appears to be 'women's work'. Although contemporary parents perceive the time of 'that was then' as a time when there was less worry, Park's study of Pakuranga in 1982 shows that women then too were often worried. These women too mentioned that their husbands were much more relaxed and did not lay awake as much at night. Some of this 'women's work' of worry was productive, anticipatory and creative, suggests Park, but from the women's descriptions it appeared that many women tended to worry 'round in circles' in a depressed kind of way. Girls too already worry a lot more than boys, says Park, which suggests that it is part of gender socialising. This is confirmed by research in Australia and Britain (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:31) which also shows that women worry more and are more anxious.

Women, say Tulloch and Lupton (2003:31), see the risk their children faced 'as important to their own sense of security and wellbeing, and therefore, as also risk to themselves'. Men, they say, generally express more confidence in being able to control their lives and therefore also their children's. This was reflected in my research with Pakeha and Dutch parents. I discussed in Chapter 5 how one of the Dutch fathers saw differences between him and his wife in terms of gender. He saw women as more 'scared' than men in regards to what they allowed children to do. This was reflected by other fathers. Women often saw this difference as 'laid backness' by fathers and an inability to see the risks which surrounded children. But despite this gender difference both men and women reflected on the risk surrounding childhood today and they were not sure how to assess those risks.

Information Gathering

Being informed about the issues surrounding childhood was seen by many parents as positive as they could make 'informed choices' (13). When one parent was asked if she sometimes found that there was too much information (as other parents had indicated) she said that 'you can actually discriminate against them now and work out, you know, umm, what is valid for you' (13). Other parents, however, found it harder to discriminate and work out what was valid for them and their children.

Being 'bombarded' (9) with information was seen by most parents as being something they found hard to deal with. Knowledge about children was now available in so many different forms, they said, that they frequently did not know how to sieve out what was relevant to them or what to take on board. As one mother said, 'Plunket says do whatever feels right and it will be fine' (4). 'And then my mother comes and she goes oh, but we didn't hold the baby all the time, you know, we used to just leave it by itself just do its own thing' (4). Then, she said, you 'read a book and it says something different again' (4). This conflicting advice was very difficult to work out, she said, because 'these days parents just want to hold their baby and love them and just enjoy them' (4).

Despite the statement by this mother that parents just wanted to hold, love and enjoy their babies, most middle-class parents were very informed about childrearing practices and children's development. Most parents stated that, although they had not read as much as they wanted recently, due to time constraints, they had done so in the past. One mother for example said:

> Before K. came along I had a very definite idea about how I wanted to do it. Not because of anything my mother did or didn't do, but because, umm you know, I had read a lot of books at that stage. I'd also been a nanny, umm, and I was working in childcare anyway. So I had lots of exposure to what worked and what didn't work (8).

Now with two young children, she said, 'I don't have time to sit down and read a book', but she often 'speed reads until I find what I want' (8). There are times, however, when books have been highly recommended to her and 'I have stayed up until 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning reading, which does not really work, because I can't function the next day' (8). Her information, she said, 'is a bit of a mish mash really, I take a bit from here, a bit from there' (8). This parent said that she chose what she liked in the information and 'runs with it' (8). When she was stuck and did not know what to believe anymore, she said, she just 'talks to someone' (8). Networking with other parents was her biggest support, she said, 'that is invaluable, yeah, it's the BEST sort of information you can get!' (8). This was a much more practical support, she stated, and people found out 'what works and what doesn't' (8).

Many parents, when discussing differences between the time of 'this is now' and the time of that 'that was then', commented that it had been mainly their mother who had decided on childrearing regimes. In contemporary New Zealand childrearing regimes are still divided by gender, as more women than men remain the main caregivers of children. However, risk management is seen as part of the role of both parents and therefore frequently discussed between partners. As one Dutch mother said,

when asked if she discussed issues surrounding her child with her husband', 'Yes, we talk about it a lot'/'Ja, we praten er wel veel over' (13).

This statement was reflected in other discussions with parents. Parents saw risk as shared. This notion of 'shared risk' emerges, argue Tulloch and Lupton (2003:19), as part of close family relationships. It gives the sense of risk as 'being shared, spread over more than one body'. Women often gather information regarding risks to children through their social networks, books and media and then discuss the issues with their partners. One Pakeha woman said that it was generally her who would say 'look' (8) and then 'we sit down and we talk about the children' (8). This happened on a regular basis, she said, 'once every few weeks' (8). Often, she said, there were just little things 'you know, how are things going?' (8). At other times one of them might say, 'I am concerned about blah, blah, blah and we'll talk about that' (8). 'We discuss', she continued, 'how we will solve that and we literally do that' (8). Not having that 'sounding board' was seen as difficult by sole parents. One sole mother found it hard that she did not have 'someone to bounce these ideas of on' (1) and 'always had to make these choices on my own' (1).

Recent research exploring people's ideas and experiences of risk (Caplan 2000, Finucane *et al.* 2000, Lupton 1999, Tulloch and Lupton 2003) shows that people construct their risk knowledges based on close observation of everyday phenomena, the behaviour of others around them, expert knowledges and the conflict and disparities between these views. Risk knowledges are therefore dynamic and contextual and how people respond to certain situations therefore depends on the setting they are in and the contradictions they face. Despite the gathering of more recent information regarding childrearing practices, many middle-class parents continue to receive information from mothers, sisters and brothers, who still play a big part in people's decision making. As one mother stated:

> If I have a problem, I'll just talk to my sisters about it, because they've gone before me and they are sort of more up with the play (4).

This information gathering through habitus was reflected in almost all the interviews. As discussed above, Dutch parents too regularly contacted family in The Netherlands to ask for advice and information. Mythen (2004:130) points out that the passing on of information and advice within families leads to continuities in the reproduction of class and familial structures. It also shows, she says, the strength of these structures which risk society theorists such as Beck ignore. I agree with that statement of Mythen. The continuities in the reproduction of class, gender and ethnicity

through family structures has remained an important part of contemporary society despite claims to the contrary. The 'freedom to choose' available to parents today allows them to 'snack' on a range of options available to them. Risk society causes angst and anxieties, the known habitus balances some of these anxieties and angst giving parents a greater feeling of security as they try to balance the different risks, they and their families, face today.

Continuing New Zealand Risk Discourses of Health and Fitness

Risk discourses surrounding health and fitness, as we saw in Chapter 3, have played an important role in the governing of New Zealand childhood. Powerful campaigns for a better and fitter population were directed towards children from the beginning of the 20th century onwards through a new model of surveillance medicine (Armstrong 1995:395-6). It included the monitoring of the physical and mental development of children in schools and other institutions. These new concerns for the politics of the body were taken up by government, schools, Plunket and other institutions surrounding New Zealand children. As the 20th century progressed more risks were included in this surveillance gaze which increasingly turned the bodies of subjects into 'the risky self' (Ogden 1995 as quoted in Armstrong 1995:403).

These health and fitness discourses surrounding the 'risky self' continue. The Plunket society is still an important feature in New Zealand society and most middle-class families make regular visits to the Plunket nurse when their children are babies. However, although health services still set up the parameters of what is a healthy and well developing child, it has now become part of individual parent's responsibility to monitor this. New Zealand parents worry about the lack of support in the health services for their families with children. One parent reflected this worry about the health system when she said:

> I think that we have gone backwards and I think there is certainly room for real improvement here (1).

Most parents felt that more parental support regarding health issues was needed as it was harder and harder for parents to judge what was right or wrong for their children. Information supplied by the media and in informal parental networks left parents with many 'niggles' (4) regarding their children which they liked to check out with an expert such as the doctor. One mother said that today's parents needed more health

support networks as they had lost the ability to use 'home remedies' (1). She said that contemporary parents were so fearful that they 'run to the doctor for antibiotics straight away' (1). This, she said, was different in the past when there 'was kind of more of a feeling of perhaps what was healthy for a child, you know' (1). This knowledge had become lost in contemporary society, she argued, as 'we've become more estranged from that' (1). The faster pace of life, less real home life and family feeling, she said, were some of the reasons that this had happened. Many parents expressed nostalgia for the past when it was easier to get help and support from family, friends and community networks.

However, many people have found ways around this as better and cheaper communication systems as well as cheaper travel allows more access to these networks again. One Dutch mother, for example said that she regularly rang her mother now as 'my mother had eight children'/'mijn moeder had acht kinderen' (6). This support with 'small things which happen with children'/'kleine dingen die gebeuren met kinderen' (6) was seen as essential to her piece of mind; 'it puts me at ease'/ het stelt mij gerust (6).

Many Pakeha and Dutch parents commented that, although they were not as strict as their parents regarding many rules surrounding healthy eating and drinking, these material areas remained very important to them too. One Dutch mother commented that one of her main roles as a parent was still to supply the 'the basic things'/'de basis dingen' (10) which were also important to her parents. This included 'the caring aspects, that she sleeps well and eats healthy and all that sort of things'/'het verzorgende aspect, dat ze goed slaapt en gezond eet en al dat soort dingen' (10). A Pakeha woman commented that she too saw it as her role, and an important part of a good childhood, that children were well fed. She was 'absolutely fussy' (9) herself in that regard, she said, as children should have: 'good food, umm, with a bit of pain in that, I don't belief in just letting kids have anything (laughs) (9).

Being in the outdoors was also seen as related to health and there were many discussions among parents, especially Pakeha parents, regarding children not spending enough time outdoors. Television and computers were regularly seen as the culprit as they played an increasing role in children's lives as they grew older. This caused worry and anxieties among parents who recalled a very different childhood. One mother describing her 'typical' New Zealand childhood in a small town said:

> …I can't remember being so strongly affected by media and graphic images around
> me, I was still very much in a fantasy stage, in nature, and I spent a lot of time outside,
> umm, I just think that is healthier, yeah …(11).

Dutch parents, as I described in Chapter 6, put less emphasis on the outdoors in relation to concepts of self. However, they too saw children being outdoors as an important part of health. Having walked or biked to their own schools in their childhood, they saw contemporary children as not getting enough exercise and tried to take them for walks at other times to make up for this.

Leisure activities have been part of developing a healthy New Zealand body since the beginning of the 20th century when powerful campaigns for a better and fitter population became part of the disciplining of New Zealand society. Contemporary discourses too encourage children to be healthy and fit as recent governmental campaigns to curb child obesity in New Zealand show. The Labour Government's decision to invest 76 million over three years in fighting obesity is strongly supported by the New Zealand Medical Association (NZMA) as it states in its *Obesity-Position Statement* (2006). The NZMA gives a variety of suggestions as how the curbing of obesity can be achieved. The recommendations include encouraging all women to breastfeed, government intervention in schools to supply healthy food and:

> … a sustained and consistent education campaign to improve parents' and children's understanding of the benefits of healthy living. Families need to be educated and empowered through guidance that recognises the impact they have on their children's development of life-long habits of eating and activity (New Zealand Medical Association 2006:4).

Middle-class parents are already very health conscious and have taken on many of the contemporary rationales and practices surrounding health as described in the policies above. Many parents, as well as their children, have increasingly taken up the more individualised leisure practices I described in Chapter 5; they jog, play tennis and squash and go to the gym. They are often also still part of sport teams. They also have taken on-board regimes surrounding healthy food. They therefore see many of the campaigns by government and other institutions to get New Zealanders fitter and healthier as positive.

One mother said, for example, that health campaigns, such as the government's 'anti-smoking initiative' (2) was an important way to increase peoples' health. She had also tried to actively seek out more information regarding health issues herself so she could make better decisions for the health of her family as the following quote reflects.

> I went to a workshop for the Heart Foundation on Friday and I was really, umm, very impressed by how far they have gone in the last say fifteen years. I just thought that was great, that was about nutrition and their concerns about the nutrition today and

lifestyle. Because statistically it would just blow you away how, how heavy the youth are! How many children are now getting sugar diabetes at the age of ten, whereas in the past they were getting them in their late fifties (2).

Becoming more informed was seen by this parent as a way to assess future risks to her children. Neoliberal discourses of self and the increasing availability of risk knowledges, as I discussed in the Introduction, has led to regimes of rationality in the middle classes in which people think of themselves as exercising a high level of control over their lives and the risks associated with them (Lupton 1999:4). This was reflected in New Zealand parental narratives about health too.

Money and Risk

The government should be ashamed of themselves, I think. I don't know how they should be doing it, but they should be doing something about the fact that, that there is so much pressure on young families today (8).

Money was a major theme in the conversations in my research. Most middle-class parents are aware of the economic conditions in which other parents and children in New Zealand live. They see their own children as having a generally good childhood with a secure place to come home to, a roof over their head and a meal on the table. 'You know', one mother said, 'that is security'.

And some parents don't have that! They don't know where the next meal will come from and I don't think that is a very good thing, it makes you appreciate what you've got (14).

But despite this appreciation of what they do have, most middle-class Pakeha and Dutch parents in this research struggled with money. The burden of supporting a young family was seen as a risky business as there were more 'things that could go wrong' (13). The anxieties surrounding the 'choice' of being a one or two income family puts pressure on both men and women as they try to decide what is less risk; a lack of money or a lack of time. Achieving the concerted cultivation contemporary middle-class regimes of childhood see as necessary is expensive in monetary terms, but also has a cost of time. Living in the 'right' area, as I discussed in Chapter 5, is very important in concerted cultivation as it affects children having the 'right' formal education through schools and informal education through leisure activities. As one mother stated:

There is no doubt about it if you haven't got two incomes, you are disadvantaged. It doesn't matter if your husband earns a very good salary, things are more, are becoming more and more expensive (2).

Middle-class parents in this study often reflected the anxieties expressed in recent articles in the media (see Chapter 5) which discuss the declining fortunes of the middle classes and the resulting anxieties for parents. Increasing student loans, job insecurity and the growing demands of parenting are all mentioned by the parents as causing stress in relation to money. Most of these middle-class parents reflected that, although they were supposed to be well-off, they frequently did not feel it that way. One parent stated:

> Well, I am certainly not reasonably well off, no! That's crap! Absolute crap! I mean middle-class without any children probably are reasonably well off, you know, but not middle-class with children (8).

One sole mother commented that, although it was not easy for her living on a benefit, she had many middle-class friends with 'homes and mortgages' (1) who struggled too, 'even if they are on two incomes' (1). This was especially the case in Auckland, she commented, with its 'inflated house prices' (1).

The Risk of Time

> You know if I feel like I don't have enough time. I say, you know, 'just wait, just wait' or 'later, later'. I, that worries me! Are they going to say 'it's always later; you've never got time for me'.

James and Mills (2005:1) discuss how embedded ideas and practices marking time affect the way we act or even reproduce collective events. Anthropologists, they argue, need to focus more on the way time is represented. Time, they suggest (2005:5), frames our interpretations of events,

> … and underlies the way we read evidences of the past, and act with reference to the future.

Time is a theme which appeared many times in my discussions with parents about childhood. Lareau (2003) shows that time, or lack thereof, is also a big issue in her study of American middle-class parents. Time, said the parents in this study, was not so scarce in the era of 'that was then' as fathers worked 'normal' hours and mothers were home to care for the family. However, the idea of time being plentiful in the past was also contradicted by the narratives in the study that mothers 'did not have time to think' in the past or those fathers 'always worked'. The sense that there was more time in the past is also part of the narrative of the 'Golden Weather', as I have described,

with its image of timelessness. Time, as James and Mills (2005:13) point out, has many qualitative aspects and is:

> ... full of markers of different scales on which we draw to shape and provide rhythms for events in our lives.

However, despite the different interpretations of time in different contexts, contemporary parents do appear under more time pressure as they try to fulfil the different roles and demands placed on them. The regime of concerted cultivation with its associated busy schedule of leisure activities, the increasing hours of work for both parents, job insecurity and the expectation that individuals continuously extend and develop themselves through study all have lead to greater feelings of stress on peoples' time. 'Finding time' for relaxation with family and friends, just to sit at a beach, or go on family holidays has become a task in itself. These increasing pressures as Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) suggest, turn parents into 'tightrope dancers'. Giving children an 'ideal childhood' is something most parents want for their children, however, this is fraught with difficulty. One father, when asked what he saw as an ideal childhood said:

> What would I see if my children had an ideal childhood? Umm, ..., more holidays, umm, probably for the parents to have more quality time, so if I wasn't as busy, umm, if I wasn't as tired …If I could work shorter hours ... Just so that I can have more quality time, so that, often now I get home, S (wife) is at the gym, or there are children activities, so we have a half hour swap over …I don't know, so it is quite physically and emotionally draining, cause there a lack of time(15).

Risk Discourses and Cyber Space

As briefly discussed in Chapter 5, the role of 'cyberspace' and computational technology in children's lives has become increasingly part of risk discourses. The increase in computer use has transformed the way New Zealanders in general, but children and youth especially, spend their leisure time. Debates about the advantages and disadvantages of cyber space are therefore regularly part of discussions in the media and as well as among parents. Pakeha and Dutch middle-class parents in New Zealand are affected by the polarised discourses and anxieties surrounding the new technologies. Concerted cultivation requires children to be up-to-date with technologies, however, there are also beliefs that computers should be contained as they have a negative effect on children.

Children, as symbols of the future, say Holloway and Valentine (2003:1), are at the heart of debates about the possibilities that the new technologies offer and also

about the dangers that these technologies bring into family homes. The new forms of technology are often seen as solitary and potentially addictive activities which may blur the boundaries between childhood and adulthood (Holloway and Valentine 2003:2). As I described in Chapter 2, children in the west are assumed to have the right to a childhood of innocence. This socially constructed identity of children as 'other' and as a homogeneous social group has been critiqued by academics from across the social sciences (see for example Hendrick 1990, James and Prout 1990b, Jenks 1996). However, despite these critiques, being a 'good' parent in today's unpredictable world is structured 'around the ability of parents to protect their children from social and physical risks' (Holloway and Valentine 2003:8). The new technologies are an area that parents find hard to police and contemporary risk talk is therefore often directed into this area. The media (television, videos, movies and the internet), although seen as a part of life and unstoppable, were frequently mentioned by parents in my research as putting their children at risk. Too much use of these new technologies was seen as part of an 'abnormal' childhood. It was a space, said many parents, in which children could get 'lost' if they were not actively guided and monitored. Parents frequently commented how it filled up children's 'brain space with violence' (8) as children often saw 'too much of it, you know' (2). Children, commented many parents, were 'affected by the media' (12). One mother stated clearly:

> They just can't deal with it you know and, umm, it takes their whole world away at this age, and I am not having it!

Parents who showed violent movies and let children play scary video games, especially young children, she criticised as 'bad' parents who did terrible things to their children's mental health, because 'I think, umm, that it adversely affects our children and their development and their growth' (8).

Holloway and Valentine (2003:155) suggest that computers are 'domesticated' by parents in different ways depending on parenting styles and the different interpretations of what the machine is for. Their research demonstrates, they say, that children in general are not spending excessive amounts of time indoors in front of the computer screen. Young people appear to use technology in balanced and sophisticated ways, argue Holloway and Valentine (2003:155) and it is important that adults do not let unfounded fears dominate their thinking. Adults, they suggest (2003:155), stress to children the importance of using this technology in a constructive and productive way in order to maximise their potential. Governments, schools and parents present computers

to children through an adult lens. Instead they need to learn, argue Holloway and Valentine (2003:157), to incorporate children's voices in the new technologies.

One of the parents reflected on the contradictions between 'concerted cultivation' which involved the use of electronic devices such as computers and television on the one hand and the risk this involves for children's innocence on the other. Children, she said 'can become more hardened these days' and had become desensitised through watching 'adult videos and adult TV' as well as through videogames 'knocking off people left, right and centre'. These 'hardened' children are different from children 'who have been protected somewhat' (1) in whom she saw a 'childlike innocence' (1) which, she said, she found 'really beautiful' (1).

Although this mother was uncomfortable with the effects the new technologies may have on her children, she also tried to find a balance as she wanted her child 'to feel comfortable' (1) wherever he was. She wanted her son to be skilled in this new world and not feel 'left out' (1). She therefore carefully monitored his access, because he still 'needs to live in the real world'. Technological devices, such as the computer and television, are portrayed as compromising the moral integrity of childhood with its associated concept of innocence (Wyness 2006:75-6). This was also reflected by the parent quoted above, however, she did not want her son to be disadvantaged in the 'real' world. She therefore tried to deal with the risk of electronic devices to her child's innocence by allowing her son 'doses of television' and the use of the computer to play certain games. This mother felt that by giving children 'antidotes' (which she saw as homeopathic doses), risks can be counteracted and children's innocence retained for a while longer.

Cyber Space Revisited

On the 21st of October 2006, when I was reflecting on my conclusions to my PhD research, my eye was caught by the headline of the article which states: '*Wasted Years: How Electronic Babysitters are destroying Childhood*'. The article starts with the lines:

> Allowing children a constant diet of TV and computer games is
> depriving them of what they really need, family life in the real world
> (Du Chateau 2006:B 1).

It describes Sarah's problem to keep control of her 13 year old son Will's electronic life which, states the article, is far from easy as both parents work and they have three children aged 17, 13 and 9.

Among them they have three PC's, two laptops and a tablet, three TVs, two DVDs and countless Playstations, Gameboys and Nintendos (Du Chateau 2006:B 1).

These technical devices have taken over the house and keeping control of all them is a parental nightmare. Sarah's problem with electronic devices is part of a wider global pattern which a hundred and ten British teachers, psychologists and children's authors want their government to stop says Du Chateau the author of the article (2006:B 1). Speaking out last month these experts called these electronic devices 'the death of childhood'. This death of childhood, they argued, is the end product of major social, cultural and technological changes. This has led to children who are more depressed, stressed and pressured than ever before (Du Chateau 2006:B 1). Children, suggest the teachers, psychologists and children' authors,

> … still need what developing human beings have always needed – real food (as opposed to processed 'junk'), real play (as opposed to sedentary, screen-based entertainment), firsthand experience of the world they live in, and regular interaction with the significant adults in their lives (as quoted in Du Chateau 2006:B 1).

Dr Peter Watson, of Child and Adolescent Health Services in South Auckland, argues that they also need time just to be children. There are worrying signs in New Zealand too, he says, as a national survey of 12 to 18 year olds shows. Watson says that he is alarmed by the high level of depression of children which he links to violence and graphic sexual content on TV, DVDs and electronic games. Solid research shows, says Watson, that watching violence desensitises young people to the real violence in the world and may also contribute to violent behaviour in children. Meanwhile, says Watson, kids are crying out for 'old-fashioned attention' (Du Chateau 2006:B 1).

Other experts are then called upon to give their opinion on the influence of electronic devices on children. Paediatrician Simon Rowley focuses on the link between childhood experience and brain development. He is convinced, he says, that too much cybertime has an impact on children's still developing brain. He argues that it gives children less time to be themselves and have free imaginative play. What works, says Rowley,

> … is letting children explore the world: to make a dam in the mud puddle and watch how the water comes up and drowns things. What happens when the dam flows over, when they make a hole and let it gush out. Nothing makes up for direct, tangible experience.

This sort of creative play, suggest Rowley, is how we make sense of the world. Interaction with people is an important part of that too. Sitting in front of electronic devices, he says, is learning to interact with a screen and totally passive. Rowley suggests that it is all a matter of priorities. Some families from the same socio-economic group choose to have mum and dad at home and rely on one wage, he states, while others 'choose the private schools, overseas holidays, label clothes for the kids and all the toys' (Du Chateau 2006:B 2). However despite 'the downside of the toxic childhood, says Du Chateau (2006:B 2)

> … sitting like a mushroom in a darkened room, swigging Coca-Cola
> and grazing on chips, interacting with a screen instead of real people –
> there are advantages.

Family therapist, Dr Kerry Gould, then reminds the readers that this 'is a great time to be a kid'. They have more voice then ever before, she says, and the children of today are 'smart and wise'. She points out that television and computer games have their advantages as it can also bring the family together. Her children, she says, also play a lot of games they make up based on television programmes such as the Simpson's. Socially, she says,

> … there are lots of good things happening when a group of teenage
> boys get together to play Xbox games. It's part of their culture (as
> quoted in Du Chateau 2006:B 2).

Gould says that her children learn a lot from computer games such as *Age of Empire*. Sarah, the mother quoted at the beginning of the article, agrees and says that her son owes his math prowess to computer games. However, although television and games may have some advantages, says Du Chateau (2006:B 2), families need to insist that their children take 'antidotes' such as more time with the family, fresh food and most importantly time on their own to explore and make sense of their world.

The second section of the narrative in the *Herald* tells the story of a middle-class Milford family. In this Milford family the rules regarding electronic devices are strictly monitored. Mother Luisa states that her problem with electronic toys, games and entertainment is that 'it steals them from family life'. Her two boys are allowed one hour a day on these devices when they get home from school, but

> After that it's homework, playing with the rabbit, taking the dog for a
> walk, swimming, dinner, soccer, sailing, hockey for Foss and piano for
> Patrick (Du Chateau 2006:3).

Luisa then compares her children's childhood with her own which she describes as very different. For a start, says mother Luisa (who was brought up in New Zealand by an Italian mother and a Dutch father), there was no television or videos and although they lived in the city she had a life of freedom as

> …our house was on a quarter acre. We had guinea pigs, a goat, a creek
> at the bottom of the garden.

Luisa was able to walk the 4 km to and from school to arrive home to a mother who had a bowl of 'goodies' ready. Dinner was on the table as soon as dad stepped into the door and they all ate together at the table, says Luisa, and 'I don't remember homework'.

Du Chateau (2006:3) summarises the rest of Luisa's childhood narrative in the following way:

> There was no weekend sport or shopping, just one car, a big rumpus
> room with a record player and piles of LPs, get-togethers with their
> Italian and Dutch extended families, and bach holidays at the beach.

In New Zealand constructions of childhood children are located in places and spaces in nature (as I described in chapter 6 and as is reflected in the newspaper article described above) which is seen as 'closer to a pure and unmediated world of spontaneity, imagination and creativity' (Wyness 2006:81). This world is in contradiction with the world of technology. Although contemporary New Zealand middle-class parents do invest in computers to improve their children's educational capital and to enhance their 'productive' capacities this comes at a perceived price.

Wyness (2006:85) argues that technological devices are not only a threat to the images of childhood, but also a potential threat to adult authority. A 'Cyber' child has access to spaces and knowledges outside adult control, suggests Wyness, and is therefore an important area for childhood studies to examine. It is a space where the boundaries between adulthood and childhood can be legitimately contested and different understandings of childhood figurations can take place. 'Cyberspace' children confuse and complicate the conceptions adults have of children. It also gives children the chance 'to subvert conventional structures that regulate children's lives' (Wyness 2006:183).

Cultivated Risk-Taking: The Potential to be Oneself

Tulloch and Lupton (2003:37-8) point out that risks can be seen as both positive and negative. The 'reflexive actor' as described by Beck, they suggest, may sometimes be frightened of the outcome of risk-taking. However, many people are willing to take some risks because of possible benefits. The project of the self, say Tulloch and Lupton, needs to be developed through continuing work and attention. Risk-taking in this context, they argue:

> … becomes a particular 'practice of the self' (Foucault, 1988); a means by which subjectivity is expressed and developed according to prevailing moral and ethical values (Tulloch and Lupton 2003:38).

Pakeha and Dutch middle-class parents too saw a certain amount of risk-taking as important to the development of their children's self. This more cultivated risk-taking is a voluntary risk taking which involves, what Tulloch and Lupton (2003:35) call, 'edgework' which provides individuals with the opportunity to display courage, to master fear and to prove something to themselves which allows them to live life with a sense of personal agency. This sort of edgework is only possible, say middle-class parents, when children have had a 'good' childhood in which they are valued, loved and listened too. A lack of this in childhood, as I discussed in Chapter 6, may mean that children become 'lost' and therefore do not have a good sense of what risks involve. Positive risk-taking requires guidance, good self esteem and a certain amount of security. One parent stated that having a supportive and loving family behind him meant that her son knew that 'if he falls down there is always some one to pick him up' (18). This support, she said, was part of an ideal childhood as it gives children the opportunity to explore and extend themselves.

Tulloch and Lupton (2003:35) argue that a certain amount of deliberate risk-taking may lead to a heightened degree of emotional intensity. This, they say, is pleasurable as it takes people out of the 'the mundane, everyday nature of life'. Dutch parents often referred to their time walking or biking to school as having a certain amount of risk which was 'pleasurable'. It was part of 'edgework' that allowed them to explore new things and time with people outside their bounded home and school environment. It also gave them a sense of personal agency. The narratives of the time of the 'Golden Weather' by Pakeha parents also can be seen as 'edgework' as it gives children opportunities to go on adventures which could extend them in new directions.

Cultivated risk means that children now learn to take risk in more regulated settings through different forms of 'edgework'. Although there is nostalgia for the time of the 'Golden Weather', parents know that the positive risk-taking associated with that time is not enough for the future of their children. The transformations which have taken place require different skills. This unknown world of risk-taking', such as computers, causes parental anxieties and angst as they try to come to terms with a rapidly changing world.

Conclusion

Finding a balance between the regimes of childhood which sees children on the one hand as active, knowing, autonomous individuals and on the other hand as passive, innocent dependants is not easy for contemporary parents. Pakeha and Dutch parents therefore struggle with their parental role as they come to terms with the ambiguities contained in childhood today. As discussed in Chapter 6, previous generations of parents (today's grandparents) were seen as more focussed on the everyday practicalities of life, such as having enough food on the table, having the right clothes and to be seen as doing the 'right' thing. They were perceived as not 'dwelling too much' on their childrearing regimes or their children's future.

Life for parents in previous generations, however, may not have been as worry-free as is often perceived by contemporary parents. Park's (1982b) study in the middle-class suburb of Pakuranga in 1982 shows that life for parents then too was 'eventful' as couples worried about childhood illnesses, changes in the marital relationship due to having children and financial problems. Worries about a lack of support for parents and issues regarding a return to work for women were already part of life then too.

However, these stresses and worries have increased over the past two decades. Parenting today has become even more eventful and it has become hard for parents to know what is 'right'. Parents are therefore increasingly more insecure and anxious about their parenting. Information by experts supports and helps them in some regards, but is also seen as conflicting and often full of contradictions. This adds to the confusion parents feel. Most Pakeha and Dutch parents in this research discussed a range of risks facing their families. They ranged from fears about the day-to-day risks children faced by walking to and from school, through the effects of school bullies or the wrong peer influences, to angst and anxieties about job insecurity, money worries, the break up of families and health issues. Where parents put the emphasis depended on

what was happening for them at the time the interview took place and their personal biographies. Tulloch and Lupton (2003:19) point out that risk knowledges are not fixed but the products of 'ways of seeing'. Adults do know, as Jackson and Scott (1999:101) suggest, that certain risks are unlikely to befall their children, but they still feel anxious about them. Parent in this research too were often reflective about the subjective nature of the risks they are discussing and they frequently laughed at themselves. They repeatedly linked their fears to their personal biographies and explained them within the context of their lives at the time. Dutch parents were in general slightly less anxious about issues of work and job security as they still saw New Zealand as a country with more opportunities than The Netherlands. They also saw the return to the home country as a possibility which gave them and their children more options when necessary. They, however, worried more about the lack of time their children had with family, such as grandparents in The Netherlands. This Dutch people saw as a loss to their children's identities.

Pakeha and Dutch also regularly talked about the positive aspects of a certain amount of risk which was seen as part of a Kiwi self or Dutch self. These positive elements of risk were seen as giving children and their parents the opportunity to engage in self-actualisation and self-improvement. These positive influences could be heard, for example, in Pakeha narratives about holidays, beaches and freedom. It also included the 'Overseas Experience' which is part of many New Zealand young people's rituals towards adulthood. Dutch parents too saw positive risks as an important part of self. Their immigration experience was seen as such a positive risk which extended their personal self and contributed to what they perceived as a more relaxed and spontaneous life for themselves and their children.

Middle-class parents in New Zealand were quite reflective in their critiques of New Zealand society in general and government and its policies. Many were critical of the neoliberal policies of recent governments and what they saw as the increasing inequalities, social problems and risks in New Zealand society this had caused. There was critique of the way successive governments had allowed the welfare system to break down and the stress this had caused. However, there was also awareness that these changes were not only the governments' responsibility, but a societal and personal responsibility too.

Chapter 8: Destabilising the Regimes of Truth

> … there have clearly been important economic, political and social
> changes from the late twentieth century onwards that have altered the
> way we see ourselves and our ability to develop a social identity
> (Wyness 2006:51).

Overview

In this thesis I described how the changes in the regimes and practices of
childhood which can be seen in contemporary New Zealand society are inextricably
connected to wider historical and material changes which have taken place since the
mid-1960s. During this time New Zealanders 'coherent and national view of the world'
(King 2003:505) was increasingly challenged. Maori and women's movements and
other forces such as expanding airline services, the advent of television and increased
immigration destabilised the status quo (see Chapter 3 and 4). However, the biggest
transformation came during the 1980s and 1990s when neoliberal reforms resulted in
shifts of governance and new ways of being.

This thesis demonstrates that one of the consequences of the neoliberal reforms
has been the dislocation of what was considered, from a middle-class perspective, a
'normal' New Zealand childhood. The dismantling of traditional certainties transformed
New Zealand society from a time in which a 'typical New Zealand childhood' was still
possible into a society in which childhood is seen as a 'complex, ambiguous and a
destabilized phenomenon' (Prout 2005:62).

Contemporary New Zealand adult understandings of who children are and what
childhood means have been questioned as a result of the shifts in governance and new
forms of subjectivity that have developed over the past decades. One of the
consequences of these transformations has been that many of the regimes and practices
of New Zealand childhood have been challenged. This, as in many other western
societies (see for example Jackson and Scott 1999, Lupton 1999, Prout 2005, Wyness
2006), has led to discourses of crisis. This idea that childhood is in a state of crisis can,
for example, be seen in the *Weekend Herald* article (Du Chateau 2006) discussed in
Chapter 7. The contemporary discourse about the crisis of childhood has left many
middle-class parents with feelings of insecurity as they try to protect their children from
the risks discussed as part of these discourses.

I show in this thesis that, as a result of these new discourses of self and the declining fortunes of Pakeha and Dutch middle-class families in the last decades, many middle-class parents have adopted strategies which stress the concerted cultivation of children. Through this concerted cultivation they try to stimulate their children's development and foster their cognitive and social skills. This, parents hope, may eventually help their children to reach 'their full potential' and give them more choices in an uncertain future. Concerted cultivation, however, alters the texture of everyday life in New Zealand middle-class families due to the often hectic lifestyle resulting from it. Parents and children juggle complex timetables as they try to coordinate the activities of different family members. Many parents in this study commented on the pressure of this hectic life style and the stress it has put on their time and their relationships.

The more global middle-class cultural repertoire of concerted cultivation coexists with a local regime based on the New Zealand narrative of the time of the 'Golden Weather' (see Chapter 6). This local figuration is often in contradiction with the hectic pace of concerted cultivation. Although contemporary middle-class parents see many advantages in the opportunities concerted cultivated gives their children (in the present and in the future), they also talk with nostalgia about their own childhood when the pace of life was very different. Not having enough time (due to busy timetables) to take their children to the 'typical' places of New Zealand childhood, namely the beach and the outdoors, was a frequently mentioned concern of middle-class Pakeha parents.

Dutch middle-class parents in New Zealand also use concerted cultivation as part of their childhood rationales and practices. They have adopted some of their host country's norms and ideals surrounding childhood and the outdoors. However, there is a difference in emphasis between Pakeha and Dutch parental narratives of self. Whereas Dutch parental narratives are more focussed on relationships with people, Pakeha parents tend to emphasise instead relationships with nature. Dutch parental narratives of childhood also include concepts such as *'gezelligheid'* (see Chapter 6).

Despite this difference in emphasis, however, both contemporary Dutch and Pakeha middle-class New Zealand parents are trying to negotiate their cultural repertoires of childhood through a lens of risk anxiety (Beck 1992, 1998). These risk anxieties are a pervasive and a constant feature of parental everyday consciousness which affect the way contemporary Pakeha and Dutch childhoods are imagined and

children's futures predicted. Keeping children safe, innocent and protected in a world which is perceived as much more dangerous than it was even a few decades ago leads to a 'tightrope' dance for parents that often causes further stress and anxiety. Risk awareness, nostalgia for an imagined past and the rationales and practices associated with concerted cultivation means that parenting in contemporary New Zealand often feels like dancing on a high-wire.

Narratives are a way to reveal the ambivalence which surrounds people's own negotiations between traditional identities and modernity (White 2000:181) as I discuss in Chapter 6. This ambivalence can also be found in the narratives of middle-class parents in New Zealand as they try to negotiate what they see as a 'traditional' and a 'modern' childhood. Kapur (2005:16), examining the transformations of childhood as a result of neoliberalism in the USA, discusses the sense of displacement many contemporary parents feel due to the transformations which have taken place in western societies over the past decades. This sense of displacement is often coupled with a sense of loss and guilt, she says (2005:17), as parents feel that they are not building the same good childhood memories for their own children as they have themselves of their childhood.

This sense of displacement, loss and guilt are also part of Pakeha and Dutch narratives. Pakeha parents, as I discuss above and in Chapter 7, feel this in regard to family holidays, while Dutch parents feel that their children miss out on memories of *'gezelligheid'* and family gatherings. Although these feelings of displacement, loss and guilt have to a certain extent always existed in previous generations, the transformations in New Zealand society in the past decades have accentuated this. These feelings are one of the dominant themes in contemporary western society and have fuelled the idea that childhood is in crisis (Wyness 2006:75).

However, discourses of childhood in crisis, as Wyness (2006:75) argues, also serve to reinforce a powerful set of ideas about where children fit within the social structure. Neoliberalism in New Zealand, as in other countries where it was implemented, established new ways of governing the self through discourses of personal reflection, flexibility and choice as well notions of uncertainty, instability and risk. These new discourses and practices surrounding the self have led to an increased surveillance and intervention in children's lives (Rose 1999a:123). New Zealand middle class children have become the focus of innumerable projects that are intended to safeguard them from physical, sexual or moral danger. Concerted cultivation also

intensifies surveillance of children (see Chapter 7). All these devices for the 'management of insecurity' (Rose 1996:37) have made contemporary middle-class childhood in New Zealand 'the most intensively governed sectors of personal existence' (Rose 1999a:123).

The Study of the Ordinary

The task for an 'anthropology of the present', argue Shore and Wright (1997:18), is to unsettle and dislodge the certainties and orthodoxies that govern the present. This unsettling and dislodging involves detaching and repositioning oneself. This is not an easy task as it is not always easy to stand back from one's taken for granted assumptions and to find the unfamiliar in the familiar. I discussed in Chapter 1 some of the dilemma's I faced during my research. My personal involvement as a parent, early childhood educator, Cub Scout leader and friend in my chosen topic of research meant that I spent a lot of my time 'small talking' in familiar settings. Detaching and repositioning myself was therefore not always easy. Using academic theoretical frameworks, however, was one way to distance myself as it allowed a different way of viewing my world and provoked me to question my assumptions.

I started my PhD process using Michel Foucault's theories as a way to examine the governmentality of childhood and parenthood. However, as my research progressed and my understanding deepened, the Foucauldian perspective alone did not capture the complexity of contemporary childhood I encountered in my ethnographic research. I therefore added Pierre Bourdieu's and Ulrich Beck's frameworks to my theoretical 'thinking tools'. Dyck (2000:41) argues that anthropological ethnographic research often connects diverse and contradictory discourses to patterned activities, institutional interests and personal relationships that span a variety of social realms. I believe that the ability to connect diverse and sometimes contradictorary theoretical approaches is also a strength within anthropology. By using a combination of theoretical frameworks, incorporating Foucault, Bourdieu and Beck, I was better able to understand the complexity of contemporary childhoods. It gave me the opportunity to look at middle-class childhood in New Zealand from three overlapping but slightly different angles.

Both Foucault and Bourdieu see subjectivity as constructed by social and historical factors which are part of our taken for granted assumptions. They argue that the new subjectivities are practiced and habituated to rules of cultural life (Bordo 1989:13). Foucault's concept of governmentality, developed further by Nikolas Rose,

shows the wider macro level of the social and historical constructions of childhood. I therefore used a Foucauldian approach especially to examine the instances and transformations which have occurred in western societies (Chapter 2) and New Zealand (Chapter 3 and 4).

Foucault stresses in *Discipline and Punish* (1977) that it is through the organisation and regulation of time, space and movement in our everyday life that bodies are disciplined. He argues that the family is one of the main institutional supports of a disciplined society (Foucault 1977:193). The governance of the individual begins with children at home through techniques of discipline and surveillance which produce an effect on the psyche or 'soul' of those supervised, trained and corrected. This is then reinforced and expanded by institutions outside the home such as early childhood centres and schools. The discipline and governing of childhood in New Zealand in families and through other institutions has increased over time as I described in Chapter 3 and 4. This increasing disciplining and governing of childhood in New Zealand since it was colonised in the 19th century took on a new form in recent decades through neoliberal rationales and practices. As in other western societies, this led to new ways of what Rose terms 'governing the soul' and new selfhoods.

Concerted cultivation, so prevalent in the contemporary Pakeha and Dutch middle classes in New Zealand, also organises and regulates childhood in unprecedented ways. It organises and regulates children (and their families) time, space and movement in ways that contradict the discourses of a good Kiwi childhood. Following Foucault, I describe in this thesis the constellation of regimes and practices that have contributed and are still contributing to this regime.

Rose (1996:57), building on Foucault, argues that under what he calls 'advanced liberal rule' a new way of governing was established through the reinvention of the soul. Constant evaluations and adjustment surrounding the family now take place with criteria provided 'by the experts of the soul'. This has established a particular way of viewing family lives and the way we speak about them. Parents are urged to constantly scrutinize themselves and their interactions with their children and to evaluate the consequences for health, adjustment, development and intellect (McGillivray 1997:9). Parents and children (as well as other individuals in New Zealand) are continuously encouraged and cajoled towards increasing levels of evaluation and scrutinisation of the self as part of the neo-liberal regimes.

Although Foucault's work is useful to analyse macro levels of childhood governmentality and to connect these to the micro levels, Bourdieu's theoretical framework is more helpful when looking at the micro level itself. Bourdieu's work can be used to deepen Foucault's theory of subjectivity through his concept of habitus (and his more recent discussion of destabilized habitus). Bourdieu's analyses of social class, as I described in Chapter 5, provides an understanding of class not as a 'position' within a stratified society but as something that is lived, embodied and performed through various social practices (Aschaffenburg and Maas 1997:161). Bourdieu shows that reproduction through the habitus produces unequal childhoods. The interweaving of parental life experiences and resources, including economic resources, occupational conditions and educational backgrounds, have a big impact on the outcome of these reproductions (Lareau 2007:348-9).

As I show in Chapter 5, 6 and 7, Pakeha and Dutch parents' choices and the possibilities they see for their children are based on their middle-class dispositions. Education, for example, which was already important in their own childhood habitus, has taken on a new meaning for contemporary parents as they seek to provide their children with the best possible preparation for an unknown future. Concerted cultivation has become an important middle-class strategy of passing on cultural capital now that economic capital has become more problematic (Bourdieu 1998:19).

The habitus is based on a constant process of cultural fixing which leads to little cracks and openings (Ortner 1998:14) which can become big cracks and openings during times of major crisis. Expectations of normality change during these times, says Bourdieu (2000:159), and a destabilized habitus results. It is those best adapted to the previous state of the game who have the most difficulty in adjusting to the new established order. Bourdieu's theoretical framework, derived from his analysis of French society, was very helpful to explain what is happening in the New Zealand middle classes. During the 1950s, 1960s and to a certain extent the 1970s, middle-class habitus in New Zealand was relatively stable. Little cracks and opening which denaturalised 'normality' did appear regularly as I described in Chapter 3, however, they never led to big cracks and openings or a destabilised habitus for the middle classes.

However, the changes since the mid-1970s and especially the neoliberal reforms started in the 1980s did result in a major crisis in the middle classes. The middle classes, who were best adapted to the previous state of the game, became

increasingly more anxious about the new established order (see Chapter 4 and 5). A destabilized habitus was the result. Contemporary middle-class parents are therefore negotiating a range of contradictory and conflictual cultural repertoires from a destabilized habitus. Added to this is a high level of risk anxiety fuelled by neoliberal discourses of risk.

Risk, as I discussed in Chapter 7, became a central metaphor in New Zealand's discourses as part of the neoliberal reforms in the 1980s. Beck's framework regarding risk society became therefore the third theory in my PhD thesis. His concepts add another layer to Foucault's and Bourdieu's work. Risk anxiety, as Beck (1992, 1998) argues, has become a lens in many western societies through which life is viewed, outcomes are imagined and futures are predicted. These risk anxieties are a pervasive and a constant feature of everyday consciousness managed through everyday practices (Jackson and Scott 1999:88). Parental preoccupation with the management and prevention of risks in Pakeha and Dutch middle classes has led to greater parental vigilance surrounding children. This is not an easy task, however, and although neoliberal discourses of self have meant that people in the middle classes especially feel that they should have a high level of control over their and their children's lives, the opposite is frequently true. Parents regularly feel a loss of control. This leads to high levels of anxiety, a greater destabilized habitus and enhanced regulation and surveillance over the lives of their children.

Class talk revisited

One of the most persistent myths in New Zealand society has been its lack of class. However, this has changed in recent decades when class became increasingly part of discourses in New Zealand (Chapter 5). Recent surveys (Black 2005) and media reports as well as my PhD research show that many contemporary middle-class New Zealanders classify themselves in class terms. The transformation which took place in the past decades has meant that New Zealand's understanding of itself as a nation changed. With this change New Zealand understanding of class also took on a different form. Class, as Wilkes (1990:80) argues, is a changing phenomenon.

From the end of the 1960s onwards inequalities in New Zealand were slowly exposed (see Chapter 4 and 5). The era of protest (1970s to 1980s) meant that Pakeha narratives of New Zealandness such as equality, good race relations, the Kiwi Bloke and discourses of ruralness all came under attack. The neoliberal pro-market policies of the

1980s and 1990s brought economic and social differences even more in the open. The utilisation of neoliberal discourses increasingly made individuals responsible for their own well-being (Rudd 2001:252) and when the Lange Government came to power in 1984 discourses of class became 'respectable' again (Wilkes 1990:79). This respectability of class discourses was also reflected in New Zealand society.

Individual responsibility and the refocusing of governmental policies towards 'those in need' led to a stream of publicity discussing the economic insecurity and declining wealth of 'middle New Zealand'. Class, therefore, re-emerged as an important concept in regimes and practices surrounding childhood in contemporary New Zealand society. However, despite these knowledges regarding class, as Lareau (2007:325) discusses for America, debate persists about the relevance of the transmission of class advantages to children. Despite an increasing use of the discourse of class, New Zealanders, like the Australians discussed by McGregor (1997), often do not recognise that class is an important organising principle of modern capitalist societies and 'the mechanism by which power, privilege and inequality are distributed and institutionalised' (McGregor 1997:18).

Beck (1992:39) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002:2) argue that in contemporary risk societies a social dynamic is set in motion which can no longer be composed of and understood in class categories (see Chapter 1). However, global economic trends in the late 20th century have created both greater wealth and more inequality within national economies (Prout 2005:20). These trends can also be seen in New Zealand. I show in this thesis that class leads to quite distinct cultural repertoires and practices and thus unequal childhoods. As McGregor (1997:17-8) also shows for contemporary Australia, 'class counts'.

Academic Rationales of Childhood and New Zealand's Agenda for Children

> … any notion of state-building and policy-formation is also a response
> to changing conceptions of family and childhood (Wyness 2006:98).

As discussed in chapter 1 the starting point of this PhD was *The Towards a Code of Family and Social Responsibility* (New Zealand Department of Social Welfare 1998). *The Code* included dominant configurations of childhood in New Zealand based on taken for granted ideas and assumptions reflected in New Zealand society, including

academic paradigms of childhood and it triggered many of my questions surrounding the construction and governing of childhood in New Zealand.

Academic childhood studies in the 1990s shifted their gaze from a focus on socialisation or the 'becoming child' to a paradigm in which children were seen as active 'agents' or the 'being child' (James *et al.* 1998). These shifts were reflected in the wider community as childrearing practices moved from a rationale of 'obedience' to a rationale of 'being oneself' (Gullestad 1997). *The Code*, which was published in 1998 by the National government, was still at odds with the newly emerging paradigm.

Paradigms of childhood until the 1990s were based on ideas and images of a 'standard adulthood' (see Chapter 2). These rationales were made credible by social and economic contexts which included specific patterns in the organisation of people's working lives and in the organisation of their intimate relationships. Adults were seen as stable and mostly unchanging over time, children were seen as unstable and incomplete (Lee 2001:8). This division of adult 'being' and children's 'becoming' informed the governing and disciplining of western societies for a long time (Lee 2001:105) and can still be seen in New Zealand in *The Code*.

The academic disciplines followed the same regimes of rationality, but during the 1990s social constructionism became a dominant discourse in the paradigm of childhood. Because children as 'others' had been socially excluded in many areas on the basis that they were incomplete human becomings (Lee 2001:11), research which developed during the 1990s concentrated on describing children as independent 'beings' who were free, stable and able to make choices. This new emphasis encouraged a deeper understanding of childhoods based on social, cultural and historical rationales and the new paradigm had real political effect (Wyness 2006:48).

Many academics who were part of the development of the new paradigm became part of child advocacy groups as can also be seen in New Zealand (Brown and McCormack 2005:185). Extensive research, publications and advocacy by academics, for example, contributed to the development of *New Zealand's Agenda for Children* which was published in 2002. Central to the work of these academics and advocates, say Brown and McCormack (2005:185), was a recognition of the cultural shifts in thinking about childhood which occurred in New Zealand and elsewhere during the 1990s. These developing views acknowledged that the meaning and experiences of childhood are varied depending on time and contexts and are linked to social categories such as class, gender and ethnicity. The New Zealand Labour government's decision to

develop a new strategy for children was a partly prompted by a recognition that policy-making had not kept pace with changing perspectives on childhood (Brown and McCormack 2005:186).

The development of the *Agenda for Children* was also linked to the wider social, economic and political environment in New Zealand and was a recognition that the economic position of many children in New Zealand had been deteriorating since the 1980s. By the late 1990s indicators suggested a need to re-balance the crucial role of families for investing in and improving the well being of dependent children (Brown and McCormack 2005:188). Achieving this balance, however, was complicated by the diverse understandings of the concept of families in New Zealand and children's roles and positions within them.

The *Agenda* mobilises discourses of biculturalism and multiculturalism (King 2003) to discuss these complicated categories within New Zealand. It describes how the wellbeing of Maori children is seen as fundamentally linked and interrelated to concepts of whanau, hapu and iwi (Brown and McCormack 2005:188). These structures, argue Brown and McCormack, perpetuate Maori cultural values and practices and provide ongoing nurturing and protection to Maori children. Many non-Maori in New Zealand, such as the Dutch and Pakeha parents I talked to during my research, see children fundamentally linked to social institutions such as the extended family too. The passing on of cultural values and practices is also an important part of their conceptions of childhood. The *Agenda's* recognition of the diversity of parents and family groups as primary sources of nurturing, protection, support and guidance for children as well as their contribution to the perpetuation of cultural values and practices is therefore an important feature of this document for all New Zealand's children and their families. It shows a willingness to incorporate new regimes of childhood in government policies. However, despite the progress made a 'creative stutter' remains necessary to destabilise the many assumptions which remain part of these rationales.

The paradigm of childhood developed in the 1990s exposed silences surrounding children and gave children a voice. The incorporation of this paradigm into government policies such as the *Agenda* means that New Zealand government policies now recognise that children in New Zealand grow up in a variety of cultural, social and environmental settings and that the concepts of the child, childhood and the family are diverse and complex. This, as I discuss in Chapter 1, was lacking in *The Code*.

However, the 'being child' portrayed in these new paradigms of childhood, which is also incorporated in New Zealand government policies, often shows children as much more independent of adult society than is realistic. Ideas of the 'becoming' child and socialisation have become unpopular in the dominant framework of childhood studies, but there is a need to re-incorporate these concepts within the discussions of childhood (see also Lee 2001, Lupton and Barclay 1997, Prout 2005). Biological realities of differences written upon bodies cannot be ignored as often happens in the new regimes of rationale surrounding childhood.

The paradigms of the 1990s established that children are not separate categories, but need to be acknowledged as full members of every society and a recognition of children as fluid and flexible beings (Martin 1994, Ong 1999) also needs to be acknowledged (Chapter 2). However, children are also members of our society who need adult care, support and love due to their bodies being socially and biologically unfinished at birth (Prout 2005:103-5).

'From Innocents to Agents'

While in the final stages of this PhD research my eye was caught by an article in the *New Zealand Herald* on the 7th of December 2006. The headline of the commentary by Garth George reads: 'Childhoods under Threat'. The commentary discusses a book published a few weeks prior in Christchurch. This book, says George, is required reading for everyone who cares about what is happening to family life in New Zealand (George 2006:19). The book, he continues, is written by Dr Michael Reid and is titled *'From Innocents to Agents'*. It traces the development of children's rights in New Zealand from the 19th century. The conclusions Reid draws, says George, is that contemporary children are political pawns.

A growing bureaucracy around children has increased state power, claims Reid (as quoted in George 2006:19), and this has come at the expense of children's welfare. The growth of special interest groups and lobbyists has been phenomenal too and contemporary children are now seen as political beings and empowered agents. Reid argues that the increasing state involvement in children's lives can be seen, for example, in the parliamentary bill which removes parents' power to smack their children. While Reid acknowledges that some government action has improved children's welfare, he also argues, that it has led to a redefinition of the family. This redefinition, he says:

… is increasingly alienating children from their true source of security and nurture (Reid as quoted in George 2006:19).

Children's rights are increasingly usurping parent's rights, states Reid, and this can lead to conflict between parents and children. A basic question then becomes:

… whose rights are the most right when there is a clash – a parent's rights to assert his or her reasonable sovereignty over the family, or the a teenager's right to go it alone and do what he or she wants? (Reid as quoted in George 2006:19).

So then what is a child, asks Reid, and what does this mean in legal terms, especially under international laws such as proposed by the United Nations? The changes that are happening are undermining the concepts of adulthood and childhood and it is a strange dichotomy that the same people who campaign to protect children are also trying to turn them into adults. It is families which give birth to children and give them an identity, direction and provide nurture. It is only when this is not the case that the state has a legitimate interest to interfere.

Being a parent is about disciplining your children, whether you do it physically, verbally or in combination. You are there to guide and nurture kids, and that's a disciplinary thing (as quoted in George 2006:19).

Parenthood is an uneven relationship, states Reid, and this will continue until the child reaches maturity. Reid is the curriculum advisor of one of New Zealand's foremost Christian schools and he researched and wrote his book for the Maxim Institute, an independent rightwing policy think-thank. However, says George, 'don't let that put you off. Wisdom is wisdom' (George 2006:19).

Normally, the Maxim Institute would have put me off, as George suggests, and the issues regarding the disciplining of children are not as simple as Reid contends. Children in New Zealand are regularly abused within the family that is supposed to protect and nurture them. However, his emphasis on the changing regimes of childhood and the 'being' child illustrate the questioning of figurations of childhood across the political spectrum. The contemporary regimes and rationales of childhood which portrays children as independent of adult society needs to be re-examined and parents' (and other adults') contribution to children's socialisation and care needs to be incorporated and acknowledged.

Voices for Parents and Children

McNamee, James and James (2005:242-3) argue, that children's voices are often interpreted, restricted and silenced. Adults, they argue, often use the concept of the child's 'best interest' to curtail children's agency. I agree that the concept of 'best interest' is often couched in terms of the 'normal' and can be used by adults to silence children. Discourses of the 'ideal family' and children's 'best interest' are regularly mobilised despite simultaneous recognition that some New Zealand families are dangerous for children.

However, parents, like children are often silenced too through the use of the concept of 'responsibility'. Parental responsibility is an ambiguous concept which, as Wyness (2006:101-2) argues, can be used to take away parents' agency. It is equated with rights and powers, but can also be evoked to limit parents' power. This could be seen, for example, in Chapter 7 when the paediatrician used the concept of parental responsibility (and risk) as a means to make parents conform to the dominant doctrine that a vitamin K injection was good for children. Society expects parents to socialise their children in certain ways, but when this does not occur according to the prevailing regimes of childhood, parental agency is curtailed. This way of thinking, as Wyman (2006:96) suggests, sees the family as an 'incubator' where the child grows until it is ready to be a moral and purposeful citizen.

Childhood studies are about the regimes and practices surrounding childhood as well as acknowledging and researching children's and parent's perspectives. James (2007:265) points out in a recent article in the *American Anthropologist* that we need to re-examine the socially constructed character of childhood which makes the social space of childhood different for different children. I would add to this by arguing that we also need to re-examine the socially constructed character of parenthood which is an important part of the constructed character of childhood. While acknowledging that qualitative research of children as active social agents is a very important part of contemporary childhood research, I chose to concentrate my PhD research on the exploration of the structural conditions that shape childhood in New Zealand with an emphasis on the voices of the parents as parents' voices are often ignored. Voices of parents as well as of children need to be heard because they both affect the social space of childhood.

Frequent Interruptions and Destabilising the Regimes of Truth

Risman (1998:5) suggests in a book called *Gender Vertigo* that we all become emotionally invested in social structures as they are one way to show that we belong. This sense of belonging is part of the governing of the nation state and the way childhood rationales and practices inform our sense of self. One of the parents expressed this well, when asked 'if you think about New Zealand childhood, what do you see?', answered with:

> Oh, I think it is just basically belonging, I think that if I had been born in, umm, say South Africa or Australia or somewhere else, there would be things that would be unique in that area that I would long for (2).

This sense of belonging is something that both Pakeha and Dutch middle-class parents want to share and pass on to their children, but the transformations in New Zealand society have made this more difficult. Despite parents' feelings of anxiety, angst, loss and displacement, however, this may also be a time when positive changes can take place. Bourdieu (2000:159) argues that, when the habitus is in crisis and becomes destabilised, regularities and rules may profoundly change. If this is a time of crisis in childhood then it is also a time in which dispositions may become out of line with collective expectations of what is constituted as 'normal'. It is during these destabilising moments, as Bourdieu argues, that hesitation arises and fields of power change. Bourdieu (1993:27) states that

> If it is true that the idea of personal opinion itself is socially determined, that it is a product of history reproduced by education, that our opinions are determined, then it is better to know this; and if we have some chance of having personal opinions it is perhaps on condition that we know our opinions are not spontaneously so.

This quote sat above my desk during the whole PhD process to remind me that I too am a product of history reproduced by my education. However, during the PhD process many of my underlying beliefs and assumptions were questioned through the intellectual stimulating readings of other academics whose work framed this research. The interactions, conversations and sharing of personal lives which took place with many people also shaped, guided and changed my rationales.

Frequent interruptions in the ritualised practices and assumptions of subjects, as Gibson (2001:664) has suggested, lead to momentary openings which offer the potential for standing outside the logic of the dominant discourses and the rationalities they embody. These interruptions encourage instances of hesitation and openings

through which regimes and rationales of 'truth' are challenged. This may lead to new ways of being, becoming and knowing for children as well as adults.

Risman (1998:11) uses the term gender vertigo to show the dizziness which occurred when gender relations changed in the 1970s and 1980s and deeply held beliefs and assumptions became destabilised. We may have to be dizzy for quite some time, argues Risman, if we are to construct a society based on gender equality. This term of vertigo is also very useful in regards to the destabilisations which are happening around childhood and the challenges to our assumptions and understandings this entails. Vertigo does often lead to anxiety and stress, but may also lead to a greater understanding of the self.

Contemporary childhood and adulthood has increasingly become a space of complexity. Regimes of rationality and practice, our own and those of others, therefore need to be constantly questioned, interrogated and destabilised. This thesis is a contribution to that destabilisation. Although it has found no quick answers to the spaces of complexity surrounding childhood, it has contributed to a creative stutter for myself as well as the many others who contributed to and were part of this research. Working on the 'near and ordinary' (Overbey and Dudley 2000:2) has been an extraordinary experience.

Anthropology, states Herzfeld (2001:1), is the study of 'common sense':

> … yet common sense is, anthropologically speaking, seriously
> misnamed: it is neither common to all cultures, nor is any version of it
> particularly sensible from the perspective of anyone outside its
> particular cultural context.

Common sense is embedded in everyday understandings of how the world works and is highly resistant to scepticism of any kind. It therefore constrains and shapes access to knowledge. Anthropology's strength lies in the destabilisation of ideas, and in asking question about the centres of power (Herzfeld 2001:5).

Appendix

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Notes

[1] The Plunket Society was founded in 1907 by Dr. Truby King. The Plunket Society set out to improve maternal and infant health. Trained nurses were sent into the home to support mothers and babies and to impose orderly childrearing practices. The Plunket Society is still part of contemporary New Zealand Society. New parents are often visited by Plunket nurses in their home during the first few months of a baby's life. Parents then attend Plunket clinics during early childhood.

[2] The killing of two-year-old James Bulger in the UK shocked and horrified all those who witnessed its unfolding on security camera footage. The discovery that the killers were but boys themselves forced a national self-examination: what kind of society could breed such a monstrous act? Jon Venables and Robert Thompson were only 10 years old when they snatched the two-year-old from an English shopping mall and dragged him to a railway line in 1993. They bludgeoned him with an iron bar and kicked him in the head before leaving his body on the track.

[3] Frederic Truby King was a self-trained paediatrician who was one of the most influential men in Pakeha history. He believed in the survival of the fittest which can be modified by suitable conditions of life and training. He put that belief in practice through the Plunket Society which he founded in 1907 to propagate his ideas.

[4] Health camps have been part of New Zealand society since the 1920s. They were set up as part of the welfare state and in response to concerns about the health of New Zealand children. They have taken on many of the new regimes and rationalities of childhood; however, their main function remains the improvement of children's health.

[5] The waterfront strike became New Zealand's largest industrial dispute. It began in February 1951 when the Waterside Workers' Union withdrew its labour in a climate of rapidly deteriorating industrial relations. The employers had previously taken action to reduce the workers' conditions. The employers responded to the withdrawal of labour by suspending the workers, who then counterclaimed they were being locked out. After a few days the Government declared a state of national emergency and used all its powers to break the strike.

[6] Refers to out of the way rural regions in New Zealand, often seen as one step away from the wilderness. The term derives from Colonial New Zealand when settlers who were trying to break in blocks of land where generally found far away from towns and more established rural areas.

[7] A select committee on Women's Rights was set up in 1973 to investigate the extent of discrimination against women in New Zealand and to make recommendations for its elimination.

[8] In 1944 New Zealand signed the ANZUS Alliance with Australia and US which was New Zealand's first independent international treaty without the inclusion of Britain. During the 1960s the US had increasingly replaced Britain as New Zealand's main military alley. When New Zealand's anti-nuclear movement started gaining strength in the 1970s, New Zealand's relationship with the US became increasingly strained as protests grew resulting in the ANZUS crisis when negotiations with the Americans regarding the ANZUS Alliance finally broke down, at the end of 1986.

[9] This term represents a place where young New Zealand families strive to bring up their children in a suburban environment, especially one with few community resources.

[10] Prime Minister Robert Muldoon gave permission for a Springbok rugby tour of New Zealand in 1981. Twenty-one nations protested this breach of the Gleneagles Agreement by which the Commonwealth discouraged contact and competition with South African sport while apartheid policies remained in South Africa. For 56 days in July, August and September 1981, New Zealanders were divided against each other in the largest civil disturbance seen since the 1951 waterfront dispute. More than 150,000 people took part in over 200 demonstrations in 28 centres, and 1500 were charged with offences stemming from these protests. Some commentators have described this event as the moment when New Zealand lost its innocence as a country and as being a watershed in our view of ourselves as a country and people.

[11] The New Zealand Play Centre Federation was started in 1948. Its aim is to provide parents and their children with educational opportunities. It is different from many other early childhood centres in New Zealand today in that parent involvement in the centres sessions are a requirement to children being able to attend.

[12] The St John Ambulance Association was founded in England in 1877 to provide ambulance transport and instruction on first aid to the public at home and at work. It has branches worldwide, including New Zealand. It is an organization of trained volunteers, providing a service in first aid and ambulance transport at public events.

[13] An inexpensive, small swimming pool, suitable for back yards (brand name).

[14] The issue of ownership of the Foreshore and Seabed entered the public arena in New Zealand in June 2003 when the Court of Appeal ruled that the Maori Land Court had jurisdiction to investigate customary title to the foreshore and seabed. New Zealand became embroiled in major political and legal controversy over Maori (the indigenous population) ownership and claims to the foreshore and seabed. The New Zealand Government responded with legislation to govern ownership of New Zealand's foreshore and seabed and on 24 November 2004, *The Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004* was passed. *The Act* protects and secures the rights of access for members of the public in or on the public foreshore and seabed, and the right to remain in that area and engage in recreational activities in or on the public foreshore and seabed. *The Act* remains controversial.

[15] New Zealand term for a holiday home, usually by the sea.

[16] Dutch expression indicating that occasions or gatherings are lively.