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**IDENTITY AND SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT:  
TRANSFORMATIONS AND CHANGE AMONG MĀORI WOMEN**

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## ABSTRACT

Several writers have argued that New Zealand's colonial history has thwarted optimal identity development among Māori (Awatere, 1984; Lawson Te-Aho, 1998a; 1998b). In recent decades the view that Māori identity may be restored via enculturation has gained widespread acceptance (Broughton, 1993; Edwards, 1999). Recent research indicates, however, that many Māori perceive their identities in ways that differ from the enculturated ideal (Borrell, 2005; Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1996; 1999). Relatively little is known of the diverse interpretations that comprise 'alternative' Māori identity forms. This thesis aims to contribute to current understandings of Māori identity by exploring identity change across three generations of Māori women. For the purposes of the research, identity was treated as 'held' within personal life-stories and transformations were investigated by comparing the life-stories of 35 Māori women from different age groups. Attention was given to the impact of three socio-historical processes on identity: the mass migration of Māori from rural to urban locations after the 1950s, the drive towards Māori assimilation which underpinned Government policy towards Māori until the late 1960s, and the Māori political and cultural renaissance which gathered momentum in New Zealand from the 1970s. Data analyses found participants born prior to urbanisation evaluated their Māori identities positively and this seemed to reflect their isolation from Pākehā and exposure to competent Māori role models during their formative years. Participants aged between 35 and 49 expressed disharmony and tension around their Māori identities which many attributed to their early exposure to negative evaluations of Māori people.

‘Post-renaissance’ Māori, aged between 18 and 35, reported prizing their cultural distinctiveness from a young age and affirmed Māori political, cultural and social equality despite what they perceived as enduring Pākehā prejudice. This interpretation appeared to reflect their early exposure to educational experiences which imparted a sense of cultural pride and a national news media which publicised Māori political activism. Women’s life-stories reveal distinct intergenerational differences, a multiplicity of interpretations of Māori identity not widely articulated in literature, and the need to expand current paradigms of Māori identity to incorporate the individuality of group members.

*Dad, this is for you.*

## PREFACE

### *Background*

This thesis explores socio-historical changes in identity among Māori by comparing the life-stories of three generations of Māori women. As an initial orientation to this topic some background information is required.

The term Māori refers to anyone who claims descent from the indigenous peoples of New Zealand (or Aotearoa). Although Māori have been present in New Zealand for over a thousand years (Walker, 1990) Māori have a more recent history of colonisation by Pākehā (white settlers mainly of British descent) who arrived here to settle from the early 1800s (Te Puni Kokiri, 1996; 2000). Largely due to force of numbers and through a series of questionable ‘agreements’ with Māori, British settlers gradually asserted political control in New Zealand from the 1840s. Pākehā have maintained political and economic dominance in New Zealand since that time (King, 2003; Orange, 2004).

Māori are now a minority ethnic group (at 15 percent the population as of the 2001 New Zealand census) swamped by Pākehā (at approximately 80 percent) (Te Puni Kokiri, 1996; 2000). As a consequence of minority status Māori have had to reorganise their traditional ways of life substantially. Over several generations the values and culture of Pākehā have usurped Māori traditions and profoundly transformed how Māori live as well as how they perceive themselves as people (Durie, 1994). Many Māori believe that colonisation has been fundamentally detrimental for Māori (H. Awatere, 1993; Department of Social

Welfare, 1988) and point to a range of social and economic inequalities between Māori and other population sub-groups that they argue may be blamed on New Zealand's colonial history (D. Awatere, 1984). While it is not difficult to find examples of how contemporary Māori are worse off than their Pākehā counterparts (see chapter three), circumstances have improved somewhat over the last 30 years in the cultural arena as Māori have driven a cultural and political renaissance which has catapulted Māori rights and identity to the forefront of New Zealand politics (Durie, 1998a; 2004).

In this thesis I am primarily concerned with one central question – how has Māori identity changed over the last 50 years? Two main factors compelled me to carry out this study. Having been raised in New Zealand and being of both Māori and Pākehā descent I have had many experiences over the course of my life which have prompted me to question what it means to identify as Māori. My father, in particular, inspired me to think about age related differences in Māori identity. He was of Ngāti Porou and Ngāti Kahungunu descent (these are both Māori tribes located on the East Coast of the North Island of New Zealand). His parents were both Māori and, as a corollary, he was a very Māori 'looking' man (his skin was dark and he had strong Māori facial features). He was raised in Porangahau, a small rural township in Central Hawke's Bay, near his tribal marae (meeting place) and he enjoyed close relationships with his extended whanau (family), including his kaumatua (Māori elders). Despite his genealogy (whakapapa), physical appearance and formative conditions, my father did not speak the Māori language (te reo Māori). He told me that when he was growing up his parents and elders spoke Māori to each other but they did not teach their

own children to do the same. When I pressed him to explain why, he told me that when he was younger the Māori language and culture seemed to ‘belong to’ older Māori and younger Māori were encouraged to put them ‘to the side’.

My experiences were very different from those of my father. Born in the early 1970s, I came to age at a time in New Zealand history when it was becoming more ‘fashionable’ to be Māori. I was raised to be proud that I am Māori. I learnt to speak basic Māori at school and was involved in Māori cultural groups (kapa haka) throughout my adolescence. On reflection, I feel fortunate to have been encouraged to embrace my Māori identity and learn to express myself as Māori. At the same time, however, I often feel a sense of disconnection from the cultural environment my father and grandparents knew.

Although I never spoke with my father about how he saw his own Māori identity, when he died in 1990 at the age of 44, I discovered that he had been reading *Teach Yourself Māori* (Harawira, 1954) during his lunch breaks at work. After being deprived of the opportunity to learn the language of his forebears, at mid-life he had wanted to learn how to articulate himself in the Māori language. Reflecting on this, I have often wondered if my Dad also felt the sense of loss and disconnection in relation to his Māori heritage that I have experienced. If so, perhaps he experienced that disconnection in a different way?

I think many Māori would report a feeling of disconnection, in various degrees, from their own Māori identity. It also seems obvious that Māori of my own age interpret being Māori in ways that are radically different from our forebears. As



a person who is interested in how people make meaning of their lives, I wonder how has Māori identity changed? At this stage in my life I wanted to look for an answer to this question and my PhD research provided an opportunity for that to occur.

The second factor inspiring this research was an experience I had several years ago when I observed the then Minister of Māori Affairs, Tariana Turia, present a keynote address to the New Zealand Psychological Society at their annual conference in Hamilton. In her speech, Turia made reference to Post Colonial Traumatic Stress Disorder (PCTSD) which was an application of the individual level psychological concept of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder to the process of Māori colonisation by Pākehā at a collective level. Essentially, Turia proffered the view that colonisation (and the concomitant processes of urbanisation and deculturation of the Māori people) had brought about low self-esteem among Māori and this manifested in a range of social problems in Māori communities, including elevated levels of other and self harm (Turia, 2000).

While this speech became the subject of public disdain in the ensuing weeks and Turia, herself, gained a fair degree of notoriety for her sentiments, her assertions were certainly not unique. Similar observations have been made in relation to populations with a similar anthropological history to Māori, that is, relatively sudden contact with a foreign cultural group followed by rapid mass settlement and subsequent political and economic takeover on the part of that group (Renfrey, 1992; Zimmerman, Isreal, Schulz & Checkoway 1992; Zimmerman, Ramirez, Washienko, Walter & Dyer, 1998; Yuen at el, 2000). For decades a

comparable theoretical explanation has been provided for high rates of violence among African American males and high levels of alcoholism within Native American communities (Kasee, 1995). Indeed, for some time, local academics have argued that the history of colonisation experienced by Māori predisposes modern Māori to a form of psychological distress (Dewes, 1975; Durie, 1985; Sachdev, 1989, 1990), which has been termed ‘cultural schizophrenia’ by Edwards (2000) and ‘cultural depression’ by Lawson Te-Aho (1998). In referring to the psychological impact of colonisation on Māori (particularly urban migration and acculturation into Pākehā society), Sachdev (1990a, p.102.) observed that the disconcerting increase in Māori psychiatric admissions in recent decades “...may reflect the impact of psycho-cultural stress on the community.” (cited in Hirini, 1998, p.206). In her description of this phenomenon Lawson Te-Aho (1998, p.219) wrote:

The act of colonisation gave birth to cultural alienation because of forced assimilation into dominant cultural practices originally foreign to Māori people. This caused Māori people to act outside of their essential being as Māori. This created historically sourced behaviours which have had devastating impacts on current generations of Māori.

Two assumptions are implicit in the argument made by these writers. The first is that Māori identity is co-terminous with enculturation – or what I call the ‘cultural view of identity’. In this view of Māori identity ‘it’ seems to be conceptualised as the extent to which Māori can engage competently with

specific aspects of traditional Māori culture and society or conduct themselves in a culturally 'Māori way.' From this perspective common indicators of Māori identity include self-identification as Māori, understanding the Māori language and culture, and involvement in Māori social activities. Evidence for the prevalence of this view of Māori identity may be found in written descriptions of Māori identity (Barlow, 1991) and measurement instruments designed to assess Māori identity using markers of enculturation (Stevenson, 2001, 2004; Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1999; Thomas, 1998). The second assumption implicit here is that Māori identity has suffered via colonisation because Māori are now relatively deculturated (that is Māori have lost the ability to live according to their 'essential being as Māori') and the resultant 'cultural alienation' (or separation from their own cultural heritage) gives rise to a range of maladaptive experiences and responses among contemporary Māori.

These observations have become common ones for Māori writers to make. Indeed, references to the detrimental effect of colonisation (and deculturation) on Māori identity has become a central theme of contemporary Māori scholarship (Durie, 1997, 1999, 2003, Ratima & Ratima 1997; Hirini, 1997, 1998; Pere, 1994; Mead, 1999; Kupenga, Rata & Nepe, 1993; Szászy, 1995; Puketapu-Andrews, 1997).

The use of the concept of identity in this way is the second reason I chose to examine changes in Māori identity. Why? Because the argument is both compelling and influential from a sociological perspective, however, at the level of the individual, the view that Māori identity is somehow defective for deculturated Māori does not hold true for many contemporary Māori (see

Borrell, 2005). As such, I believe that it is time to un-pack and explore more carefully the assumptions that give rise to this view.

To begin with, I think that it is fair to suggest that not all Māori people feel psychologically maligned because they are culturally alienated, or, to soften this argument, I point to the fact that Māori are a very diverse social group many of whom seem to function adaptively in New Zealand society yet differ in their perceptions of the relevance of Māori culture for them personally.

Durie (1994) recognised this diversity when he described three groups of Māori. One group of Māori he observed are ‘conservative’, ‘traditional’ or relatively enculturated. This group are culturally and socially Māori, understand their Māori whakapapa, speak some Māori and are familiar with tikanga Māori (Māori custom). Another group he observed are ‘bi-cultural’, that is, they identify as Māori yet operate effectively among and are socially competent in the company of Pākehā. Bi-cultural Māori evaluate their Māori identity positively and see their Māori culture and heritage as enhancing their lifestyle lived in a Pākehā dominated country. A third group are largely detached from both Māori and Pākehā society. Māori in this group may find it difficult to be accepted socially and culturally among both Māori and Pākehā. Because of their ‘marginalisation’ in this respect they may feel a sense of alienation from Māori society and the same time a sense of animosity or resentment towards Pākehā society and people.

Williams (2000) described similar sub-groups of Māori. One, he observed, are the ‘traditional core’ who are the most enculturated, live close to their traditional tribal areas and speak both Māori and English. The second group he described as ‘primarily urban.’ Members of this group may identify with Māori kin in rural areas but are urban dwelling and functionally bi-cultural. A third group he referred to as ‘unconnected’. This group are biologically Māori but may not identify culturally or socially as Māori. The final group he described is a large group of people who are socially and culturally indistinguishable from Pākehā. This group are biologically ‘part-Māori’ but define themselves as ‘Kiwi’ or ‘New Zealander’ (also see Royal, 2003).

Although these descriptions are observational, research indicates that they reflect a social actuality in which many Māori no longer see their Māori heritage and culture as a particularly significant aspect of their identities. An indication of the number of Māori that may fall into this group was recently revealed in the findings of Te Hoe Nuku Roa (a longitudinal survey of 550 Māori households carried out by researchers from Massey University, New Zealand). In this study when 956 Māori from the Manawatu, Gisborne, Wellington and Auckland regions of New Zealand (aged over 15 years) were asked to choose an identity label that best described them, over half (51.1%) chose Māori but 25.9% preferred to be described as either a ‘Kiwi’ or a ‘New Zealander’. Among that same group of adults, when asked if speaking Māori or being able to speak Māori was important to them, 42.4% said it was extremely important, 37% said it was important, while 19.5% said it was unimportant, or extremely unimportant (Te Hoe Nuku Roa, 1999). These findings indicate Māori have a range of

cultural characteristics and see their identities in unique ways that may or may not be consistent with the ‘cultural view’ of identity.

Another weakness of the argument that cultural alienation lies at the heart of Māori social dysfunction is that it tends to detract from the fact that many Māori are actually very proud of who they are and show a keen interest in expressing themselves culturally as Māori. For example, a report from Creative New Zealand (1999) indicated that over the 1997/1998 year, Māori were more likely than other groups to be involved in cultural arts and activities as a student or teacher. Nearly half of Māori (45%) took part in some form of Māori arts or cultural activity. Māori women and those aged between 45 and 59 had the highest level of participation (50%). The key reasons women gave for taking part were enjoyment and to maintain and pass on Māori cultural skills and traditional knowledge.

In addition, the results from the 2001 New Zealand census showed that the Māori language is the most widely spoken language in New Zealand after English. The census found one-quarter of all Māori stated that they could hold a conversation in Māori about everyday things (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Further, Māori parents seem committed to encouraging their children to learn their language and culture. In testimony to this, in July 2001, nearly 10,000 Māori children were enrolled in kohanga reo (Māori ‘language nests’) and these children made up 31% of all Māori enrolments in early childhood education (Ministry of Education, 2001).

How do we reconcile the concept of cultural alienation with statistics that indicate that many Māori are flourishing culturally, are positive about their cultural identity and are passionately working to affirm and improve their knowledge of Māori language and culture? Moreover, how can it be argued that Māori identity has been maligned by cultural alienation when some ‘biological’ Māori seem ambivalent about their own heritage and culture? Terms like cultural alienation and PCTSD seem inappropriate to apply to Māori as an entire people.

Moreover, in stressing the harm of colonisation upon Māori identity, concepts such as PTSCD downplay the rich complexities in the way individuals experience being Māori and tend to paint a picture of deculturated Māori as dysfunctional individuals who have not adapted identities that allow them to cope effectively with modern society. It seems timely, therefore, to shift focus from the argument that Māori identity has been maligned by deculturation towards exploring why Māori differ so much in their own expressions and interpretations of their Māori identity and the factors that shape their identities in this respect. By focusing on identity change in this thesis I hope to elucidate how Māori identity has adapted with socio-historical changes while not becoming focused on how Māori have been culturally alienated or disadvantaged.

To carry out my research I collected and examined the life-stories of three groups of women. One group comprised women born prior to the 1950s (who were raised in mainly Māori communities and in Māori cultural contexts), a second group comprised women born between 1950 and 1970 (a period marked

by rapid Māori urbanisation and increased contact between Māori and Pākehā) and the third group comprised women born after 1970 (who came of age after the beginnings of the Māori cultural renaissance spurred on by the Māori political activism in New Zealand during the late 1960s).

During data collection I focused on how the women interviewed defined, described and evaluated their own identities as Māori and the origins of those interpretations in their personal life experiences. To clarify the relationship between historical context and identity, during the process of data analysis I focused specifically on the differences in life-story content between women from different age cohorts. I found women in each group reported different social contexts and life experiences and, therefore, different ideas about what it meant to be Māori. In this sense, reflecting historical patterns in social, economic and cultural processes, and public opinion regarding Māori identity and culture, women's life-stories demonstrate the relationship between massive social changes in New Zealand history and individual level differences in how women perceive themselves as Māori today.

This thesis comprises of eight chapters. Chapters one and two provide a theoretical context by proposing the life-story conceptualisation of identity and addressing key considerations of working with ethnic identity as a topic of study. Chapter three discusses the socio-historical context and reviews important features of Māori and New Zealand history that worked to shape the lives of the women interviewed in this research. Chapters four and five discuss the research process in some detail including the data analytic techniques used. The



limitations of the study are also discussed in these chapters. In chapters six and seven I present and discuss the results. Finally, in chapter eight, I discuss the data in relation to current understandings and conceptions of Māori identity as well as additional issues arising from this research.

While it is hoped the insights provided in this thesis support current efforts to improve the Māori social condition by elucidating how Māori identity may be appropriately understood and nurtured, I recognise that it is not within the scope of this work to cover other several important areas of study. In particular, I acknowledge the omission of discussions of Māori men, and gender and sexuality as salient factors in identity development.

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## CHAPTER ONE: THEORIES OF IDENTITY

### *Introduction*

This chapter provides a theoretical foundation for the view that identity may be treated as ‘held’ within life-stories and describes a technique for exploring identity change within ethnic groups across generations.

Before proceeding I acknowledge that, while Māori ideas around identity are crucial to this thesis, the literature review in this chapter mainly examines what may be broadly referred to as ‘Western’ social psychological theory and research. This is simply because scholarly works concerned with Māori (psychological) identity tend to be descriptive rather than explanatory. Moreover, because Māori literature is often motivated by the desire of the writer to articulate a uniquely Māori view of the world, it tends to focus on how Māori identity reflects the cultural traditions, values and behaviours of Māori as a people (e.g. Barlow, 1991; Karetu, 1979, 1990, 1993; Pere, 1979, 1988; Puketapu, 1979).

Since this thesis is concerned with topics not often explicitly addressed from a Māori perspective (i.e. the social and historical construction of identity and how identity ‘works’ in a psychological, social and behavioural sense) one of the key challenges of this thesis was ‘settling upon’ a treatment of identity which enabled the concept to be studied within a social psychological research paradigm and which accorded

comfortably with a Māori world view. This process was challenging for several reasons.

Not only do Māori and non-Māori views of what is important about identity differ conceptually, but many Māori seem dubious of the applicability of Western psychological approaches to Māori experience (e.g. see Durie, 2002; Lawson-TeAho, 1993; Love, 2002 for discussions). When Māori and psychology have ‘interfaced’ and Māori have been subjects of psychological research several Māori academics have expressed dissatisfaction with the methodological techniques used to examine Māori as subjects of study (see Cram & McCreanor, 1993; McCreanor, 1993a; Stewart 1997 for discussions). Lock (1996, cited in Gergen, Gulerce, Lock & Girishwar, 1996, p. 451) suggested that some Māori view psychology as culturally inappropriate for Māori because ‘it’ has been used as an instrument devised by the ‘dominant power’ to legitimate the oppressive treatment of Māori by Pākehā.

A comment by Lawson-TeAho (1993, p.26) highlights the tension that some Māori feel in relation to psychological practice in this respect. She observed:

Psychology and clinical psychology in particular, has created the mass abnormalisation of Māori by virtue of the fact that Māori people have been on the receiving end of psychological practices as the helpless recipients of (English) defined labels and treatments.

Although it seems important to position this study within a wider context in which Māori ideas and social psychological treatments of identity may conflict and in which some Māori have rejected the applicability of psychology for Māori, it is certainly not accurate to suggest that all Māori reject the discipline of psychology as a per se. Further, the view that psychological research should not be 'trusted' by Māori may be somewhat extreme given that, in recent years, several researchers working from a social psychological perspective have given voice to a wide range of views from the perspective of Māori individuals themselves (e.g. Cram, Smith & Johnstone, 2003; Edwards, McManus & McCreanor, 2005, Liu & Tamara, 1998; Liu, Wilson, McClure & Higgins, 1999; McCreanor, Tipene-Leach & Abel, 2004). Indeed, as qualitative researchers within this discipline increasingly shift towards methodologies which embrace participant centred and narrative based approaches, it seems antiquated to argue that psychology is an entirely inappropriate discipline from which to research the experience of Māori people.

Nonetheless, before reviewing the literature, it is appropriate that I respectfully acknowledge that here I attempt to bridge the gap between the Māori position, Māori views of identity and the psychological imperative for systematic data collection and analysis in two ways. My use of grounded theory as a methodological foundation (see chapter four) is seen by advocates as a participant centered, social science methodology – insofar that this method permits groups previously denied access to an academic voice the opportunity to have their views heard and accepted

(Oplatka, 2001). Second, the life-story approach works from the premise that identity should be explored from the subject's perspective (rather than 'measured' using researcher constructed assessment instruments) and, therefore, has been recognised as culturally appropriate to employ with Māori (Bishop, 1996; Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Not only are both these techniques deemed appropriate to use with Māori but in combination they meet the demand for systematic data collection and analysis fundamental to social psychological research (see chapter four). The remainder of this chapter lays out my theoretical approach in some detail. Three questions structure the discussion: What is identity? How may identity be studied? And, how may the impact of socio-historical factors on identity is explored?

### ***What is identity?***

Although many theorists have grappled with the concept and increasingly concur on a few key theoretical features, no single way of conceptualising identity currently prevails (Howard, 2000). Identity theorists define identity in different ways and work with different dimensions of self-experience (Breakwell, 1983). While some theorists have written about the self which is presented in social interactions and call 'it' identity (Goffman, 1959), others prefer to see identity as a set of self-concepts people internalise as a result of group affiliation (Tajfel, 1981). In order to achieve an understanding of how identity may be understood in the current study it is first necessary to clarify what it is to experience being one's

‘self’ and then explicate how identity is encountered by the person in relation to the self.

### ***The Self***

The experience of the self is viewed in psychology as a cognitive, experiential phenomenon that involves a combination of the person’s awareness of themselves as an object and as an actor in the social world. Early descriptions originated with Baldwin, Cooley and Mead who conceived of the self as socially derived and developed experientially through one’s membership in social groups and experiences in the social environment. Baldwin (1897), for example, suggested that the construction of the self was a dialectical process between the person and others in their immediate social milieu. In Baldwin’s account, children ‘became’ themselves by imitating and acting out what they had learnt through interactions with their immediate caregivers. Through repeated exposure to others around them, children learnt how to conduct themselves in order to function adaptively (and be accepted by others) within their social environment. Writing of the development of the self in children via modelling and imitation he wrote “my sense of myself grows by my imitation of you, and my sense of yourself (*sic*) grows in terms of my sense of myself. Both ego and alter are thus essentially social; each is a social and each is an imitative creation” (p. 335).

Writing after Baldwin, in *Human Nature and the Social Order* (1902), Cooley (cited in Cooley, 1956) proposed the concept of the ‘looking glass

self'. He observed that individuals, being aware of themselves as objects in the social world, form ideas about themselves that are consistent with the views of others around them. Cooley argued that humans use sympathetic introspection (mental reflection upon the perceptions of others) to imagine themselves as others see them and these views are then internalised (or psychologically taken 'on board') as their own. Thus, in Cooley's view, the expectations of others are central to the development of self-understandings and, therefore, the individual and society are two sides of the same coin; no individual exists apart from society, and there can be no self apart from others. Cooley emphasised that the self is developed within the context of small groups in which face-to-face interaction is likely to occur. In this respect, the family was regarded as pivotal in forming a child's sense of 'me.' Because children were exposed primarily to the ideas and behaviours of others in their families they were seen as a reflection of their family of origin, raised in accordance with the activities and beliefs of those around them.

Mead (1934), in *Mind, Self and Society*, followed Cooley and observed that individuals acquire a sense of self from what they believed other people thought of them, or what he called the 'reflected appraisals' of others. However, Mead was more insistent than Cooley about the importance of the self motivated actions of the person for developing their own sense of self. Rather than simply absorbing the views of others, Mead suggested that individuals exercise a degree of agency in selecting the ideas about themselves they believe to be true. Besides the ideas about

them that individuals saw as being held in the minds of others (which he called the 'me'), Mead argued that there are also spontaneous and active aspects of the individual (or in his terminology, the 'I'). In his view, the 'I' acts upon the 'me' shaping the socialisation process itself. As such, self-development is essentially a continuing social process with two distinguishable aspects: a mixture of what is expected of the individual by others and the ideas they choose to believe and internalise about themselves (Mead, 1934).

Although their theories differed slightly, for Baldwin, Cooley, and Mead the self was primarily a social construction, socialised in familial networks through communicative activity in close interpersonal groups. All three saw the 'self', as both a cognitive ('in the mind' of the individual) and experiential phenomenon (manifest through the exchange of words and the acting out of behaviours) that operated on and was affected by the world of which the person was a part of.

### ***The multiple aspects of the self***

In attempting to clarify the nature of the self various writers have differentiated 'its' different dimensions (e.g. Harre, 1998). Neisser (1988), for example, discriminated five primary aspects of the self. First, he observed, people experience an 'ecological self' — that is persons are aware of occupying a physical body within a material world at any given moment over time (the awareness of this aspect of the self is automatic and present from infancy). He also described an experience he calls the

‘private self’. This aspect of self-experience exists in the mind of the person who ‘has’ it. While people may reveal aspects of their private selves to others, it is essentially a psychological experience which is never fully available for others to see (for example only I can understand the physical discomfort endured when I underwent surgery).

Neisser (1988) also made reference to the ‘conceptual self’ which comprised the diverse forms of self information, acquired via socialisation, that relate to the person’s membership in various social groups. This dimension of self-understanding comprises knowledge of how we fit into the world and takes into account the social categories we occupy, such as age, occupation, gender and ethnic groupings. The conceptual self is invoked when individuals are acting or thinking in accordance with the normative social expectations for a person of their status and position in life. For example, I am aware of the strong social expectations in our society for women to ‘feel maternal’ towards their children and this influences how I see myself and my own responsibilities as a mother as well as how I act as a mother around other people.

Another aspect of self-experience is the ‘interpersonal self’ whom Neisser (1988) suggested ‘emerges’ when a person is engaged in an immediate social interaction with another. The interpersonal self is a monitored, strategic representation of the self, he argued, that does not necessarily reflect the ‘true’ or private self lying beneath.



Finally, Neisser observed that people experience an ‘extended self’. The extended self referred to people’s sense of continuity – or more specifically their understandings of themselves as human beings who had existed over time. The extended self incorporates into the person’s mind their memories of being previous ‘selves’, activities, experiences and relationships of the past – as well as their aims and aspirations for their future.

Neisser’s contribution provides an important starting point for understanding the complexity of working with the self. The self is not a unified entity. Rather, as Harre (1998) observed, the label ‘self’ denotes a combination of different kinds of psychological experiences that derive from a person’s perception of themselves as a ‘being’ with a social status and a history of experiences and interactions with others in their social world.

The pre-eminent psychological construct in psychology which refers to people’s self-understandings in this respect is the ‘self-concept’. Early descriptions of this construct can be found in the writings of Cooley and Mead. Their assertions that individuals learn about themselves and form concepts that they carry with them and that direct their behaviour towards the world ‘outside’ gave rise to the notion that we organise these self-understandings in a structure ‘inside’ our minds – or self-concept. The self-concept has traditionally been defined as an overarching and inclusive cognitive structure comprising the totality of self-descriptions and self-

evaluations available to the person (Gecas, 1982; Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983; Rosenberg, 1965, 1979, 1981; Shibutani, 1961). Thousands of studies have been concerned with understanding the role of the self-concept in human behaviour, and research on this construct has dominated much of the research pertaining to the self in psychology (Gecas & Burke, 1995; Gecas & Schwalbe, 1983; Marsh, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c, 1987a, 1987b, 1987c). Because various strands of theory and research within psychology suggest people actually hold quite resilient self views (Markus & Kunda, 1986; Markus & Sentis, 1982; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Swann, 1983) and report similar traits on different occasions when asked ‘what they are like’ as a person (Rosenberg, 1965, 1981) the self-concept is believed to be relatively stable leading some theorists to treat ‘it’ as an internal frame of reference which guides the individual’s social behaviour towards the world outside (Banaji & Prentice, 1994).

### ***Identity: A definition***

Unlike the self-concept which is seen as an all inclusive structure, identity relates to specific kind of self knowledge. At the core of the concept of identity is social comparison (Josselson, 1996; Williams, 1989).

Identity as a particular kind of self knowledge was also described by Mead and Cooley who observed that, because the self is an entity among others, with whom they are similar or different, people have self-understandings which relate specifically to their social position and relative social standing. It is these aspects of self-experience that identity as a concept

seems to be ‘getting at’ in literature around the topic (Ashmore & Jussim, 1997; Breakwell, 1983; Hogg, Terry & White, 1995; Scheibe, 1998).

Harre (1998) for example, observed that the notion of identity in much contemporary writing refers to those aspects of self-experience which pertain to the class, type or group to which an individual belongs. Erikson (1996, 1968, 1974, 1987) suggested that identity relates to how one is situated relative to others and comprises a person’s self-labels and group memberships (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg & Turner, 1990; Woodward, 2000). Scheibe (1998) described identity as that which is spoken of when a person identifies themselves as a member of a certain nationality, gender, religion, social class, marital status, or sexual orientation, and indicates that definition is an important characteristic of who they are. Thus, identity may be best viewed as denoting the aspects of the self-concept that pertain to ‘who’ a person is and how they ‘fit in’ with others in the social world (Harris, 1995).

Woodward (2000) observes that major determinants of identity include race, ethnicity, religion, gender, nationality and sexual orientation. However, identity can also derive from social roles (‘father’, ‘lawyer’) and personal experiences and talents (‘well travelled’, ‘pianist’). In this sense, suggested Breakwell (1983), identity stems from social categorisation and may be most simply defined as the self-definitions people apply to themselves which differentiate them from others. The issue of how identity ‘stems’ from self-definitions will be discussed in ensuing sections.

However, I should note here that defining as ‘a certain kind of person’ conveys a range of social meanings. Therefore, identity refers not only to ‘who a person is’ but also indicates what that ‘means’ as a member of society.

While identity may seem to be a clearly distinguishable type of self knowledge, the terms identity and self-concept are often conflated (Breakwell, 1983). Why? Although these concepts are conceptually distinct, they frequently overlap because identity comprises self-understandings and the self-concept theoretically subsumes all self-understandings (Thoits, 1983, 1986).

For example, the statement “I am Tongan” may be categorised as a statement of identity but may also be included ‘in’ the self-concept. The statement “I am proud to be Tongan” is also part of the self-concept, however, in this thesis, the latter statement is treated as part of the person’s identity, because it is an evaluation linked to being Tongan.

It is also important to differentiate identity from personality. Woodward (2000) did this by suggesting that identity is something an individual actively claims in relation to their social position, while personality refers to a feature – such as a trait someone ‘has’ or what they are ‘like’ as a person. For example, consider the two statements “I am generous” and “I am generous because that is the Tongan way”. The first statement refers to the speaker’s personality (because it refers to an aspect of the person’s

inherent nature) while the second statement one might treat as an aspect of the speaker's identity – since the reference is made in relation to their membership in the social category 'Tongan'.

The main point to take from these examples is that here identity is defined a specific way; that is, identity is that aspect of the self-concept that relates to 'who' a person is and what that means relative to others.

In the next section several theoretical treatments of identity are discussed and their applicability to my own research explained. To contextualise different approaches reviewed, let me return to the work of Cooley and Mead for a moment. Their fundamental proposition that the person simultaneously experiences themselves as an object and an actor in the social world (and that this phenomenon comprises elements of self-experience which are both private and socially expressed) gave rise to several theoretical approaches to identity within the social sciences. Four different treatments of identity are described below. The first two approaches focus on the socially constructed and context-dependent properties of identity. These perspectives treat identity as present within the ecological, conceptual, and interpersonal aspects of the self as described by Neisser (1988). The second two approaches are more psychological in orientation, and focus on how identities are constructed and fashioned into a comprehensible form in the mind of the person. These perspectives relate identity to what Neisser (1988) referred to as the private and extended aspects of the self.

### ***The social construction of identity***

A particularly influential early theory concerned with how identity is socially constructed was proffered by McCall and Simmons in their seminal work, *Identities and Interactions* (1966). The authors observed that in any given society people occupy social roles. Some roles people are born into, such as gender and ethnicity. Some roles derived from interpersonal relationships and included the role of ‘mother’ or ‘husband.’ Other roles related to personal talents and idiosyncrasies, for example, ‘musician.’ McCall and Simmons suggested that each society constructs sets of conventions around particular social roles. These conventions specified what is socially acceptable for individuals to ‘be like’ when they occupied those roles. The authors suggested that by virtue of being an occupant of a social role people internalised, or adopted as their own, the social conventions attached to that role. These ideas, they argued, were stored in the mind of the individual as ‘role identities’ or sets of concepts that determined how one ‘should’ think, feel, as well as behave as an occupant of that social role. In this respect, social roles gave the individual a means of defining themselves and understanding who they were and what that meant (i.e. an identity) as well as a blueprint for socially appropriate behaviour.

In their explanation, not only did we see ourselves but we also saw others as role occupants, and imposing an identity upon others is an essential aspect of operating effectively in the social world. For instance, in order to know how to react to an approaching stranger, one had to be able to

identify them. This is done, they suggested, by applying stereotypes to others according to their physical appearance (and the social role they appeared to occupy). They observed that in complex societies (comprising many different types of people) stereotypes attached to social roles were the currency by which individuals made sense of those around them. By using visible clues to the roles occupied by strangers, they argued, people connected others to stereotypes and used those as a frame of reference in order to predict people's characteristics and act towards them accordingly (McCall & Simmons, 1966). Furthermore, they argued, since people in the same society were influenced by similar concepts and patterns of ideas pertaining to different social roles, they tended to rely upon the same stereotypes to make sense of others and themselves. As such, in their view, day to day interactions may be construed as a series of role identity enactments with individuals acting towards each other according to sets of socially constructed regulations.

The concept of role identity has long been used in the social sciences, (particularly sociology) to explain how people are influenced by social convention to see themselves in certain ways and behave according to socially constructed norms. For example, Davies and Harre (1990) illustrated the compelling influence of social norms on our characteristics and behaviour in their discussion of 'mothers'. As they noted, in any society everyone 'knows' what the role of the mother means and the characteristics associated with 'good mothers'. Mothers who fall short of social expectations may risk social disapproval, criticism from their family

and contempt (perhaps even social exclusion) from others in their community. On the other hand, conforming to what society expects of 'good mothers' affirms the woman's social connections with valued social networks. This does not mean that people have no choice but subscribe to social expectations attached to their role. What it does imply, however, is that social conventions, stereotypes and expectations may curb, to a large extent, how people come to see their own identities (Moscovici & Hewstone, 1983).

Although influential, McCall and Simmons's theory has been criticised for being overly simplistic, implying that people's identities are simply constructed via passive internalisation of social expectations. A later theoretical development, social identity theory, addresses this concept and extends on the role identity model by treating identity as having both social and personal aspects. To explicate the relationship between how the person sees themselves and their social roles Tajfel (1981) made a specific distinction between what he called personal identity and social identity. Focussing on the role of social group membership on identity he defined social identity as "...that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that group membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p.255). Personal identity was conceived of as a general view of the self (including personal beliefs about the self, skills, and abilities) influenced by social identities, however, quite unique to each individual. By differentiating social and personal identities, social



identity theory increases the relevance of role theory for understanding identity because people's identities are seen as shaped by their group memberships but not completely determined by them (this is discussed further in chapter two).

Stryker (1968, 1980, 1987) also took up the challenge of extending the relevance of role theory for understanding identity by combining the notion of social role with the impact of social contexts. Like McCall and Simmons, Stryker also viewed identity as a reflection of a person's social roles. However, he sought to clarify how people switch from identity to identity depending on social demands. To explicate the changeability of identity, he theorised that people's role-related behaviour varies in relation to commitment and salience.

He argued that because people desire social acceptance, they emphasise certain social group memberships or role identities. In this view, the importance placed on particular role identities depended upon the number of important relationships a person had predicated upon that particular identity. The more people who expected the individual to 'be' a particular kind of person (express a particular role identity) the more the person acted in accordance with and the more committed to (focussed on and loyal to) that particular role identity the person would be (Stryker & Statham, 1985). In this way, the role identities that receive the most support from others gain prominence (salience) to an individual while those that are demeaned or ignored become less conspicuous over time.

Overall, in Stryker's view, people's expressed identities do not reflect an unvarying or unified set of features a person 'has' rather, the identity that people express emerges from a mixture of role identities which are held in the person's mind and selectively valued, expressed and experienced across social situations depending upon the degree of commitment and salience those identities hold. Subsequently, identity is viewed as multi-dimensional with many different role identities (including nationality, ethnicity, gender, family, social class, occupation and sexuality) varying in salience depending environmental demands and associated requirement upon the individual to express them (Woodward, 2000).

Stryker's ideas have provided a conceptual basis for a large body of research focussed on the relationship between identity and social relationships. For example, Stryker and Serpe (1982) demonstrated that the importance individuals placed upon their religious identity (self-concepts and behaviours related to being a member of their religion) related to the extent to which individuals valued relationships based on religion, the time they spent in religious activities, and the salience of religious identities to them personally. Similarly, a study by Jackson (1999) found that Black Americans valued their Black American identities more when they had a close network of Black American friends with whom they socialised regularly.

What do role theory, social identity theory and Stryker's concept of multiple identities contribute to our understanding of identity? All account

for how people form their identities through exposure to social norms around role occupation and group membership. In this way, these approaches provide a valuable heuristic for understanding how people's identities are socially constructed – that is, they reflect the broad social, cultural, ideological and historical conditions in which people live.

Social identity theory extended role theory by suggesting that people do not develop identities simply by passively adopting social expectations associated with group or role membership, rather people's identities reflect a mixture of the features of groups they belong to and their own unique personal features. Finally, Stryker's approach indicates that people's identities are multifaceted with aspects they selectively value over others depending on the number of important relationships predicated upon them being a certain kind of person. Why? The answer seems to lie in social acceptance. People will value most the identities which are accepted and promoted within social networks they value (see Ethier & Deaux, 1994). In this sense, a person's identity may vary considerably along with the extent to which their daily activities are bound with other people who promote some identities over others. This prompts the question of whether people's identities are 'real' or whether they simply act in accordance with what is expected of them in different social situations.

### ***The situated identity***

While the role identity paradigm emphasises the importance of the person's social networks in determining their identities, theorists adhering to this view do not see identity as entirely situationally derived. Stryker (1982) maintained that our different identities are internally 'held' and organised hierarchically (in order of importance) within the self-concept. In his view, even though how we see ourselves and what we do is influenced by the presence of others, our behaviour should essentially be seen as a reflection of the content of an overarching, multifaceted 'real identity' inside our minds (Thoits, 1983, 1986).

Because of the strong influence of social circumstances upon the identities people express however, many theorists have chosen to treat identity in a way which by-passes the notion of any internal or resilient aspects of identity altogether to focus specifically upon the representations of identity that people express in the course of social interactions (Alexander & Wiley, 1981; Davies & Harre, 1990).

This view of identity assumes that individuals seek to maintain a positive image of themselves in the eyes of others (Alexander & Lauderdale, 1977; Alexander & Wiley, 1981) and that people act upon the environment in order to maximise positive feedback. Goffman contributed greatly to this view of human behaviour in his work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). He argued that when individuals appear before others, being acutely aware of how they are likely to be perceived, pre-

empt unwanted treatment by managing the impression they make upon others. To do this, he suggested, individuals create short-term situated identities, or temporary renditions of themselves, and change them according to social context (also see Goffman, 1967).

Goffman was particularly interested in how people manage social stigma. In *Stigma: Notes on the Management of a Spoiled Identity* (1963), he argued that members of groups that are subject to stigma (such as ethnic minorities) will attempt to minimise any discredit attached to them personally by manipulating how other people perceive them. To do this, they engage in what he referred to as identity management. A particularly common method of managing one's identity or deflecting stigma, Goffman suggested, was for the person to align themselves with, or distance themselves from, social groups to which they visibly belonged in order to affiliate with or avoid the (positive or negative) stereotypes attached to those groups. This concept has provided the foundation for a large body of research concerned with how individuals avoid social disapproval by denying membership in stigmatised groups (or 'passing' as it is commonly referred to — see Mills (1999) for a discussion). For example, Skipper and McCaghy (1978) used Goffman's (1963) concept of stigma to describe the way in which strippers spoke about their job to others. They suggested that some strippers react to stigma and negative stereotypes attached their group by 'hiding' their profession from others (even close family members). To do this, women avoided discussing

specific details of their work and manipulated conversations about their employment by talking ‘around’ the subject.

As it is not always possible to conceal one’s group membership using linguistic strategies, in order to avoid social discredit, Goffman suggested people will attempt more sophisticated methods of identity management. For example, they may argue for an alternative view of their group (and therefore themselves as members) when they are engaged in social interactions in which they are aware that they are perceived as group members. His theory has provided the rationale for a large number of studies which have demonstrated that individuals, when talking about the groups they belong to, acknowledge stereotypes held about their social category, yet present alternative interpretations of group membership, seemingly in an effort to negate any unwanted feedback from others (Martino, 2000). This has been shown among diverse populations including people who are homeless (Snow & Anderson, 1987), people who have been diagnosed as HIV positive (Cherry, 1995), Native American women who view Native Americans as subject to prejudice (Nagel, 1994, 1996), people with physical disabilities (Alston, Bell & Feist-Price, 1996) and ethnic minorities subject to racism (Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker, McGraw, Thompson & Ingerman, 1987; Crocker & Quinn, 1998; Porter & Washington, 1993).

In the context of the current thesis, these studies are consistent with the observation made earlier that social acceptance is pivotal in determining

the identities people express around others. While this may be the case, the treatment of identity as a situated aspect of self-experience posits a rather extreme version of the individual as constantly changing to fit into their social environment. If individual's identities were purely situated identity, as a concept, becomes something quite precarious, dependent on circumstance and social interaction and lacking any actual continuity across situations (Burr, 1995).

Abrams and Hogg (2001) suggested that we should not lose sight of the fact that what is being described in situated treatments of identity is an 'interpersonal aspect' aspect of identity which does not necessarily reflect the 'true' identity people have but rather testifies more to the powerful human drive to save face in social situations (also see Brewer, 1991). In this respect, situated expressions of identity may be best viewed as managerial – or as a selection of an appropriate representation of identity, influenced by situational factors rather than entirely determined by them (Abrams, 1999).

What does the situational approach tell us about identity? Overall, people have many different aspects to their identity and can choose to present themselves differently across different social situations depending on the impression they wish to make. However, does this mean that we lack a 'real' identity that transcends situational expression? There is little evidence to suggest that people actually experience their identities as 'fragmented' and constantly changing to gain the acceptance of those

around them (Rosenberg, 1981). On the contrary, as Glover (1988) observed, the sense of being having an integrated or 'real' identity is an aspect of self-experience known to all. In fact, it is difficult to imagine living without an identity we see as 'ours' that we carry with us throughout our lives (Smith, 1988). How is this sense of 'having' a 'real' identity explained?

### ***The development of identity across the lifespan***

Erikson (1968) looked at identity from a standpoint of personality development, placing it in a psychosocial framework of self in society. He is credited with drawing attention specifically to identity as a psychological construct defining 'it' as a more or less integrated set of self-understandings learned during childhood, consolidated during adolescence and ideally resolved by the time individuals had reached their adult years. The content of identity as an object of examination, he suggested, was the person's answer to the question 'Who am I' (self-definitions) and 'What does it mean to be 'me' as a member of society' (self-descriptions and evaluations).

Erikson (1968, 1974, 1987) believed that individuals are driven to settle on a cohesive 'picture' of who they are and uncertainty about this issue peaks during adolescence. During this time questions about 'who' the adolescent is (or wants to 'be') become more salient, not only because of the dramatic physical and physiological changes associated with adolescence but also because of the altered social experiences and



changing demands from society. He suggested in young adulthood adolescents face accelerating social pressure to make appropriate career choices and to establish ways of becoming independent from their families of origin. As a result of social pressure, Erikson believed that young people begin to consider the various ideological (for example religious and political positions) and occupational options available to them in their society and experiment with a range of possible identities they could adopt. From there, adolescents ideally select appropriate identities and make commitments (firm or provisional) to life plans which would eventually enable them to enter into their chosen social niches.

To establish an identity, he argued, adolescents must meld together self-understandings carried over from childhood with what they have learnt about their various role options and their aspirations for the future. Part of this process requires committing to a new set of self-definitions, self-descriptions and self-evaluations consistent with their anticipated social role. Once adolescents have settled upon their new set of self-definitions, descriptions and evaluations (i.e. their identity), they achieved what he called 'identity fidelity' or a specific view of themselves and their future. Once this state had been attained, identity was resolved and would then serve to orient the individual to their place in the world. If individuals did not resolve their identities during this crucial time however, he argued, they experience an 'identity crisis' which was associated with a lack of purpose, a feeling of confusion and uncertainty about the future.

Although Erikson's ideas were influential, his work was mainly conceptual and descriptive. The most often cited elaboration of Erikson's views on identity formation is Marcia's (1966) identity status model. Like Erikson, Marcia agreed that adolescence is a time when young people explore and commit to certain identities in a variety of life domains including the political and religious beliefs, career choices and familial and gender roles. Marcia defined identity as a socially constructed psychological structure ('in the mind') which comprised the individual's self-definitions, self-descriptions and self-evaluations adhered to. In his view, the more advanced the individual's identity development the greater their self-awareness and sense of confidence, purpose and meaning. On the other hand, the less developed the individual's identity, the more confused they were about their own distinctiveness and therefore, they would have to rely upon others for direction and a sense of purpose.

Marcia (1966, 1967, 1976, 1980, 1993) conceived of identity in terms of four psychological statuses based on the amount of exploration and commitment to an identity the individual had experienced. The first status was 'foreclosure'. Young people in 'foreclosure' had not explored identity options but had committed to the values, beliefs, and ideas learnt within their families of origin. Young people in 'moratorium' were actively experimenting with 'possible identities' (i.e. they were considering various job options, political/social and religious affiliations) but had not committed themselves to specific identity. Young people in 'diffusion' were disinterested in identity. Finally, those who had 'achieved' identity

had been through the process of exploration, weighed up alternative options and settled on a particular identity in important life domains.

Marcia's views have spurred hundreds of studies on the relationship between identity statuses and psychological adjustment among adolescents. Several measurement instruments designed to measure identity exploration and identity commitment have been developed, including the Ego Identity Process Questionnaire (Balistreri, Busch-Rossnagel & Geisinger, 1995), the Extended Objective Measure of Identity Status (Adams, Bennion & Huh, 1989) and the Identity Status Interview (ISI) (Waterman, Besold, Crook & Manzini, 1987). Identity research utilising Marcia's (1966) identity statuses has been prolific during the last three decades. The ISI in particular has become a popular identity assessment tool and has been used by many researchers concerned with identity development (Meeus, 1996). The ISI comprises an extensive list of questions regarding the extent to which individuals have explored and committed to an identity and addresses domain-specific identity concerns, including family issues, personal relationships, recreation and leisure interests, occupational interests and political and religious beliefs.

Research undertaken from this paradigm has indicated that Erikson's and Marcia's concern with identity development in adolescence was well directed. The experiences of purposeful attempts at self-definition and striving to consolidate a firm sense of self have been reported by a substantial number of adolescents in a wide range of studies (see Meeus,

1996 for an overview). In addition, a large body of empirical research based upon Erikson's views support the notion adolescents who can clearly and confidently articulate their future life choices and identities are more secure, have higher self-esteem (positive conceptions of themselves) and engage in more goal orientated behaviours designed to achieve their aspirations for the future (e.g. Meilman, 1979).

A major contribution of Erikson and later Marcia was that they provided subsequent researchers with a clear conceptual basis upon which to view identity as a 'measurable' psychological construct. Marcia further advanced research on identity by establishing a method of identity 'measurement.' His ideas provided researchers with 'tangible' constructs to analyse and therefore facilitated considerable research attention and interest in the concept of identity development and function.

While much of the research from this paradigm has affirmed the need to consolidate a firm identity accelerates during adolescence, subsequent research has emphasised that the desire for individuals to establish a 'clear' identity is an ongoing developmental experience. For example, in a study which is particularly relevant to my thesis because of its qualitative nature and emphasis on the experience of women, Josselson (1996) built upon Marcia's theoretical approach by exploring identity development for women throughout the life span. Over a 22-year period, Josselson interviewed women on three separate occasions and asked them to talk about their identities (understandings of how they fit into the world and

what that meant for them personally) in relation to four subject areas; occupation, religion, politics and sexual values.

Over the course of several interviews, she found that women seemed quite conscious of their drive to establish a clear sense of identity. When she asked them to describe this process they spoke of their identities as being shaped profoundly by their experiences of feeling competent (being effective and doing things of value) as well as their connections (ties and relationships) with other people. She found that women's sense of competence was derived from their work roles, their roles in their homes as homemakers and their participation in community organisations and activities. Because women derived a sense of purpose and definition from these roles, they featured prominently in their descriptions of identity.

Josselson also reported for the majority of women their self-definitions and evaluations were derived from familial relationships. In describing their identities, therefore, women spoke of their positions in their families of origin as daughters, granddaughters and sisters and the obligations and expectations those roles entailed. She also found women with partners and children tended to emphasise these relationships as integral to their sense of identity.

Josselson found the identities women described changed markedly over the course of their adult lives. For example, from age 33 to 43, many of her participants reported that they had felt the need to reassess their

relationships with their parents, with the aim of being accepted as adults. This meant that their previous attitudes towards their familial roles were reviewed and adjusted. Women also reported that their families of origin had less influence on their identities as they grew older and geographically more distant and practically less dependent. For example, women identified themselves as 'daughters' when younger and described themselves as more reliant on their families for practical and emotional support. These views later changed as women moved away from their families and became mothers themselves.

Another feature of women's identities that changed over time related to their beliefs about the role of women in society. Josselson found that women's ideas around women changed profoundly in accordance with changes in the prevailing societal ideologies of each decade. The women in Josselson's study came of age at the dawn of the modern women's movement. When they were interviewed as younger women attending college, very few of them were involved in feminist causes and concepts of 'sexism' and 'patriarchy' were relatively new to many. Later in their lives, women were exposed to various channels (such as the media and further education) in which ideas around sexism were conceptually 'revealed'. As women became increasingly aware of sexual discrimination they developed different ways of understanding the male/female relationship (at an individual and societal level) and this changed their own self-views and identities as women. As such, when Josselson interviewed women at age 43, she found more espoused specific beliefs

about women's rights to 'equality' and more women described themselves as affirming feminist views particularly in relation to their political affiliations.

While women's identities changed over the course of the years, Josselson noted that women did not seem to lose their sense of continuity as a person. Despite transformations in their relationships, activities, experiences and beliefs about the nature of the world and their role within it, women reported a sense of 'sameness' over the course of their lives. They appeared to see themselves as evolving renditions of historically established identities rather than completely 'new people' in each subsequent interview.

Several important implications for understanding the concept of identity follow on from this research.

As a starter, Josselson's research found that women did experience 'having' a 'real identity' over time (i.e. their identities were experienced as transituational in nature). Moreover, despite changing their ideas about who they were and what that meant, they reported a more or less cohesive picture of their identities as consistent aspects of self-experience. This supports the view proposed by Erikson that people are compelled to have a clear sense of identity and that this need is an ongoing aspect of self-experience.

Secondly, she found that women's identities were intrinsically linked to their relationships with others (in their families and wider community) and, as those relationships changed, so did women's identities. This highlights the need to see identity as socially derived and amenable to change as social relationships change. In this sense, identity does not seem to be static rather it is a developmental process which reflects changing social demands across the lifespan.

Another particularly compelling finding was that women in this study changed how they saw themselves as they were exposed to new concepts by which to interpret who they are and what that meant as a member of society. As the feminist movement grew in influence, women became more exposed to feminist ideology and, as such, began to reassess their identities in ways more consistent with those new ideologies. By demonstrating this phenomenon Josselson showed that in order to 'have' certain identities people must have the ideas available to them. This highlights the importance of broader socio-cultural influences upon individual identities and how people are shaped by the prevailing understandings of their time.

Overall, Josselson's work demonstrates people do experience a 'real' sense of identity that they 'carry' with them throughout their lives and indicates studies of identity should take into account multiple levels of influence upon the person – from close familial relationships to wider societal processes and ideologies. Moreover, her research reveals the very



complex nature of identity development and raises several questions in relation to the current study. Two pertinent issues stand out: Firstly, how may we best take into account the multiple environmental influences that shape personal identity? And secondly, how do individuals change so dramatically in how they view themselves over time, yet integrate and unify aspects of their historical self to form a ‘current’ identity? In the next two sections I address these questions by proffering the view that identities may be seen as held within the person’s evolving life-story and that these stories may be seen as a product of socio-historical context.

### *The life-story model*

In developing a conceptual framework for understanding how identity operates, a key task for theorists has been to clarify how identities and the life events that shape them are integrated in the mind of the individual in a way that connects the past, present and future (Eakin, 2000; Ezzy, 1998; Glover, 1988; Leiblich & Josselson, 1994; Linde, 1993).

Several theorists (Atkinson, 1999; Bruner, 1987; 1997; Polkinghorne, 1988) have suggested that the process of ordering one’s life meaningfully in this regard is achieved through the weaving of an internal narrative or ‘inner story’ that amalgamates the person’s self-knowledge, associates that knowledge to life experiences they have had and orders those experiences within an intelligible autobiography.

The key contributor to theoretical development on this topic, Dan McAdams (1985, 1994, 2001), has argued that identity should be seen as taking the form of a personal life-story in which life phases may be considered 'chapters' in the individual's evolving autobiography. According to the model, in late adolescence and young adulthood people start to psychologically organise and make meaning of their lives by creating 'inner' personal histories that reconstruct their own past and anticipate their future. To do this they draw upon all the events that have happened to them in the past, tie them together in a meaningful sequence and use that 'story' to explain who they are, what that means, and where they are 'going'.

McAdams (2001) has suggested that the tendency for children to make sense of their own past in relation to the events that have occurred to them in chronological order emerges at a young age as children develop autobiographical memory and an awareness of themselves as distinct individuals in the world. Later, as children develop language, they are able to hold more complex concepts in their memory and therefore add to their self-knowledge by attributing certain distinguishing characteristics to themselves which differentiate them from others. These things may include what they have done, their personal characteristics and details about their various social relationships (McAdams, 2001). As information about their lives and self accumulates, children increasingly need a way to organise a mounting pool of self-understandings and personal memories.

Personalised stories seem a suitable option for making sense of our lives in childhood, observed McAdams (2001) because parents typically encourage children to place their experiences in accurate chronological order from a young age. Moreover, children are typically exposed to books, story telling and verbal recollections of what other people have 'done' and, as such, they progressively learn to think of their lives as the lives of others in their society have been depicted to them (that is in biographical form).

In McAdam's view life-stories need to make sense to people. Therefore, in establishing one's own life-story and a clear picture of who we are, McAdams suggested we strive for causal coherence. In this sense, we have a tendency to view our own traits, attitudes, competencies, beliefs and preferences, as products of the experiences and events that preceded them. For this reason, our memories of our life experiences are pivotal to understanding identity and further, it is important to emphasise that people have a tendency to focus on events from their past which they believe to be causally linked.

McAdams (2001) noted that during childhood the potential for the individual to formulate their life-stories independently increased as their cognitive abilities developed. Consistent with Erikson's view, McAdams emphasised that life-stories provide people with an understanding of who they are and how they fit into the world. Thus, the person's life-story 'holds' their identity (self-definitions, self-evaluations and self-

descriptions) as well as specific details as to where those concepts came from in their own personal history.

In recent years, several theorists have proposed that personal life-stories are the best available structure to make sense of how individuals come to experience and understand themselves as individuals in time (Atkinson, 1999; Ezzy, 1998; Kenyon & Randall, 1997; Sarbin, 1986, 1993). The personal life-story may be conceived of as an 'inner' identity in that life-stories are private and comprise an accumulation of the person's own personal understandings of who they are and what that means as a member of society. Further, by their nature, life-stories require individuals to explain themselves with reference to the social world, relationships and events that shaped them (McAdams, 2001). As such, life-stories carry explanations for the origins of identity for the person in their own personal history.

McAdams (1994) suggested the life-story approach is also consistent with situation-specific views of identity because the expressions of identity people make publicly may be viewed as a selection of the appropriate aspects of a person's own story, tailored for the moment in which it is expressed and formulated to be appropriate to a particular audience.

The idea of identity development is also accommodated in this model as it assumes that, because individuals continue to live their lives and accumulate self-knowledge, their life-story is continually a work in

progress, changing over time reflecting changes in the person's self-understandings, social environment, social roles and relationships (McAdams, 2001).

The appeal of the treatment of identity as held within life-stories is that it incorporates the various aspects of self-experience labelled identity by theorists into one process of continuous identity formation and self development in a way that no other perspective has been able to achieve. Reinforced by the inclusiveness of this approach, I have adopted the model here by taking the view that identity may be found in the 'contents' of the person's life-story – specifically in the self-definitions, self-descriptions and associated meanings that individuals attach to themselves when asked to talk about their identity as a person. The appeal of this approach is not limited to its theoretical inclusivity but, as noted at the opening of this chapter, life-story interviews have been considered culturally appropriate to use with Māori (discussed further in chapter four).

### ***Identity and socio-historical context***

While McAdams (2001) has focussed on how the person constructs their story in their own minds, theorists of a more sociological bent argue that approaches to personal identity need to be supplemented by a consideration of the wider spectrum of social phenomena – particularly socio-historical conditions.

Strauss (1959, 1994), for example, argued that if you wish to ‘really understand’ people — why they interpret their world and themselves the way that they do — you must be prepared to understand how their lives are determined by their socio-historical contexts (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). In his view, because social psychologists typically study the course of single lives or short sequences of action carried out by individuals, the impact of socio-historical factors upon identity are not adequately emphasised in much of the research within this discipline.

How may the influence of socio-historical context on identity be studied? In addressing this question, Strauss (1959) suggested that because each generation shares similar experiences they share similar personal characteristics and tendencies. Therefore by locating those shared commonalities (and the sources from which they derive) one may reveal the consequences of socio-historical context for identity (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Strauss, 1959, 1994). Several researchers have found age related differences in identity using life-stories as a methodological strategy. In reviewing literature for this thesis two studies were located which exemplify this technique and therefore provide an appropriate model for my own research.

In the first study, Schulz (1998) conducted 31 interviews with Navajo women and analysed their content to locate key themes (recurring patterns of ideas) in relation to identity (how women defined and described what it meant to be Navajo). She asked participants how they interpreted their

own identities as Indian, Navajo and as women and how their ideas were shaped by their personal experiences. Schulz divided women into three different age groups: those born before 1946, those born between 1946 and 1960 and those born between 1961 and 1976. These age groups were chosen because of their relationship to changes in the United States Indian (*sic*) policies that women were influenced by as they grew to adulthood.

To present data, for each woman she noted year of birth and relevant political events of the decade in which women were born. She also noted the prevailing views of Native Americans espoused by Native American leaders and taught via State education system during that time. She then showed how the interpretations each woman gave of being Navajo and ‘Indian’ (*sic*) differed and how those differences reflected the different political and ideological period in which women had been raised. For example, women in the oldest cohort grew to adulthood in an era in which ‘Indians’ were being pressured towards assimilation yet many women in this group were raised in tribal communities speaking Navajo. Reflecting this, older women stressed the value of Navajo culture in describing their own identities, resisted being defined as ‘Indian’ and preferred to be defined according to their tribal affiliations. Women in the middle cohort, born between 1946 and 1960, grew up at a time when there was increased political pressure to erode Navajo tribes and move Navajo into work outside of reservations. Native American leaders resisted this shift and tried to reinforce group solidarity by promoting the pan-tribal ‘Indian identity’. Reflecting this, women in this group were more likely to define

themselves as Indian and speak about pan-tribal unity and 'Indian pride'. Women born in the youngest cohort, between 1961 and 1976, reaped the benefits of the political efforts of the 1960s. When they attended school the 'politically correct' view of Native Americans was that they had a unique and valuable culture that should be preserved. Most of them attended schools located on reservations and attended classes which emphasised bilingual education and the importance of learning about Navajo history and culture. Reflecting these formative conditions, women in this group were more likely to affirm the validity of Navajo culture, talk about Native American rights to equality and define themselves as both Navajo and Indian.

In another study which highlights the relationship between socio-historical contexts and identity, Korgen (1998) examined changes in self-definition, self-description and self-evaluation among 62 bi-racial Americans (individuals with both an African American and a White American parent). Like Schulz, Korgen demonstrated how differences in identity among respondents could be traced to differences in personal circumstances determined by broader features in the socio-cultural milieu in which they were raised.

To contextualise the research she reviewed historical changes in the legal treatment of and socio-cultural views of bi-racial Americans. She noted that up until the mid 1900s, inter-racial couples were typically ostracised (at one point or another in America 38 States passed anti-miscegenation



laws) and bi-racial children experienced substantial social disapproval by the White community. What that meant was prior to 1960, anyone with any African ancestry had little choice but define themselves as Black because they were not accepted as White. The Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965) resulted in equality under the law for Blacks and other racial minorities. The Black Nationalist movement challenged racism directly with the slogan 'Black is Beautiful' during the 1970s and affirmed the ideology of multi-culturalism. Over the ensuing decade inter-racial couples became more socially accepted, as did their bi-racial children.

In her study, Korgen demonstrated how these large scale political changes shaped the identity of bi-racial individuals by describing differences in self-definition between bi-racial Americans born prior to and after the 1960s. To do this she conducted semi structured life-story interviews with bi-racial Americans, the majority of whom were born after 1965. Overall, she found that participants aged in their 40s at the time interviewed were more likely to identify as Black because they came to age prior to the Civil Rights era. Younger participants (born in the late 1950s) were more likely to identify as both Black and bi-racial. She noted that, although this cohort also experienced racial prejudice and discrimination when they were younger, they were also exposed to Civil Rights messages that challenged racism. Because of these experiences they found it easier than their older counterparts to embrace and value their Black identities. As a corollary

they were more likely than those born the generation before them to identify as Black and affirm that identity positively.

Because these studies demonstrate the efficacy of life-story comparisons across age groups for highlighting age related differences in identity, they provided a fertile source of conceptual direction for my own research and underpin my own methodological approach (see chapter four). Another relevant feature of these studies is that they demonstrate the profound impact of changing societal views on the identities of ethnic minorities and thus validate my own concern with the impact of socio-historical conditions on identity.

### ***Summary Chapter One***

The literature review in this chapter demonstrated that identity comprises elements which are expressed and private that work together to endow the individual with a sense of who they are and how they fit into the world. Various approaches to identity emphasise different dimensions of identity formation and thus contribute to our understanding of identity in different ways.

Approaches reviewed in this chapter include role theory and social identity theory which account for how identity is socially constructed (that is people learn what it 'means' to define themselves in certain ways according to socially constructed norms). Also discussed was Stryker's view of identity which illustrated how the importance people place on

certain identities depends on the extent to which those identities are valued and accepted by those around them. Goffman's situational treatment of identity cautioned us to be aware that identities are contextually influenced, while Erikson, Marcia, and Josselson's developmental approaches demonstrated that people desire a sense of integration and continuity in their identities - yet identities have the capacity to develop and change substantially over time.

With these understandings of identity in mind, in this chapter I also asked how may identity be best treated as an object of study? I suggested that working with identity requires a theoretical approach which accounts for both the development of identity over time and the multiple influences that bring to bear upon identity 'content'. Driven by this imperative I embraced the life-story model of identity as a theoretical position.

The final task in this chapter was to demonstrate how the impact of socio-historical contexts on identity may be explored. To this end, two studies were reviewed which illustrated how comparing life-stories of subjects for different age cohorts effectively reveals intergenerational changes in ethnic identity.

This chapter has been concerned primarily with establishing a definition and treatment of identity, as well as a methodological foundation for this research. Up until this point I have focussed on conceptualising identity in a general way as opposed to Māori identity specifically. Having

established a basic theoretical foundation however, it is necessary to reflect more carefully on how Māori identity as an aspect of self-experience may be understood. The purpose of the following two chapters is to address issues relevant to Māori identity by acknowledging several special considerations of working with ethnic identity (with a discussion of issues pertinent to Māori identity in particular).

## CHAPTER TWO: ETHNIC IDENTITY AND THE CONSEQUENCES OF MINORITY STATUS

### *Introduction*

From a social psychological perspective ethnic identity is a generic term which refers to a person's identification with a particular ethnic group or groups as well as their personal understandings of what that identification means (Aboud, 1987; Tajfel, 1981, 1982a, 1982b, 1986).

While all identities are socially created, because they derive from being associated with different categories of people, the particular significance of ethnic identity for minority ethnic groups makes 'it' important to consider. Why? Although peoples of all ethnic categories are, by definition, 'ethnic groups', the term 'ethnic' is typically used to refer to minority people and people of colour. These groups are often visible minorities (physically distinct), many are socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged, and many are subject to negative stereotypes and racism from other groups in society (Allport, 1954; Porter & Washington, 1979, 1993). As such, in thinking about ethnic identity it seems vital to acknowledge that ethnic minorities have specific kinds of experiences which have profound implications for their personal identity. Following this, the general assumption underpinning identity theory in relation to ethnic minorities has been one of identity 'problematism' (Appiah, 1994; Barnes, 1980; Brown, 1995; Erikson, 1966; Pettigrew, 1964; Taylor, 1997). In support of this, empirical research on the

psychological impact of racism and discrimination on ethnic minorities indicates a range of negative psychological outcomes such as decreased self-esteem, frustration and aggression (Dion & Earn, 1975), reduced life satisfaction (Koomen & Frankel, 1992) and feelings of stress and anxiety (Dion, 1986) all of which may impinge negatively upon identity development.

A consideration of these phenomena are vital to the current thesis because, not only are Māori a minority in New Zealand and disadvantaged socio-economically but, as noted by McCreanor (1995, 1997), Māori as a social group have historically been subject to prejudice and racism on the part of Pākehā. In testimony to this, several recent studies indicate Māori continue to be the victims of prejudice and negative stereotypes from Pākehā New Zealanders (for discussions see Bayard, Holmes & Murachver, 2001; McCreanor, 1993b, 1995, 1997, 2005; McCreanor & Nairn, 1990; Nairn & McCreanor, 1991). Because these features of being Māori are likely to have an important impact on Māori identity a discussion of the influence of minority status for identity seems essential. As there is little existing research on how minority status shapes Māori identity, relevant research with non-Māori minorities will be reviewed and the implications of each line of research for understanding Māori identity is summarised at the end of the chapter.

Four key issues in relation to minority status for ethnic identity are described in the psychological literature. One is salience, that is, ethnic

identity seems to be more important to ethnic minorities than to members of majority groups. The second is lowered self-esteem, that is, the process of ‘having’ or ‘developing’ an ethnic identity has been seen as more problematic for ethnic minorities because of the negative societal stereotypes and discrimination they face from wider society which may threaten their personal sense of self-worth and identity (Chambers et al., 1998; Phinney 1990; Tatum, 1997; Joiner, Katz & Kwon, 2002). A third issue for discussion pertains to the role of enculturation for counteracting the negative consequences of minority status (Taylor, 1997). The fourth issue relates to the role of ethnic identity development for psychological well-being. The influential theories of Cross (1971, 1978) and Helms (1993, 1995) will be reviewed. These authors argue ethnic minorities can only develop a ‘positive ethnic identity’ by moving from a state of ‘internalised racism’ (or believing negative stereotypes held about their ethnic group) to a position of empowerment based on a positive sense of group membership.

### ***Ethnic identity salience***

Social psychological research has consistently demonstrated that minority status seems to ‘push’ ethnicity to the fore for minorities – that is, they see ethnic identity as a particularly important aspect of ‘who they are’ (Shorter-Gooden & Washington, 1996; Verkuyten, 1995). For example, Phinney and Alipuria (1990) asked Asian American, African American, Mexican American, and White American college students to rank how important their ethnic identity was to their overall sense of identity. They

found that minority group students ranked ethnicity as much more important to their identity than did White students. Similarly, in a large study Dukes and Martinez (1997) surveyed 12,386 American students and found that, overall, members of ethnic minority groups evaluated their ethnic identity as more important than did their White American peers. I could not locate a similar study that compares Pākehā and Māori views of the centrality of their ethnic identity however Te Hoe Nuku Roa (1999) found that over 50% of 1574 Māori surveyed saw their Māori identity as ‘important’.

Why would ethnic minorities see their ethnic identity as so important? Literature in this area provides two types of explanation. The primordial approach claims ethnic identification endows people with a sense of personal meaning and value in ways that other identifications do not (Roosens, 1989; Yinger, 1986) because it is determined by biological connection and therefore it is ‘naturally’ more important (Geertz, 1963). Others such as Hutnik (1991) argue, however, that ethnic identity salience derives from the discrimination and prejudice minorities face from other groups in society and not biological features. The proof that the social value of ethnic identity renders ‘it’ salient, argued Hutnik (1991), can be found in societies without ethnic diversity. In cases where societies are homogenous in this respect ethnic identity becomes unimportant and some other source of social stratification emerges to take precedence — such as class or gender.



The view that ethnic identity salience is a reaction to social and not biological factors has been emphasised by a number of theorists (Barth, 1969; Calhoun, 1994) and was illustrated in a study conducted by Jackson (1999). In his study, Jackson conducted hour long focus groups with White Americans attending predominantly Black American colleges and Black Americans attending predominantly White American colleges. Students were aged between 18 and 45 at the time of being interviewed and took part in focus groups (made up of six White Americans or six Black Americans) for an hour. Jackson found several differences between Black and White Americans in how they perceived the importance of ethnic identity.

He found White participants did not seem to be particularly concerned with their ethnic identity and shared the view that there was no need to define themselves ethnically because there was only one 'basic culture' in America – which was their own or 'American'. Black participants differed markedly from Whites on this issue and, overall, reported that being Black was a major part of how they saw their identities. When asked why they placed emphasis on 'being Black' several Black respondents indicated that their 'Blackness' had become a big deal to them personally because they had been conscious of racism directed against Blacks by Whites for as long as they could remember. Others said that racism made them focus more on their Black culture because it gave them a sense of meaning, self-worth and purpose not accorded them by White people. For example, one Black participant said:

I think you have to have a cultural identity in general just so you know who you are and where you come from, and where it is that you may go, or where you have the destiny to go. And, of course here ... you have to have some sort of cultural identity, but you have to get it before you come here 'cause (sic) you'll get lost in a lot of things here. (Jackson, 1999, p. 82)

Racism also seemed to make Black students even more determined to maintain their own distinctiveness in White dominated social contexts. One Black participant said she could not 'live with herself' if she forfeited her integrity by changing herself around Whites to be more acceptable to them. In summarising his findings Jackson suggested that White subjects seemed to be ambivalent about their cultural identities because they had never been 'put down' for being White and therefore there was no need for them to ruminate about their own ethnicity. Black participants, on the other hand, were very conscious of the racism and prejudice held against Blacks and this led them to focus on the fact they were Black and finding ways to feel positive about that aspect of their identities.

What do these findings reveal about the consequences of minority status for ethnic identity? Indeed, Black participants in Jackson's study did seem emotionally committed to their Black identities. However if it was natural for them to do so one might expect White participants to focus on White culture and White pride. The fact that they did not suggests that it is the

racism associated with being an ethnic minority that pushes people to focus on that identity (perhaps to affirm their social worth).

In summary, because ethnic minorities have to cope with expressions of rejection from dominant group members this seems to complicate identity formation substantially. This points to the need for approaches to exploring ethnic identity to appreciate that 'it' is strongly influenced by the treatment that minorities receive from more powerful groups in society. In turn, this requires analysis of the broader social context in which the individual lives, the prevailing stereotypes held about them, the nature of their interactions with dominant group members, and how those experiences may render their ethnic identity personally problematic.

### ***Ethnic identity and the social hierarchy***

A large body of empirical research in psychology concerned with addressing how ethnic identity may be problematic for the person has been based on the social identity paradigm.

A basic premise of social identity theory (reviewed in chapter one) is that groups in society (social classes, gender and ethnic groups) are situated within a social hierarchy in which some groups are 'higher' and others 'lower' depending upon the amount of power, prestige and influence those groups collectively hold. The position of one's group within the social hierarchy is viewed as central to the self-experience of individual members because social identities are not only descriptive but they are

evaluative. That is, not only do they furnish the individual with rules for behaviour, but they furnish an evaluation of the social category and thus of its members relative to other social categories in the hierarchy (Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel, 1982a, Tajfel, 1982b; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Tajfel (1982a, 1982b) argued that individuals strive for favourable evaluations of their group or what he called a 'positive social identity'. The more positively one's group is perceived, the greater the positive evaluations individuals can draw from in interpreting themselves. On the other hand, if people belong to a low status group, they may be prone to a 'negative social identity,' or unfavourable evaluations of their group and their group characteristics. This would auger poorly for the person psychologically because they may attach those negative evaluations to themselves (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

This is the key theoretical argument that specifies the psychological disadvantage of membership in a socially disparaged group – that group members are threatened by negative evaluations held about their category because they internalise those ideas 'into' their own self-concept.

This idea has been espoused frequently in relation to Māori – often by Māori who have criticised negative stereotypes of Māori depicted in the mainstream media (e.g. Wall, 1995, 1997). A number of publications have suggested that negative images of Māori in the television and print media perpetuate stereotypes that threaten personal identity development among

Māori by feeding them negative ideas by which to conceive of themselves (H. Awatere, 1993; Grace, 1995; Johnson & Pihama, 1995; Pihama, 1994; Ramsden, 1994; Walker, 1990a, 1996, 2002). For example, Pania Dewes (1975), a woman of Ngāti Porou descent, argued:

If I were to believe what I read and hear about Māori via the media, I would see myself as a glue sniffing, shoplifting, pot-smoking, tattooed street kid whose parents were ripping off the Department of Social Welfare or, alternatively, calling upon Māoridom or the Government to ratify the Treaty of Waitangi. My future would also be mapped out for me. No school qualifications, no prospects, no motivation, no interests (outside of gangs), and no money. In fact a drag on society.

Similarly Ramsden (1994, p. 111) observed:

Identity construction (for Māori) has offered little that is positive and much that is ambivalent and even bizarre. With so little to choose from it is scarce wonder that many Māori have chosen role models which relate to brown resistance movements ... or to brute force.

Echoing this perspective, Grace (1994) and Pihama (1994) contend that many films and videos in Aotearoa are ‘dangerous’ for Māori people because they reinforce negative values, actions and behaviours that are

maladaptive and lead to self-loathing (H.Awatere, 1996). One movie in particular, *Once Were Warriors*, which received international media exposure in the late 1990s, has drawn strong criticism from some Māori academics, who argue that the film reinforces negative stereotypes of Māori men as aggressive and predisposed to committing violent crimes (Walker, 1996) which in turn threatens their pride and self-esteem.

Although I was not able to find any recent research on how the identities of Māori adults may be influenced by negative images depicted of Māori in the media, one study with Māori children suggests that even very young Māori are acutely aware of the negative stereotypes attached to Māori and also believe them themselves. Bruce, Curtis and Johnston (1998) asked 34 Māori and Pacific Island children aged 5-to-6 years old (all from a similar socio-economic background) at Christchurch primary schools to look at pictures of light skinned and dark skinned children and attribute positive or negative attributes to them. They also asked children to identify which picture was the most like them, and which person they would rather be when they grew up. The results showed that all children were more likely to attribute negative attributes to dark skinned people and report that they would rather be light skinned when they grew up. The authors concluded that the positive bias Māori children showed towards light skinned people does not mean they do not want to be Māori – rather suggests they are aware that negative stereotypes are attached to Māori and that Pākehā people have a higher and more desirable social and economic status. As

such, they suggested, Māori children became acutely aware at a young age of the negative social implications of being Māori.

Do Māori carry this view into their adult years? If so, do they internalise negative stereotypes that exist about Māori people ‘into’ their own identities? There is little research that explores this issue for Māori; however, many researchers have sought to substantiate this claim with other minority populations by linking group membership with unfavourable personal psychological states through group identification (Crocker et al., 1987; Crocker, Luhtanen, Blaine & Broadnax, 1994; Crocker & Major, 1989; Crocker & Quinn, 1998).

A large body of research has supported social identity theory’s prediction that ethnic minorities who evaluate their ethnic group favourably report higher personal self-esteem and less of a negative impact of racism on their personal feelings of self-worth (Blash & Unger, 1995; Dukes & Martinez, 1997; Walker et al., 1995).

However, is there any evidence to show that ethnic minorities are psychologically harmed by negative stereotypes held about their group? Findings in this area are less clear (Crocker & Major 1989; Phinney, 1990, 1995). Cross (1991) examined the results from 45 studies conducted between 1939 and 1987 investigating the relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem. Cross found that 36% of the studies reported a positive association between ethnic identity and self-esteem, whereas 64%

of the studies reported no relationship. Twenge and Crocker (2002) conducted ten meta-analyses of studies which compared self-esteem between groups of Whites, Blacks, Asian Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans. They included only studies which measured self-esteem (using the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale). In their overall findings (combining 345 studies) they found that Blacks actually scored higher than Whites on measures of self-esteem.

Thus, the societal context of racism does not necessarily translate into negative self-esteem at the level of the individual. Why? It seems that the extent to which people take on negative social evaluations as their own depends upon their own personal interpretations of what it means to be a group member.

In testimony to this several studies have found that those with a positive view of their own ethnic identity are 'protected' from believing negative views about their group. For example, Shorter-Gooden and Washington (1996) found that adolescent African-American women evaluated their ethnic group and identity positively although they acknowledged negative societal stereotypes and racism against Blacks. Relationships with other women, close family members and role models were mentioned as an important factor shaping their identities and women referred to these relationships as proof of their own social acceptability and value. The authors suggested that, for these women, what close family and friends thought of them mattered much more than the perceived low



evaluation of socially 'higher' group members (also see Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004).

The finding that ethnic minorities may be protected from the psychologically harmful effects of racism by strong networks of personal relationships with those close to them is consistent with a large body of research that indicates that individuals who do not develop positive relationships with members of their own ethnic group are more prone to think of their ethnic group as subject to stigma and social degradation (Phinney, 1993, 1995; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992). Several studies have also found that parents who model positive views of ethnic identity in the home can help children deflect and overcome negative messages about their ethnic group presented to them from wider society (Emshoff, Avery, Raduka, Anderson & Calvert, 1996).

Two studies conducted by Lee, published in 1996 and 1997, endorsed the importance of acceptance by in-group members for identity among ethnic minorities and may help to clarify how negative societal views have a differential influence on how minority individuals see themselves. Lee studied the life experiences of Hmong college women between the ages of 18 and 32 living in America. In two studies she found virtually all the participants reported experiences of personal racism (being sneered at, told to go home and being made to feel unwelcome in the USA by White Americans). All women reported that they found racism directed towards them distressing. However, women did not respond to racism in the same

way.

In her first study with high school students, Lee (1996a, 1996b) found that many young Hmong women did internalise negative views of Hmong. In other words they accepted White people's criticisms of Asians and responded to racist experiences by rejecting their own ethnic identities. Women who 'internalised' reported that, at times, they had disparaged Asians themselves and attempted to emulate their White peers behaviour by copying their dress and changing how they acted around them. One woman reported making fun of Asians in order to be accepted by White people.

In her second study, Lee (1997) found the internalisation of negative stereotypes of Hmong were more common among young women (under 24 years) who had little understanding of Hmong culture and history. She found that older women (who were more educated) had a clearer understanding of the circumstances surrounding the Asian refugees and were, therefore, less likely to blame Hmong for their own poverty. Lee found that educated women were also more likely to have a detailed understanding of the efforts of their Asian forebears to survive and settle in a hostile social environment in America, despite the prejudice they confronted. Because this group had more information about Hmong history they were able to subvert racist comments by arguing for alternative views of Hmong people and their culture. Overall, the more mature, educated and informed women were the less they believed

negative stereotypes about Hmong people. Moreover, rather than accepting racism, they told Lee that they reacted by focussing on ways in which they could value their Hmong identity by forming close relationships with other Hmong and avoiding situations which may threaten their sense of worth as an Asian person.

The relevance of these studies for my own understanding of the consequences of minority status and racism for ethnic identity are two-fold. First, negative stereotypes and racism may be psychologically distressing for ethnic minorities and some may take negative views of their ethnic group personally 'on board'. However, people who have learnt to evaluate their ethnic group positively seem better equipped to deflect negative stereotypes and not let them determine their own ethnic identity. This suggests that one should not assume ethnic identity to be psychologically problematic for minorities or that racism is automatically 'internalised' by ethnic minorities. Rather, developing a positive ethnic identity, or sense of worth and acceptance around one's ethnic identity, seems to be a balance between personal beliefs (shaped by the individual's unique experiences and personal relationships) and external social influences (commonly held perceptions of one's social group). This underscores the importance of viewing ethnic identity as highly individual and indicates the need to take an exploratory approach to investigating ethnic identity by taking into account the personal meanings individuals attach to their own ethnic groups (Rowley, Sellers, Chavous & Smith, 1998).

### *Ethnic pride, awareness and psychological outcomes*

As Lee's (1997) study described above indicates, people who have learnt to evaluate their ethnic group positively tend to evaluate their own ethnic identity more positively. This is why, in recent decades, ethnic groups internationally have focussed on elevating the self-esteem of individual group members by encouraging them to learn their own language and cultural practices (Tucker, 1999; Zimmerman, Isreal, Schulz & Checkoway 1992; Zimmerman, Ramirez, Washienko, Walter, & Dyer, 1998). The reasoning is that understanding their own culture will provide ethnic group members with the sense of pride and self-worth needed to cope with discrimination and prejudice from wider society (Taylor, 1997).

In line with this view many Māori have argued that Māori individuals need to learn about their Māori language, heritage and culture to fortify their personal self-esteem (A.Durie, 1997; M.Durie, 1985, 1986, 1994, 2004; Durie et al., 1996; Edwards, 1999, 2000; Kupenga, Rata & Nepe, 1993; Rangihau, 1975). Szászy (1995), for example, observed that Māori need to know their culture so that they can accept and value themselves. Mead (1999a, 2003) argued that for Māori people, matauranga Māori (knowledge of things Māori) comprises an important part of the material that Māori require to get a grip on their lives as it enables them to be whole. In fact, in recent years the promotion of cultural identity and cultural pride has become a primary focus of Māori and Government initiatives to promote well-being among Māori people (Beasley et al., 1993; Broughton, 1993, 1995; Durie, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2003;

Huriwai, Sellman, Sullivan & Potiki, 2000; Huriwai, Robertson, Armstrong, Kingi & Huata, 2001; McFarlane-Nathan, 1994; Pipi et al., 2003).

A review of psychological literature in relation to this argument suggests the focus on developing cultural competency and ethnic group pride as a way of promoting psychological well-being is well directed. In a review of psychological and sociological writings around ethnic identity, Hutnik (1991) observed that because ethnic groups are endowed with traditions which are uniquely their own members have access to a powerful source of personal dignity and pride. Thus, ethnic group members who understand their cultural heritage may draw from a rich reservoir of positive ideas about their group which enables them to resist any negative stereotypes attached to them by society.

Congruent with this view empirical research in this area suggests that ethnic minority individuals who have accepted that side of their identity and are knowledgeable in aspects of their ethnic group culture fare better on various measures of psychological well-being (Belgrave et al., 1994; Brook, Balka, Brook, Win, & Gursen, 1998; Caldwell, Kohn-Wood, Schmeelk-Cone, Chavous & Zimmerman, 2004).

Phinney (1992, 1993) has made a considerable contribution to research concerned with the relationship between self-esteem and ethnic identity over the last 15 years. Phinney (1992, 1993) identified several components

of ethnic identity. These include; self identification as a group member, knowledge of shared culture, participation in cultural activities, a sense of belonging and commitment to the group and a sense of acceptance as a group member. Phinney held that various levels of achievement in each identity aspect indicative of a 'high' or 'low' ethnic identity. A 'positive' ethnic identity is characterised by a strong sense of belonging, well developed cultural knowledge, and a sense of security and belonging as a group member. In her view, once individuals had reached high levels on each of these components they could be said to have achieved ethnic identity 'achieved'. The person who has an achieved ethnic identity has a clear sense of the importance of their ethnic background, has some certainty about how their life is influenced by group membership, and appreciates the role their ethnicity plays in their interactions with others.

Phinney (1993) developed the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) which is a questionnaire of 23 statements that assesses three aspects of ethnic identity: affirmation and belonging, ethnic identity achievement and ethnic related (cultural) behaviour. A key benefit of the MEIM is that it is not ethnic group specific and can be used with samples that are ethnically diverse (Phinney, Cantu & Kurtz, 1997).

For example, in a large study, Dukes and Martinez (1997), drawing from Phinney's conceptualisation of ethnic identity as a process of moving from 'low' to 'high' ethnic identity, hypothesised that higher ethnic identity scores on the MEIM should be related with higher self-esteem. To test

this, they surveyed 12,386 junior high and high school students in six Colorado schools. Ethnic identity was measured using items from the MEIM. To measure self-esteem they employed a ten item version of the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965). A typical item states, "On the whole I am satisfied with myself" to which participants indicate using a four-point-Likert scale the extent to which they disagree or agree with each statement. Statistical analysis of the data demonstrated that the higher participants scored on the MEIM (or the higher the ethnic identity) the higher they also scored on Rosenberg's scale of self-esteem. In another sizeable study, Roberts, Phinney, Masse, Chen, Roberts and Romero (1999) examined the relationship between scores on MEIM and other indices of psychological well-being for 5,423 12 to 14-year-olds from diverse ethnic groups. In their study, subjects completed the MEIM, several measures of psychological well-being (such as coping ability, mastery, self-esteem and optimism) and a measure of ethnic identity salience. They found that across all ethnic groups ethnic identity was related positively to all measures of psychological well-being administered and negatively to measures of loneliness and depression.

Several other studies have found that higher scores on MEIM are statistically associated with higher measures of psychological well-being. For example, among African Americans, Latino Americans and White Americans, Phinney, Cantu and Kurtz (1997), found that higher ethnic identity was a strong, positive predictor of self-esteem (Dukes & Martinez, 1997; Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Phinney & Kohatsu, 1997). Phinney and

Alipuria (1990) also found that self-esteem was greater in ethnic minority individuals with higher scores on Ethnic Identity Achievement, a major component of the MEIM.

What do the findings of these studies tell us about the consequences of cultural knowledge for ethnic identity? First, it is evident that people who value their ethnic identity and report that they understand more about what it means to be an ethnic group member (in relation to language and culture) are likely to report having high self-esteem, while those who feel ashamed of their ethnic identity are relatively worse off in this respect. Why? On one hand, it seems that having ‘more’ cultural knowledge is, in itself, associated with an elevated sense of personal worth. On the other hand, enculturation alone should not be viewed as the key to psychological well-being for ethnic minorities. Another reason, Fitzgerald (1969, p.29) suggested, is that having relationships with others on the basis of shared culture provides a “sense of belonging to a sub cultural group that still offers psychological satisfactions that are not attainable in the larger society.” Emphasised in his explanation is that the sense of belonging and attachment the person derives from their connection with others of their own ethnic group provides them with a sense of acceptance that they would not receive from members of the dominant group.

This point suggests that interventions that impart cultural knowledge to minorities are well directed — not only because learning about one’s own culture promotes self-esteem, but because the processes involved in



cultural education may consolidate positive relationships with other ethnic group members — which further affirm the person's self worth and value.

### *The journey of self acceptance*

A final topic for discussion in this chapter relates to ethnic identity development. Thus far I have shown that negative stereotypes and racism impact upon minority identity but personal resources (such as positive relationships with others in one's ethnic group) substantially moderate their effect. In addressing this dialectical relationship between personal contexts and society, a large body of research around Black identity development has dominated empirical research on racial identity since the 1970s, and has focussed specifically on the processes employed by Black people as they learn to accept their own identity in a world which is dominated by White people.

Cross's model of Black Racial Identity Development (1971, 1978) has provided the conceptual basis for a substantial body of literature and research around ethnic identity since the 1970s and will be discussed here in some detail because of its significant influence on how minority identity has been researched empirically.

Cross defined racial identity as that aspect of the self-concept that relates to the person's identification with their racial group (traditionally defined as a biological group definable in relation to physical characteristics e.g. see Yetman, 1985). His model is discussed here in relation to ethnic

identity as Cross's work implies a similar process of identity development occurs for ethnic minority groups and people of colour as it is their minority status and social subordination that works to problematise identity.

Cross argued that while all people have to develop and consolidate a firm sense of self over time, the task of achieving an adaptive identity was complicated for ethnic minorities because they had to face negative attitudes and experiences that dominant group persons may never encounter. He outlined four stages of racial identity development that tracked the process by which racial minorities construct their identities. The first stage was the Pre-encounter, which referred to the attitudes and beliefs the individual held about being Black before he or she had any experiences which alerted them to their minority status. In this stage, the individual saw the world from a dominant group perspective and was oblivious to racism held against Black people by Whites. During this time, Cross theorised that the individual held positive attitudes towards the dominant group and negative towards their own. The second stage was the Encounter stage in which previously held anti-Black and pro-White attitudes were challenged by an event or encounter that caused the person to think about their minority status. Typical encounter experiences involved a confrontation in which the individual became aware of racism held against them and subsequently changed their previously held beliefs. This stage was characterised by feelings of anger, anxiety and depression.

In the third stage of racial identity development, Immersion/Emersion, the person learnt to value their own racial identity by finding ways to vilify Whites and idealise Black people. In essence, the person held positive attitudes toward their own group and negative attitudes towards the dominant or 'out-group'. Tension, emotionality, and defensiveness on the part of the individual were associated with this stage.

The fourth stage in Cross's model was the Internalisation stage in which African-Americans committed to being Black while accommodating the validity of being White. According to Cross (1971, 1978), during this final stage the person displays a calm demeanor, psychological openness and a decline in anti-White attitudes.

Cross's views have proven very influential, spurring several others to develop stage models that echo Cross's conception of racial identity as a result of a journey from one less enlightened/self-actualised state, through a period of exploration and experimentation, to arrive at an achieved or adaptive ethnic identity (Atkinson, Morton & Sue, 1993; Helms, 1993, 1995, 1996; Parham, 1989).

Developmental models assume that when racial minority individuals are 'in' the last stage of racial identity development (the Internalisation stage which is characterised by more self-acceptance) they are at a psychological advantage relative to those in earlier stages. For example, people in the Immersion/Emersion stage, who focus almost completely

upon idealising their Black identities, are assumed to feel resentful about the treatment of Black people by Whites and this, in itself, is psychologically draining (Helms & Parham, 1990).

The view that identity development stages are associated with different levels of psychological well-being has led several theorists to refer to internalisation attitudes as indicating a positive Black identity and Immersion/Emersion attitudes as a negative (or less adaptive) Black identity (Neville & Roderick, 2000).

To measure the relationship between ethnic identity stages upon psychological adjustment, Parham and Helms operationalised Cross's Black Radical Identity Development model in the form of the Racial Identity Attitude Scale (RIAS). This instrument has since become one of the most widely used measures of racial identity in published empirical psychological research of this nature.

The RIAS purports to measure African Americans' racial identity through assessing respondent's values, attitudes, and beliefs regarding their own racial group and White Americans as a group. The logic of the RIAS is that Black people in various stages of racial identity development will express different attitudes towards Black and White people and, therefore, differences between subjects who take the measure suggest different stages of racial identity development.

The RIAS, and adjusted versions, have been used extensively in research examining Black identity (Behrens, 1997; Fischer & Tokar, 1998; Neville & Roderick, 2000; Pyant & Yanico, 1991). Studies using the RAIS have found that particularly early stages of racial development in which individuals express anti-Black/pro-White attitudes (associated with the 'pre-encounter' stage of racial identity development) or anti-White/pro-Black attitudes (associated with the Immersion/Emersion stage of racial identity development) are associated with lower levels of psychological well-being (including self-esteem and self-efficacy) (Carter, 1991; Parham & Helms, 1985a, 1985b; Pyant & Yanico, 1991).

For example, Parham and Helms (1985a) found that African American individuals who display Pre-encounter (associated with a lack of racial identity awareness) or Immersion attitudes exhibit low self-esteem. Carter (1991) reported that Pre-encounter and Immersion attitudes were positively associated with clinical conditions such as anxiety and went on to suggest that people with a predominant Pre-encounter attitude may feel as if they exist on the borders of two worlds, not fully accepted by Whites and apprehensive about their associations with Blacks.

Wilson and Constantine (1999) investigated the relationship between Black identity attitudes, self-concept, and perceived family cohesion in Blacks. Using the RIAS, a global assessment of self-concept, and a measure of perceived family functioning they found Pre-encounter and

encounter ethnic identity attitudes were related to negative self-concepts and internalisation related to positive self-concepts.

There are several implications of these studies for the current thesis. First, many empirical studies using the RIAS show that the more positive attitudes that ethnic minorities report about their ethnic group, the higher they score on measures of psychological well-being. As such, this line of research does support the view that ethnic minorities who have accepted their own identity as a group member are at a psychological advantage relative to those who have not. However, what do these studies tell us about the negative consequences of minority status for ethnic identity? They suggest that developing a positive ethnic identity may be conceptualised as following stage related processes, whereby individuals must be exposed to certain ‘key’ experiences in order to learn to accept their ethnic identities completely. What experiences are important? Cross believed that people must first become conscious of their minority status and racism directed against their group, and once of aware of this, they must then find ways of deflecting those negative ideas and replacing them with more positive views.

Despite the considerable amount of literature and research based upon Cross’s theoretical paradigm, developmental models have been viewed as overly simplistic because they reduce a complex, life long process of identity development into stages of achievement. Moreover, since empirical research from this approach has employed quantitative

assessments (which do not record idiosyncratic expressions of identity or data regarding personal social contexts) little insight into the personal interpretations of group membership has been yielded from work in this area.

As the review in this chapter demonstrates, understanding the consequences of minority status for ethnic identity requires an understanding of the full range of experiences and relationships unique to each individual that have facilitated or threatened their ability to value their ethnicity. This points to the need to see ethnic identity as complicated, multifaceted and an ongoing process of development and suggests a better comprehension of the key experiential determinants of ethnic identity may be gained through the analysis of personal interpretations.

### ***Summary Chapter Two***

In this chapter attention was directed towards exploring the consequences of minority status for ethnic identity. At the beginning of the chapter I demonstrated that racism and stigma seems to push minorities to focus on their ethnic identities (perhaps in an effort to affirm their social worth in the face of social disdain). Overall, ethnicity is likely to be a very absorbing aspect of the self for minority group members and therefore, for the purposes of research, one must broach the topic with the appropriate level of respect and sensitivity.

I then showed that, although racism may complicate identity development for ethnic minorities, the extent to which each person is influenced by racism seems to depend upon their personal beliefs and experiences. This suggests, therefore, understanding the development of ethnic identity requires insight into the significant events and relationships that shape how individuals define, describe and evaluate themselves as group members.

Thirdly I demonstrated that ‘having’ more cultural knowledge is, in itself, associated with more positive ethnic identities and, in addition, a positive ethnic identity reflects positive relationships predicated upon that identity. Following this in working with ethnic identity as a topic of study it seems essential to explore the person’s personal contexts and relationships and how these promote or demote positive identities in relation to the face of ‘out-group’ (or dominant group) prejudice.

Finally, in my review of developmental approaches to racial identity I demonstrated that ethnic identity may require certain conditions and experiences to ‘become’ adaptive or positive for the person. As such, studying this aspect of human experience demands attention is given to the opportunities that each individual has had to develop their sense of ethnic awareness, knowledge, and acceptance.

What is the relevance of the review in this chapter for a study in Māori identity? Several issues seem pivotal to consider.



First, in order to understand Māori identity an appreciation of Māori history and the attitudes held towards Māori by Pākehā (and Māori people themselves) seem even more vital — since wider societal views impact upon the identities of minority group members in key ways (this is discussed in the following chapter).

Second, since Māori are a minority group traditionally subject to prejudice and negative stereotypes, being Māori may be a particularly absorbing aspect of identity for Māori people. As such, research ‘on’ Māori identity demands an appropriate level of respect and sensitivity. This gives validity to the argument that culturally appropriate research techniques must be used with Māori (as outlined in chapter four).

As noted at the beginning of this thesis, enculturation is currently hailed by Māori as a way of promoting well-being for Māori people. Research reviewed in this chapter verified that enculturation carries a dual benefit for minority group members. Why? Because cultural knowledge in its own right seems to enhance the individual’s feelings of self-worth. In addition, enculturation appears to be beneficial because the process promotes ethnic group bonding which also enhances a sense of social acceptance for ethnic group members (see Little Soldier, 1985 for a discussion). Because of this, an understanding of unique cultural experiences as well as personal relationships seem crucial for understanding Māori identity. My approach to dealing with this requirement is addressed in chapter four (research methodology).

Having established my position on identity and reviewed psychological research relevant to understanding Māori identity, the next step is to establish a context for the current study by describing major historical changes in Māori society with an emphasis on factors relevant to identity.

## CHAPTER THREE: SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### *Introduction*

It is not possible here to provide a comprehensive portrait of New Zealand history (see King, 2003). Rather, here I discuss traditional or pre European views of Māori identity followed by a sketch of the major historical events typically associated with Māori identity in literature around the topic.

### *Pre-colonial (pre European or ‘traditional’) Māori identity*

To gain an appreciation of how Māori may have traditionally conceptualised their own identities, a basic understanding of pre European, or ‘traditional’ Māori social and economic organisation is necessary. Pre European Māori society comprised small communities organised according to three main social groupings: whanau (family units), hapu (sub-tribes), and iwi (tribes). As Walker (1990) explained, whanau were a vital social unit within Māori society and usually included three generations of family members of common descent who lived together in defined home areas (kainga). Several or more whanau comprised hapu and hapu merged to form iwi. Iwi occupied distinct geographical areas throughout New Zealand. Social control in Māori society was upheld via the rule of Chiefs, tohunga (experts in various aspects of Māori spirituality) and Māori traditional lore (Walker, 1990). Harsh living conditions meant whanau were interdependent, as the collective efforts of many families were required to successfully plant, harvest, and gather food (Ramsden, 1994; Selby, 1999). Following this,

the survival of each iwi relied upon mutually beneficial relationships between whanau as they strengthened the vitality of each hapu and, therefore, contributed to iwi stability (Biggs, 1960; Liu & Tamara, 1998; Pere, 1982).

As a reflection of this social and economic system, Māori cultural values and social expectations cohered around fairly clearly mapped out obligations to whanau and hapu (Best, 1952; Smith, 1948). Māori were also proud of their tribal identities. Walker (1990) has suggested that this was a practical necessity as inter tribal warfare was common and each individual's commitment to their iwi would have provided more protection and greater chances of survival for whanau when required to defend themselves from invading groups (Pere, 1982).

As a result of this communal social and economic system Māori identity – or what it meant to be an individual occupying a position in a Māori whanau, hapu and iwi was predicated upon those three major reference points (Marsden, 1975). Foremost, Māori identified themselves in relation to their position in their whanau, hapu, and iwi structures (Barlow, 1991; Best, 1924; L. Smith, 1990; Moeke-Pickering, 1996; Willmott, 1989). In the present day when Māori introduce themselves to other Māori in group gatherings or culturally Māori contexts it is viewed as appropriate that the individual define their iwi and hapu name and location (as these larger groups are more likely to be known to Māori from different areas). This interpretation of the traditional basis of personal identity is demonstrated

in the following excerpt from an interview with Harata Ria Te Uira Parata (a prominent Māori kuia or female elder of Ngati Raukawa, Ngati Toa, and Te Atiawa descent) conducted by Judith Fyfe in 1990 (p.87).

I see myself not as an individual but as part of a group. That is the difference between our culture and Western culture. In Western culture there is the individual first – you go the other way in Māoritanga and I literally mean this. When somebody sees me they don't say 'Harata', they say 'Ngati Toa' or 'Ngati Raukawa' – the last thing they say is my name. And if I'm in a Māori situation to identify myself, I identify my canoe, my iwi, all of that. The last thing I do is say my own name.

Apart from hapu and iwi affiliation (whakapapa) Māori identity has also been viewed as derived from an association with ancestrally occupied (tribal) lands (Rangihau, 1975; Walker, 1975, 1989). Bennett (1979 cited in Moeke-Pickering, 1996) for example, explained that Māori identity 'emanates from the land' because for Māori, their tribal lands are the place where their self-awareness and a sense of meaning originate. Supporting this, Walker (1990) observed that tribal location and significant tribal markers such as mountains and rivers are an intrinsic part of identifying as Māori. As such, references to distinctive features of tribal lands feature prominently in Māori descriptions of identity (Broughton, 1993; Karetu, 1990, 1993; Mead, 1999; Rangihau, 1975).

Research has found that these understandings of what it means to be Māori were still widely held among many Māori 100 years after sustained contact with Pākehā (Beaglehole, 1946). For example, Fitzgerald's (1969) study of identity among 75 Māori University graduates demonstrated it was common for participants to report that being Māori related to communal values and group orientation. Participants also described whanaungatanga (family strength and unity), kinship ties (community spirit and cooperation), group identification, pride in tikanga Māori and Māori arts and crafts as central to their identities.

A more recent study demonstrates the continuance of Māori emphasis on whakapapa and communal economics in relation to identity. Liu and Tamara (1998) examined identity among the Tuhoe (a tribe located in the central North Island of New Zealand) by conducting in-depth interviews with 16 participants. The interview data was analysed for content relating to Māori and Tuhoe identity and several recurring themes were found. Participants shared the belief that identity derived from whanaungatanga (kinship, collective development and loyalty) as well as connection to Māori culture, language and tribal lands. In this study older participants fondly recalled the communal economic activities that characterised their own childhoods as well as the lives of their forebears. Accordingly, their descriptions of what it meant to be Māori reflected their childhood experiences, that is, they described Māori identity as related to communal activity for collective gain, reciprocity, and mutual support.

While there seems to be a resilience of pre European values and beliefs in relation to identity among modern Māori, the social and economic circumstances that maintained these values have changed considerably – particularly over the last 50 years (Walker, 1975, 1979, 1989, 1990). To illustrate how, the remainder of this chapter is devoted to reviewing three historical periods. Period one (1800s - 1960) which was characterised by mass arrival of Pākehā to New Zealand, transfer of Māori lands to Pākehā ownership and focussed efforts on the part of the white settler Government to assimilate Māori ‘into’ the Pākehā culture. Period two (1960 – 1990) which was a time of Māori cultural and political revitalisation and period three (1990’s to the current time) which may be characterised as a time of increasing Māori diversity in regards to personal interpretations of group membership (Borrell, 2005; Butcher, 2003; Diamond, 1999).

### ***1800-1960: Land loss, assimilation and Māori urbanisation***

Pākehā settlers and traders arrived in New Zealand in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and their numbers slowly increased in the decades which followed. The Oxford history of New Zealand (1992) notes that up until the early 19<sup>th</sup> century relationships between Māori and settlers tended to be amicable as both groups were eager to trade. However, the negative impact upon Māori of the introduction of muskets, disease and alcohol led to pressure for formal governance to be established by the mid 1830s. Walker (1990) observed that although Māori had attempted to establish their own form of national governance their efforts were usurped after the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in February 1840. There are two versions of this

Treaty which founded New Zealand as a Colony under British Governance. Most Māori chiefs signed the Māori version (500) and only 39 signed the English version. Because the English and Māori versions are not direct translations this has created difficulties in interpretation and the legal meaning of the Treaty remains a source of debate (Orange, 1992, 2004).

Many Māori argue that the Treaty of Waitangi guaranteed they would retain all of their lands and their political autonomy as a people (Awatere, 1984). However, this was to change as the Treaty ultimately empowered the settler (Pākehā) Government to establish a system of laws that both Māori and Pākehā were required to follow (Mead, 1985, 1999; Walker, 1990). To ensure continued Pākehā settlement, the Government established legislation (and a Native Land Court) devised to facilitate settler access to Māori land (Jackson, 1993). These efforts were successful and large scale transfer of Māori land to Pākehā ownership occurred (Walker, 1990). In 1877 The Treaty was declared a nullity by Judge Prendergast in the Bishop of Wellington v Wi Parata case and was virtually disregarded by the New Zealand government for over 100 years subsequently (Orange, 2004).

Māori frustration over land loss and a growing animosity towards Pākehā led to open warfare in the 1840s (Belich, 1986, 1996). Walker (1990) noted that although Pākehā did not directly conquer Māori they managed to successfully subdue them through a series of confrontations which



occurred over a period of 30 years. After the land wars Māori lost most of the land that remained in their possession through Government confiscation. This major loss of land combined with Māori deaths from disease and warfare saw the Māori population decline dramatically towards the end of the 1800s (Durie, 1994).

By the early 1900s Pākehā had become the majority group in New Zealand and held much of the lands previously occupied and utilised by Māori. Māori found themselves surrounded by a more numerous and economically powerful group who were in a position to exert considerable influence over their experience in most areas of social and economic life (Awatere, 1984). Māori increasingly sought employment as labourers for Pākehā landowners and business people (Walker, 1990). Broughton (1993) noted that this adjustment was a ‘traumatic shock’ for Māori because their economic prosperity depended upon being able to utilise their own land. Not only that, the increasing dependency of Māori upon Pākehā altered Māori social life profoundly because it meant that aspects of Māori survival rested upon their ability to ‘fit in’ with Pākehā people.

Concerned that these circumstances may lead to Māori ‘Europeanisation,’ Māori politician and leader, Sir Apirana Ngata established a programme of building carved Māori ‘meetings houses’ (symbolic of the traditional pre-colonial Māori community life) throughout New Zealand for each hapu and iwi in their tribal areas (see Sissons, 1993 for a discussion). Ngata was concerned that Māori people still needed their tribal identity and believed

that these buildings and surrounding land (marae) would protect Māori from assimilation because they served as a common meeting place for Māori cultural and social activities. Ngata's venture was very successful and, in the present day, marae throughout New Zealand remain places in which Māori consolidate relationships and strengthen their culture and language.

However, despite the capacity of marae for protecting some aspects of Māori social life, these places may now be seen as 'Māori cultural havens' (or distinctively Māori spaces) in a country which has, by and large, become a 'Pākehā' cultural environment. Over time historical developments have required Māori to adapt to broader societal changes and continually integrate with Pākehā. From the early years of colonisation this integration was directly encouraged by Pākehā missionaries as well as the colonial Government which adopted a focussed policy of 'modernising' Māori through institutions of the state (Matthews & Jenkins, 1998).

Matthews and Jenkins (1998) have described intensive efforts to 'Europeanise' (assimilate Māori 'into' Pakeha culture) through the Native Schools system. After 1900, legislation was introduced that remained in force up until 1960 that discouraged the use of the Māori language and the expression of Māori 'cultural values' in New Zealand schools (Edwards, 1990; Jenkins & Matthews, 1998; Simon, 1998; Smith 1992). Although each region differed, the ban was widely accepted by many Māori as they

believed that learning Pākehā culture would enable them to prosper among them. This was not the case, however, as up until 1960 education was directed towards Māori which was designed to prepare them, not to live equally with Pākehā, but for working class careers as domestic servants and manual labourers (Johnston & Pihama, 1994; Simon, 1998).

Up until the 1950s, despite considerable integration between Māori and Pākehā, they remained at a distance geographically as well as socially (King, 1977, 1983, 2003). Māori lived largely in rural areas while Pākehā lived in larger New Zealand cities. The maintenance of a distinct Māori culture was possible for Māori in rural environments because Māori were able to maintain many of their traditional lifestyle practices (communal gardening, sharing resources and food gathering from the sea as they had for generations) (Biggs, 1960). In rural areas Māori were closer to their marae and were able to participate in activities with other Māori which consolidated Māori relationships and reinforced their culture. Moreover, while Māori lived in their rural areas, they were closer to their elders and had more exposure to the Māori language, and traditional culture and values (Beaglehole & Ritchie, 1958; Metge 1976, 1990; Walker, 1990).

Māori social organisation changed dramatically after the 1950s as New Zealand's economy boomed and Māori moved to the cities to seek work (Walker, 1990). Urbanisation occurred rapidly and by the mid 1970s only one in four Māori remained in rural areas (Department of Statistics, 2004). This process altered Māori social life markedly (Metge, 1976). In an effort

to identify how newly urbanised Māori adapted culturally to city life Walker (1975) studied Māori who had moved to South Auckland between 1967 and 1970. His key objective was to explore whether urbanisation would accelerate the loss of Māori cultural practices and values or whether Māori would maintain their distinct cultural identity in urban environments. Walker found that Māori living in South Auckland were committed to expressing their Māori identity. However, intermarriage with Pākehā was beginning to weaken Māori ties with their own families and culture. He also noted that the distance of younger Māori from Māori elders meant that they were deprived of instruction in genealogical, historical, and cultural information. Furthermore, as city life demanded financial success and independence the maintenance of Māori culture became impractical and Māori began to change.

Apart from the challenge of adapting to a different social milieu it was common for Māori to experience explicit racism in the early years of urbanisation (e.g. see Edwards, 1992; Rangihau, 1975). Beaglehole and Beaglehole (1946) reported a range of negative stereotypes attached to Māori by Pākehā, which included the view that Māori were ‘slackers’, dirty, lazy and dishonest. Such attitudes seem to have been widely held by Pākehā and in a practical sense, made it difficult for Māori to obtain rental housing in certain areas and find steady employment (Walker, 1990). Exacerbating this, Māori typically lacked the qualifications to secure well paid work and were confined to semi-skilled labouring and service jobs (Simon, 1998). From the 1970s the availability of this type of work

declined and unemployment became an increasing feature among Māori (Kelsey, 1995). The economic and social gap between Pākehā and Māori widened and by the end of the 1970s Māori were firmly positioned at the lower end of the socio-economic scale (see Walker, 1990).

While educational material pertaining to New Zealand history became more common in New Zealand schools in the 1980s, a lack of socio-political education within the education system up until that time meant that, for many generations, Māori and Pākehā children were not educated concerning the historical events which had shaped New Zealand society (Booth & Hunn, 1962; Hohepa, 1978; Hunn, 1960). The prevailing stereotypical view of Māori and Pākehā history was that the two groups had 'joined together' to become 'One People' after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Hohepa, 1978). This 'myth' promoted the view that Māori poverty and unemployment was due to their general incompetence and inability to keep up with Pākehā (Mead, 1999).

The relevance of the 160 year period up until the 1970s for understanding contemporary Māori identity cannot be over emphasised. Māori sources of identification changed remarkably as they became disconnected from their extended family networks and traditional economic practices. One could only imagine that this would have created an underlying sense of dislocation for Māori who were faced with the challenge of adjusting to a different cultural context. In cities the ability of Māori to progress economically and socially was related to their ability to adjust to Pākehā

society. Pākehā culture dominated all national institutions (the political, educational, economic, and legal systems) (King, 2003). Not surprisingly, in an effort to be ‘successful’ many young urban Māori lost interest in their own culture and language and made a conscious effort to become ‘less’ Māori and more like Pākehā.

Once urbanisation had become a long term reality for Māori, associations between rural and urban Māori weakened further. Financial constraints meant that many Māori families virtually lost their connections with their own extended families. Evidence of the long term effect of this phenomena emerged from the 2001 New Zealand census data which asked those who specified they had Māori ancestry to identify their iwi. In 2001, some 604,100 (80%) stated an affiliation with one or more iwi. Of the remainder, 20% did not know to which iwi they were affiliated (New Zealand Department of Statistics, 2002).

Several writers have argued that these factors in combination were hugely detrimental to the Māori psyche. For example, in her politically influential book *Māori Sovereignty* (1984) Donna Awatere observed that colonisation and the concomitant processes of assimilation and urbanisation worked to demean the Māori people, their language and their culture and replaced Māori pride with defeatist attitudes. In her view, Māori started to believe they were inferior – and this in turn sowed the seed of self-fulfilling prophecies for Māori who began to act in ways which verified the stereotypes held about them (Awatere, 1996).

As Walker (1990) noted, by the late 1960s educated Māori grew increasingly agitated with Māori social, economic and cultural marginality. Influenced by a growing international interest in human rights Māori leaders began to promote a strong Māori political and cultural renaissance in the 1970s (Poata-Smith, 1997b). Māori activism centered on the Treaty of Waitangi and political activists focussed on claiming compensation for historical breaches of the rights guaranteed to them as ‘Treaty partners’ with the New Zealand Government.

### ***1970-1990: The Māori Renaissance***

Māori political efforts in the 1960s and 1970s included a diverse range of activities including land occupations and regular protests at Waitangi (see Chadwick, 1997; Hazlehurst, 1993; Poata-Smith, 1997a, 1997b, 2004 for discussions). Māori activism placed the New Zealand Government under increasing pressure to deal with Māori demands for restoration (see Sissons, 1993). Reflecting this, the Treaty of Waitangi was given greater recognition after 1975 with the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal (a forum where Māori could make claims for compensation for breaches of their Treaty rights). In the mid-1980s the Government extended the jurisdiction of the Tribunal to examine Māori grievances retrospective to 1840. This was a major coup for Māori as it enabled them to make claims to the Government for historical injustices against their ancestors (van-Meijl, 2003).

In terms of ideological change, from the 1960s Māori became increasingly

concerned with reversing the effects of Māori assimilation. Poata-Smith (1997a) has observed that Māori activists aimed to foster Māori pride and unity by espousing ‘Brown Power’ – a concept which represented a rejection of Pākehā culture and advocated Māori return to their own cultural roots. Key Māori political figure, Donna Awatere (1984), captured the essence of this argument when she proposed that Pākehā had tried to eradicate Māori through generations of ‘forced assimilation’ which denied Māori their ‘identity’ as a people. The argument that Māori cultural alienation underpinned Māori oppression promoted the view Māori could be ‘healed’ through immersion in their own culture or ‘Māoritanga’ (Awatere, 1984). Consistent with this argument Māori political leaders demanded that Māori rights to cultural equality be exercised by promotion of the Māori language and culture within Government institutions, the education system and throughout New Zealand society (Webster, 1998).

Alongside Māori political activism, a growing body of affirmative literature from Māori writers emerged from the 1970s which focussed on clearly defining, articulating, and expressing a distinctively Māori way of viewing the world (Grace, 1986; Ihimaera, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977). Although many Māori had long been alienated from their distinctive Māori culture, many became more focussed upon reclaiming their cultural identity. In testimony to this, Māori artists, weaver, carvers, and painters began to produce more and more traditional forms of Māori art (Mane-Wheoki, 1995). This trend was also reflected in academic circles with an increased body of scholarly critique of (what was increasingly referred to



as) Pākehā hegemony in systems of education, health, legal systems and the media (Walker, 1990a, 1996; Wall, 1995). In the political arena written material encouraged Māori to idealise their own culture and vilify Pākehā culture. For example, Donna Awatere (1984), contrasted negative aspects of Pākehā culture with attractive features of Māori culture by arguing that Pākehā were competitive, exploitative, and money 'hungry' and these cultural imperatives had suppressed harmonious, egalitarian Māori values (also see Greenland, 1991; Hanson, 1989).

In response to Māori demands the New Zealand Government tried various ways of 'revitalising' and 'restoring' Māori culture from the 1970s. Sissons (1993) has documented a range of specific programmes implemented by the New Zealand Government in the 1970s and 1980s designed to promote Māori access to learning Māori language through the education system. A particularly important Māori driven and Government funded initiative designed to increase the number of Māori language speakers was the Kohanga Reo movement launched in 1982 which emphasised teaching Māori under five years old to speak te reo Māori (Tawhiwhi, Renwick & Sutton, 1988). Kohanga reo centres (which have now been now been established throughout New Zealand) were established not only to focus on teaching children to speak Māori but to encourage Māori parents to embrace Māori customs in the home and learn to speak Māori themselves (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust, 1995). For the benefit of older Māori children, the development of 'kura kaupapa

Māori' or primary and intermediate schools which operated according to Māori pedagogical practices (Bishop & Glynn, 1999) and extra curricular activities in schools such as Kapa Haka groups, Māori speech contests and Māori cultural festivals grew in popularity during the 1980s and continue to attract widespread involvement.

Apart from shifts in Government educational and social policy since the 1980s Māori tribal groups seeking compensation have achieved many successes in the legal arena (see van Meijl, 1995; Lashley, 1996, 2000). Although the Treaty of Waitangi itself has not been ratified by an Act of Parliament a number of Acts now refer explicitly to the Treaty and officials performing public duties are legally obliged to act consistently with its inherent principles (Orange, 2004).

The Māori political resurgence and cultural revival has had a continued momentum. Since the late 1980s, in response to Māori demands for autonomy in health and social service delivery to Māori people, ('by Māori for Māori services'), many Government funded initiatives meant to reduce Māori inequalities in relation to health (Ministry of Health, 2004) criminal offending (Cram, Pihama, Karehana, & McCreanor, 1999) and education (Hohepa & Jenkins, 2004) have aimed to enhance outcomes for Māori by recognising the value of Māori cultural distinctiveness. In addition, pan-tribal (urban) Māori organisations have also provided a forum for Māori seeking connection to their culture. These organisations have had a major impact upon city Māori and are testimony to the Māori

drive to adapt and flourish in urban environments which have been historically hostile to Māori distinctiveness (Hazlehurst, 1993).

Another recent achievement for Māori, which has the potential to change the way that many young Māori view their identity, is a Māori controlled television station which started broadcasting in 2004 with its key mission to revitalise Māori language and culture. The service has been hailed by Māori as a major accomplishment as it has the capacity to reach many Māori who would otherwise have little opportunity to be exposed to positive Māori role models in the media (Horomia, 2004).

Overall, the last 30 years have seen massive changes in the social landscape of New Zealand and how Māori people, their history and culture are treated by Government representatives (and arguably by New Zealand society as a whole) (Awatere, 1996). Not only have Māori reaffirmed the value of Māori culture and identity among their own people, they have gained substantial recognition of their political rights to equality with Pākehā in New Zealand society (Metge, 1990, 1995).

What have these changes meant for Māori identity? It seems fair to suggest that many developments have been positive. The increased social value attached to being Māori in some aspects of social life has meant that Māori are showing more pride in their identities. Moreover, many Māori have been exposed to Māori generated socio-political concepts over the last 30 years. This type of knowledge may enhance Māori identity by helping Māori to attribute current Māori social problems to socio-

historical injustices rather than Māori inadequacies (Liu, Wilson, McClure & Higgins, 1999). In addition, for urban Māori (disconnected from their tribal links) pan-tribal urban Māori associations have created new options for meaningful social connection with other Māori people. Urban organisations such as these may promote Māori identity by helping Māori establish a sense of belonging by association which may nurture identity for those who do not know their hapu or iwi (Hazlehurst, 1993).

As Metge (1990, 1995) has observed, the changes for Māori identity in recent decades have been significant. While being Māori was seen as socially backward by previous generations, the current trend is for Māori to embrace their unique Māori identity by acknowledging Māori whakapapa and learning about Māori history, culture and language.

Despite adaptations in Māori society and significant cultural revitalisation, Māori have not made similar advancements in other important areas of economic and social life including education, employment, and health (Te Puni Kokiri, 2000). Māori remain an economic underclass and continue to feature prominently in most negative social statistics (Kelsey 1995; Chapple, 2000). Data from the 2001 New Zealand census shows that Māori households receive less than 80 percent of the average New Zealand family income and are more likely than non Māori to be unemployed and live in poorer urban and rural areas (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Māori tend to be concentrated in primary and semi-skilled occupations (Statistics New Zealand, 1997; 1998). Since the 1980s the

availability of this type of work has declined meaning Māori are more vulnerable to unemployment (Statistics New Zealand, 2002). Higher rates of crime and incarceration are also disproportionately common among Māori (Cram, Pihama, Karehana, & McCreanor, 1999). Elevated levels of abuse of children in Māori families and suicide among Māori youth have also attracted substantial media and Government attention in recent years (Te Puni Kokiri, 2000).

Also, it seems that the flow on effects of the cultural renaissance have not managed to 'reach' many Māori. Durie (2003) estimated that less than half of Māori have an adequate knowledge of their own language and culture. While the number of Māori speakers has increased in recent years, the vast majority of Māori do not speak Māori (Karetu, 1990). Results from the 1995 National Māori Language Survey which interviewed 2,441 Māori aged 16 years and over indicated the use of the Māori language is still under threat of being restricted to Māori ritual and ceremony. The survey found that 59% of Māori adults can speak Māori but only 8% are highly fluent speakers. Fluency was found to be lowest among young adults and Māori language use was commonly localised to use in schools, marae and kohanga reo (Te Puni Kokiri, 1998).

How has Māori identity been influenced by recent developments? Although Māori now have access to a variety of mechanisms through the education system and the media that promote the learning of Māori culture, not all Māori have access to these resources. In addition, because

Māori remain an economic underclass, many Māori may remain subject to negative personal experiences which negate the positive images of Māori presented to them about Māori culture through the education system. This may particularly be the case for young Māori who have exposure to few positive Māori role models in their own families of origin (see Hirini, 1997; 1998).

In addition, since the national media frequently publicises negative statistics about Māori people (in relation to crime, health, unemployment and education) it is virtually impossible for New Zealanders to avoid exposure to the idea that Māori are still 'behind' Pākehā in most areas of public life (Walker, 1996, 2002). Being acutely aware that one's ethnic group is socially and economically failing is not likely to auger well for identity at a personal level.

What emerges, therefore, is a picture of contemporary Māori identity as being influenced by conflicting ideas and images around what it means to be Māori. As there is currently little research which examines personal interpretations of identity, or how Māori may construct positive identities in the face of conflicting concepts around Māori people, at this time it is difficult to specify how Māori identity has been shaped by contemporary changes in New Zealand society.

### *Pākehā views of Māori*

Because Pākehā are the dominant group in New Zealand and there is a very high degree of interaction between Māori and Pākehā the importance of Pākehā views of Māori are vital for any analysis of Māori identity.

Understanding the effect of Pākehā views on Māori identity is complex. On a personal level Māori and Pākehā interact daily in relative harmony. However, because of the history of inter-group conflict, tension remains between Pākehā and Māori in New Zealand (King, 1988, 1999; Macpherson, 1991). In testimony to this, several studies indicate that Māori still face considerable intolerance and racism from their Pākehā counterparts (Selby, 1995; King, 1977, 1983; Pearson, 1990; Johnston & Pihama, 1994).

Several studies indicate that many Pākehā are intolerant of Māori claims to restoration for past grievances and are reluctant to see money spent on Māori progress and development (Taylor & Wetherell, 1995). In 1988 and 1989 the Heylen Research Centre (cited in Lee, 1997) explored Pākehā attitudes to Māori. When asked if Māori should receive compensation for their lost land and resources 22% of the general public (mainly Pākehā) said 'yes' but more than twice as many, 48%, said 'no'. Nairn and McCreanor's (1991) study revealed some of the attitudes held by Pākehā which underpin this reluctance to see Māori compensated. They examined 220 written contributions from individual Pākehā to the Human Rights Commission in 1979 following an incident at Auckland University of

Pākehā denigrating the Māori traditional Haka. Findings suggested that many Pākehā hold a dim view of Māori and may divide Māori into two groups – ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Māori. ‘Good Māori’ were described by Pākehā as ‘fitting in’ and bad Māori as ‘radicals’, resisting integration and ‘stirring up trouble’. Many Pākehā also argued that because there are so few ‘real’ Māori left Māori claims to special privileges (such as Government funded health services specifically for Māori) are unfair, racist and akin to apartheid (Nairn & McCreanor, 1990, 1991, 1997).

What does Pākehā sentiment about Māori mean for how Māori individuals see themselves? One might suggest that on a personal level, Māori interactions with Pākehā may at times be tense, particularly when their group memberships are highlighted and issues around Māori and Pākehā rights and responsibilities have been pushed to the fore. Moreover, racism is still a reality in New Zealand meaning that those Māori who are not equipped to cope with racist or demeaning encounters with Pākehā are likely to be negatively affected (see Edwards, 1990, 1992).

***Current debates: How should Māori identity be defined?***

Māori do not only face intolerance from Pākehā, but in-group discrimination seems to be a genuine concern among contemporary Māori (see Borrell, 2005). In-group discrimination for Māori may relate to the Waitangi Tribunal claims process which requires that Māori need to be associated with a hapu or iwi to file a claim for restoration for Treaty breaches. Rata (1996) has suggested that this has led to the development



of a kind of class system within Māoridom in which tribal organisations (and Māori associated with their tribal groups) are the first in line to enjoy financial benefits meant to promote the social and economic progress of all Māori (also see Rata, 2004). Given that many people who define themselves as Māori do not know their hapu and iwi, these circumstances have been seen as inherently unjust leading several commentators to argue that it is time to reassess the criteria by which Māori are identified (Butcher, 2003).

### *Summary Chapter Three*

This chapter has provided a backdrop to the current study and serves to place the women interviewed for this research in their historical ‘time and place’. Massive demographic changes, shifts and transformations in prevailing ideologies around Māori as well as biological and social integration with non-Māori have produced a complex social group. The last twenty years, in particular, have seen a remarkable shift in widely held public opinion about Māori people and culture. Māori identity has become a ‘hot topic’ politically, and, as noted earlier, Māori identity has assumed increasing importance in New Zealand in recent years, not only in relation to Māori social and cultural development, but it is also seen as a key determinant for Māori health and well-being. At the same time, the effects of historical changes on Māori identity are not well understood and there is little data available on how Māori interpret their own identities from their own subjective viewpoints.

The aim of this thesis is to add to current understandings in relation to how Māori people interpret their own identities. Using Korgen and Schulz's studies (reviewed earlier) as a conceptual base I explore the effects of socio-historical changes on Māori identity by comparing the life-stories and identities from women of different age cohorts.

## CHAPTER FOUR: METHOD

### *Introduction*

Research for this thesis involved the collection of the life-stories of 35 Māori women. Eighteen of these were collected in individual interviews and 17 in a hui (meeting). This chapter discusses the process of data collection in some detail. I begin with an outline of the sampling procedures used and the characteristics of the sample. I then provide a rationalisation for the use of semi-structured life-story interviews, and describe how the group and individual interviews were conducted. Finally, I describe the key features of the raw data.

### *Sampling*

#### *Criteria.*

The only criteria for participation in this research was that women were of Māori descent, identified as Māori and were interested in talking about their Māori identity. I chose to focus on women for several reasons. As a woman myself, I was particularly interested in the experience of women. More importantly, however, I felt more qualified to interview women. Anastas (1999) observed that asking someone to provide their life-story is a relatively intrusive form of data collection. The interviews are also time consuming and often touch upon issues that are difficult or uncomfortable to discuss with a stranger. As such, the establishment of rapport between the interviewee and researcher is an essential aspect of the method. With

this in mind, I believed that it was more appropriate to work with women as they may be more likely to feel an affinity with me and feel comfortable speaking freely about their personal issues.

*Locating participants.*

The participants were located by various means. Eighteen participants were recruited for individual interviews. Within this group seven of the participants were known to me personally. To elicit their involvement, I simply asked women I knew if they would be prepared to speak about their Māori identity as part of my research and if they agreed we set an interview time. Another seven participants were students at Auckland University whom I did not personally know prior to the study. To locate these participants I placed notices around the University advertising my research. Interested students contacted me by telephone, we talked about the research, and if they agreed to participate we set an interview time. The remaining women interviewed individually were associated with an Auckland based Māori Urban Health and Social Services organisation that provided support for the study (the 'Trust'). Once I had been given permission by the Chief Executive Officer of this organisation to approach staff, employees of the organisation were asked if they would be prepared to participate, or if they knew women who would be interested in speaking about their Māori identity as part of my research. Using this approach, four participants were identified and agreed to an interview.

In order to explore changes in identity over different age cohorts, the involvement of older Māori women was necessary. While I had managed to locate a varied sample of women less than 60 years of age for individual interviews with relative ease, I found it very difficult to locate kuia (older Māori women) to participate. Elderly Māori are a very small percentage of the Māori population (according to the 2001 New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings just fewer than five in 30 people of Māori ethnicity are aged 65 and older). Also, the study was based in the Auckland area, a large urban city where elderly Māori are geographically widely dispersed, and therefore, difficult to identify and contact personally.

After discussing these issues with staff of the organisation which supported my study, I was given permission to attend the organisation's monthly rōpu kaumatua hui (community elders meeting) and speak with the attendees (all of whom were aged over 60 years old). Because the meeting was my only opportunity to access a sizeable sample of older women, on attending this meeting, I asked all of the women present if they would be willing to participate in the study. I explained that their involvement would require them to talk about their Māori identity by recounting their life-stories. Women discussed this and collectively made the decision to devote their meeting time to talking about their Māori identity as part of the research. Seventeen women subsequently participated in this process by recounting their life-stories to me and the others who were present.

### *Number of participants.*

I based the number of interviewees in total primarily on the point of saturation, a term coined by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to refer to the phenomenon by which over a number of interviews each new case confirms what had already been found. Once 35 women had participated, I felt I had enough information to demonstrate differences between age cohorts in identity content and that each woman was reinforcing what others had already reported.

### *Characteristics of the group*

#### *Ages of participants.*

In the oldest cohort (cohort one) there were 19 participants born prior to 1950 and aged between 60 and 75 at the time of interviewing. In the middle cohort (cohort two) there were eight women born between 1951 and 1969 and aged between 35 and 60 at the time of interviewing. In the youngest cohort (cohort three) there were eight women born during and after 1970 who were aged between 18 and 35. A breakdown of characteristics by age cohort is provided in the following chapter.

#### *Ethnic group affiliations.*

All women had at least one Māori parent and identified themselves as Māori. Of the 18 women who participated in individual interviews, eight women had two Māori parents, seven women had one Pākehā parent and one Māori parent, two women had one Tongan parent and one Māori parent, and one participant had one Māori parent and one Chinese parent.

Data on ethnic identity of participants' parents was not collected from each individual member in the focus group, however, all women who participated said they were Māori and, in testimony to this, spoke at length about their Māori identity. Seven Kuia recognised 'mixed' ethnic backgrounds apart from Māori. Scottish and Irish ancestries were specific affiliations mentioned.

### *Hapu and iwi affiliations.*

Twenty women made explicit reference to iwi they affiliated with in their life-stories. Women stated the following iwi affiliations (four women reported affiliation with more than one iwi). Ngapuhi (4), Te Aupouri/Whakatohea (4), Te Rarawa (3), Ngāti Whatua (1), Tainui (2), Te Arawa (1), Tuhoe (1), Ngāti Porou (6), Ngāti Kahungunu (1), Te Ati Awa (1) and Ngai Tahu (1).

### *Occupations.*

Younger women were working in a variety of occupations at the time of being interviewed. Three women worked at the Auckland Based Māori Urban Health and Social Services organisation that provided referrals to the study. One woman was a tertiary teacher, two were self employed, two women were health and social workers working with Māori in Auckland, one woman was a researcher, one was a Clinical Psychologist and one woman held an administrative position in local Government. The remaining participants were either students, retired, between jobs, or occupied on a part time basis in voluntary work.

### ***Education.***

Fifteen participants (all in the individual interviews) had at least some formal tertiary education (eight of these women were University students at the time of participating in the study). The remaining three participants in the individual interviews had been schooled to secondary level. Data regarding education was not gathered from kuia; however, none mentioned tertiary education as part of their life-stories. Because it is so uncommon for Māori women in this age group to have had any tertiary education one would expect them to mention it if they had.

### ***Method***

#### ***Methodology.***

My basic methodological foundation was grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a response to the conventional social science paradigm which collects data in order to verify pre formulated theory. Rather than concerning themselves with verifying existing theory these authors were concerned with the discovery of theory from systematically gathered data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In this sense, the authors sought to develop theory closely based on ('grounded in') the actual lived experiences participants described. In this approach, a theory is generated by exploring the data carefully, categorising all available data and synthesising many categories into a few salient constructs. In this way, research is meant to yield information to create new theories by using ideas that have emerged from the data. The theory derived from the data is then supported by the words and concepts provided by research



participants themselves. Theory may then be illustrated using “characteristic examples” of these interpretations (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 5) often in the form of excerpts from narrative interviews. Because grounded theory is recognised as a credible social science methodology (Anastas, 1999) and it is congruent with the use of life-story interviews it was seen as an appropriate basis for the current study.

### ***Method for collecting life-stories.***

Life-story collection techniques have been outlined by several theorists (Bertaux & Kohli, 1984; Bertaux & Thompson, 1997; Garfinkel, 1967; Josselson & Lieblich, 1993; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rosenthal, 1993). Schutze (1981, 1983, 1987 cited in Reimann & Schutze, 1991) first proposed the use of life-story interviews. He argued that the most appropriate way to gather personal information is simply to ask research participants what they think about certain aspects of themselves using the story of their lives by which to structure a response (Bujold, 1990; Spradley, 1979; Josselson & Lieblich, 1993).

Shutze originally advocated for a non directive interview approach whereby interviewees were asked a very general first question (usually about first recollections from childhood) and were then encouraged to tell their life-story freely. The task of the interviewer was simply to facilitate the flow of the narration without interrupting to ask questions (unless a problem with comprehension occurred). Bertaux and Kohli (1984) have noted the central benefit of allowing participants to express their stories

without interruption is that it yields the most natural data and minimises the risk of imposing the researcher's preconceptions on the topic reported.

Problematically however, noted Anastas (1999), allowing participants to tell their life-stories freely, without guidance from the researcher, runs the risk of generating too much irrelevant information or gaining minimal information on the important details required to fully comprehend the factors that shaped the individual's life. Further, in a sample of several interviewees, there is likely to be inconsistency between individuals in terms of the type of information they provide unless some direction is provided for them. For example, while one may speak at length of familial role models, the other may bypass this altogether and speak only about their political views. In the absence of any efforts to standardise data collected, suggested Anastas, variation in the data will increase and responses will lose their comparability.

An alternative is the 'directed life-story interview.' In this approach, interviewees are still asked for a detailed narrative of their own life (Potter, 1996). Providing some guidance to interviewees, in the form of questions posed at the appropriate time, ensures participants remain focussed on the topic under study and is seen as one way of eliciting comparable information from different participants. In his (1994) book, *The Stories We Live By*, McAdams outlined a highly structured method of conducting life-story interviews, as a way of analysing human identity,

which have been subsequently taken up by several researchers (Dreyfuss, 1990).

Drawing from the views of Potter, McAdams and Shutze, I opted to gather life-stories using open-ended story telling, augmented by specific questions (Rosenthal, 1993). This style Patton (1990 p. 197) referred to as the 'the standardised open-ended interview'. This allowed the discovery of unexpected material in personal accounts while ensuring cases were consistent and therefore amenable to comparison (Anastas, 1999). In addition, this approach enabled me to ask specific questions about the significant experiences and key relationships that shaped women's Māori identities. This was seen as important as these factors were highlighted in my literature review as significant to understanding ethnic identity. Another benefit of the semi-structured format was that it allowed me to compare answers to the questions asked of each interviewee and follow up on topics of interest initiated by the interviewees themselves. This enabled me to fine tune my focus on emerging issues of importance when needed and achieve a greater depth of understanding of the process of identity development among the women interviewed.

### ***Method for individual interviews.***

Interviews were divided into four sections. 1. Introduction, 2. Collection of demographic information, 3. Life-story recollection and 4. Conclusion.

### ***Introduction.***

All participants were given information sheets and asked to complete and sign consent forms (Appendix 1, A & B). All written information pertaining to the study (consent forms and information sheets) were also translated into Māori and made available to participants who requested them. Before beginning I asked permission to record their interviews and take notes.

### ***Collection of demographic information.***

The interviews began with a preamble (explanation of the research from me). I then asked participants to tell me, in an informal way, about themselves including their age, marital status, if they had children (and what ages they were) and what work/training they were doing at the time. When interviewees appeared relaxed life-story recollection began.

*Life-story recollection.*

I explained the following to each participant: “I am interested in exploring Māori identity. I would like to know what you think about that and how you feel about yourself as a Māori. To do this, I would like you to tell me about your life.”

I then asked them to tell me the story of their lives from year to year until the present time. I asked women to divide their lives into sections by suggesting they begin by recalling and then describing some of their earliest childhood memories, then school experiences, then what happened when they left school, began working, met partners and then perhaps if they had children/grandchildren (if those experiences were applicable). I asked women to remain mindful that I was interested in key events, experiences, relationships, and concepts that contributed to how they felt about being Māori, their experiences of Māori culture, and how they had come to interpret and feel about that aspect of themselves. To encourage this, I suggested women should recount factors which shaped their Māori identity rather than speaking about their lives in general.

If women asked for clarification I suggested that it might be easier for them to talk mainly about the significant experiences and people who came to mind when they thought about what it means to be Māori.

Interviewees responded by telling their life-stories. During the course of the interviews I encouraged them to provide as much detail as possible on

issues pertinent to the study, for example, I would ask, “What happened then?”, “Can you tell me more about that?” or “Can you recall how you felt at the time?”

Each participant was asked questions regarding five subject areas. These were: 1. Formative conditions and role models (social relationships and role models women believed influenced their Māori identity), 2. Identification as Māori (how women defined themselves and how important their Māori identity was to them), 3. Perceptions of social role expectations (how women viewed the role expectations of Māori), 4. Details of significant events (salient events women believed shaped their Māori identity), 5. Māori culture (women’s understanding of and competence in Māori culture, te reo Māori, and tikanga Māori) (see Appendix B)

Rather than asking each woman the same questions in the same order, questioning was contingent upon story content and the ‘flow’ of the interview. This meant that some women were asked the majority of questions directly, while other participants made many questions irrelevant by addressing them without being asked. I ensured that questions were timed appropriately by asking women questions that were consistent with topics they were discussing. For example, if women were speaking of a time when they heard Māori spoken and felt an affinity with the speaker, I would then ask, “do you speak any Māori yourself?” Making questions contingent upon responses allowed narratives to be fluid

and dynamic, while allowing me to collect similar types of information from each participant. In order to ensure that all women were asked the same questions I kept an interview schedule in front of me and crossed out questions as they were addressed.

### ***Conclusion of individual interviews.***

Once women were satisfied that they had recounted their own stories adequately and all the issues on the interview schedule had been addressed, interviews drew to a close. Interviews were between one hour and two and a half hours in length. Seventeen individual interviews were completed in one sitting; however, one participant had her interview conducted over two meetings. At the end of the interviews, I asked participants to clarify any material which was unclear and they were given an opportunity to reflect upon their interview and ask me any questions.

### ***Method for focus group (hui)***

#### ***Introduction.***

The collection of life-stories in a group situation is a less frequently discussed data collection method in the social science literature; however, collecting individual views in group settings (or focus groups) is a popular research technique in social psychological circles (Morgan, 1988). The focus group method was developed in the 1940s (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1956). In the focus group, a number of people who share specific characteristics of interest to the researcher are assembled and questions are posed to the group to elicit their reactions (see Anastas 1999 for a detailed

description). Each individual then takes turns at expressing their ideas. The task of the researcher, essentially, is to keep participants 'on track' by prompting them to discuss material pertinent to the research. Anastas (1999) notes that focus groups have proven to be very effective devices for eliciting and elucidating differing feelings and opinions around particular topics. In addition, the technique is practical because it can be done quickly and easily.

The process of meeting to collect information in a group forum (whereby the researcher poses questions to the group to elicit their reactions) may be likened to a hui. This term simply refers to a gathering or assembly of people who come together for a particular purpose and is a customary method of information dissemination and discussion of issues important to Māori community (Barlow, 1991; Bishop, 1996). In terms of the use of hui for research purposes hui are similar to focus groups. However, a key difference is that, in a hui, the researcher is less likely to attempt to direct the flow of conversation and the participants are encouraged to direct the discussion towards issues they feel are important.

The protocol of the hui used in the current study was determined by two factors. One, it was incumbent upon me to follow local protocol and allow the women themselves to direct the process of the hui. What this meant was that I needed to introduce myself to the group, openly discuss my reasons for coming to speak with them, and then allow them to address the research questions in their own time and manner. Second, I wished to



collect similar data (in terms of content) from each woman in the meeting that had been collected from women in individual interviews. As such, I engaged in similar steps taken in the individual interviews, but remained cautious to read each participant carefully to ensure that I did not break protocol inappropriately or encroach upon material which was too sensitive to discuss in a group situation.

### ***Method.***

The focus group/hui was attended by my self, the participants, and a research assistant, a fellow PhD student. Her role was to take notes and operate the recording equipment. In addition, she contributed to the discussions by asking women to clarify what they had said when there were any ambiguities or inconsistencies in their responses that I did not manage to detect myself.

Following a similar protocol employed in individual interviews, focus group data collection was divided into three sections. 1. Introduction, 2. Life-story recollection and 3. Conclusion.

### ***Introduction.***

Before beginning, I spent time talking with kuia about the study. I introduced myself and spoke about my own background and tribal affiliations. Permission was asked for the hui to be recorded and for notes to be taken.

***Life-story recollection.***

I then asked women to talk about their Māori identity by telling me the story of lives, from year to year until the present time. I asked them to focus particularly upon roles models, events, and experiences which shaped the way they felt about themselves as Māori. I also asked them to specify how important their Māori identity was to them.

Rather than asking the women specific questions as laid out in the schedule used for the individual interviews, women were asked at the beginning of the hui to discuss several issues in recounting their life-stories. Specifically these were: 1. Formative conditions and role models (social relationships and role models women believed influenced their Māori identity): 2. Identification as Māori (how women defined themselves and how important their Māori identity was to them): 3. Perceptions of social role expectations (how women viewed the role expectations of Māori): 4. Details of significant events (salient events women believed shaped their Māori identity): 5. Māori culture (women's understanding of and competence in Māori culture, te reo Māori, and tikanga Māori).

In response to this request, woman then took turns at standing and recalling their life-stories. Rather than having set time to speak, each women varied their time of contribution, and speaking circulated with individuals addressing others, making comments and supporting each other when they became emotional. When appropriate, I encouraged

speakers to provide as much detail as possible on issues pertinent to the study. Once a topic was exhausted, and no new information was being generated, we moved on to the next topic.

A key strength of both hui and focus groups is that participants are able to share experiences and exchange opinions as part of the research process. While the open forum nature of this data collection method limited my interaction with each participant personally, observing the interactions among participants and the reactions among different women to each others' stories extended the richness of the research. The group dynamic that was created, in which members verified commonalities and supported each others' ideas and recollections demonstrated that women in this cohort had similar experiences and thus recognised their own lives in the accounts provided by others. This approach was seen as desirable methodology, consistent with Māori preference for collaborative information sharing (Bevan-Brown, 1998).

#### ***Conclusion of focus group/hui.***

Once women felt that they had no more information that they wished to share the hui drew to a close. The hui took two hours to complete.

#### ***Description of the data***

Once all the life-story interviews had been completed, the tapes were given to an assistant who transcribed them verbatim. Transcripts from individual interviews varied from 8 to 25 pages in length (single space).

To check them for accuracy I compared the original tapes with the transcripts and edited them when necessary. I had been provided with transcript data on computer disks, so when I found errors I corrected these on the original version, printed off new hard copies, and kept these aside for analysis.

I transcribed the focus group/hui data myself. Because women who participated in the focus group often spoke more than once (and at different times during the focus group) it was necessary to reread this transcript several times (while listening to the audio tape) to identify each women's contribution and collate their accounts into individual life-stories. Theirs were much shorter than those I had collated from women in the individual interviews (two to six paragraphs in length — single space). The fellow PhD student who attended the focus group checked the transcript for accuracy. Once amendments were discussed and made, a new hard copy was created and kept for analysis.

Focus group transcripts combined with transcripts from individual interviews yielded 35 distinctive life-stories varying considerably in content, length, and detail. For those who requested, or when there was some ambiguity in the transcript, a copy of the transcript was sent to the participant for her feedback on its accuracy. Twelve participants were provided with transcripts. No participants returned amended transcripts although one participant telephoned me and pointed out an error in the iwi affiliation she had reported.

## ***Reliability and Validity***

### ***Validity of life stories as a source of data.***

I viewed the use of life-story interviews as valid because they enabled the collection of rich, in-depth, personal interpretations of identity not easily accessed using quantitative techniques. Moreover, the life-story approach was viewed as appropriate to employ with Māori for several reasons. One, as noted by Bishop (1996), there was a strong cultural preference in traditional Māori society for the use of story telling to pass on knowledge. In addition, because the life-story approach works from the premise that identity should be explored from the subject's perspective, the technique is seen by advocates as an empowering social science methodology – insofar that the approach gives people who would not typically have their ideas expressed in academic literature the chance to have their own words written and acknowledged (Oplatka, 2001). Bishop (1996, p.24) also recognised the appropriateness of using narrative interviews with Māori when he observed that a life-story interview “addresses Māori concerns in a holistic, culturally appropriate manner, because storytelling allows the participant to select, recollect, and reflect upon their stories within their own cultural context and language rather than the cultural context and language chosen by the researcher”.

While, over the last 30 years the social sciences have seen an upsurge in research involving the collection of life-stories as a way of examining both how individuals make meaning of their own personal histories (McAdams, 2001) and as a way of exploring the relationship between the individual

and the wider socio-cultural circumstances that shape them (Bertaux & Kohli, 1984; Bertaux & Thompson, 1997; Linde, 1993; Mishler, 1986), the validity of life-stories as factual data sources have been challenged by several authors. Baumeister (1991), for example, argued that because few people can tell a life-story that encompasses every single act or experience, they are a product of selective memory, and as such, we must be sceptical of the authenticity of people's accounts of their own past. Similarly, Burr (1995) commented upon the fallibility of recollections of personal past observing that, as they are constructed from memory, they share memory's incomplete nature.

In relation to this concept, McAdams recognised that an individual's memories may be distorted in order to maintain consistency with the individual's current views. This is known as 'retrospective bias' (Baumeister, 1991; Marcus, 1986). Given the potentially selective, distorted nature of our recollections of our own past, one might ask whether recollected life-stories should be dismissed as too subjective to be included in a 'scientific' study. However, in his defence of the use of the life-story method, McAdams (2001) observed that life-stories should not be seen as lacking authenticity. He argued that life-stories must rely upon actual events to some extent because they would be very difficult to imagine 'out of thin air'. In his view, life-stories should be seen as a product of real personal experiences and what the individual chooses to remember and understand and adopt. As such, life-stories seem to be

based upon the facts of a person's life – although not completely consistent with them.

To argue for the validity of life-stories as data sources I emphasise that the aim of this study was to explore women's interpretations of their own identities and not to collect factually precise historical data (Kestenberg, 1994; Kenyon & Randall, 1997; Bluck & Levine, 1998; Robinson & Taylor 1998). As such, it was not necessary to try and verify the precise accuracy of each woman's account. Aside from this justification, the authenticity of each individual life-story is also augmented by the fact that many of the women in the same age cohort but from diverse familial backgrounds recalled similar factors shaped their identities. The fact that many women reported the same type of personal relationships, significant experiences and key events shaped their lives, suggests that women's accounts describe the effects of genuine social phenomena which touched all of them in different ways.

***Validity of interview method.***

Two issues relating to validity of my interview technique require address. First, I wish to point out that, in some ways, it is easier to promote validity using in-depth interviews than with other research methods, such as surveys. Because of my presence, I could ask a question in different ways until I was confident that the interviewee correctly understood the intent of the question before she responded to it. I could clarify responses through the use of probes and follow up questions. Moreover, because of my direct

interaction with participants, I was able to discern their level of comfort as they answered questions. This meant I could reword, change and ‘soften’ the way I asked questions to promote openness from the person being interviewed.

However, one issue of concern is the potential influence of social desirability bias – specifically whether participants in this study offered versions of their life-stories which they believed were socially acceptable in the context they were recounted. McAdams (1997, 2001) observed that life-stories should be seen as selected renditions of the individual’s history — heavily influenced by the demand characteristics of the situation such as the individual’s perceptions of their role in the interview process and their perceptions of the interviewer. In other words, noted Burr (1995), life-stories vary according to whom they are told, with interviewees playing up or down elements they believe desirable depending upon their audience.

Potter (1996) observed that in order to minimise social desirability it is important researchers maintain marginality or a ‘distance’ between themselves and the topic being discussed. Similarly, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) urged researchers to show no favour or disfavour with the content of responses during interviews so as not to influence the behaviour of interviewees. However, Lindlof (1991) pointed out that some degree of active intervention by the researcher is needed to promote adequate interview flow — that is, if the researcher seems reticent, then the



participant may mirror this approach and become reticent also. Patton (1980) also noted that marginality should not demote rapport and that there is a fine balance between showing interviewees they are important while showing that the content of their data is somehow unimportant. Following these views, in an attempt to minimise social desirability, I opted to establish rapport and affiliation with women (by showing genuine interest and concern with their experiences) but, avoided taking sides or evaluating their interview content (as good or bad) during the course of the interview, an approach Potter (1996) referred to as active participation.

#### ***Reliability of findings.***

In the context of working with narrative or qualitative data reliability is the degree to which the finding is independent of the actual circumstances of the research. Several issues around reliability in this study require address.

Given the very personal nature of women's recollections, it seems appropriate to ask would another researcher carrying out a similar study with a similar sample generate the same data? Zussman (2000) has termed narrative interviews 'autobiographical occasions', a term which recognises that life-stories should be taken as an account presented at the time, to the particular researcher. In the case of my interviews, I believe I had a particularly strong rapport with several of the participants in this study. Following this, I found women (particularly in individual interviews) forthcoming and expressive, even in their recollections of deeply personal events. It could be argued that a different researcher (perhaps one who was

not Māori) would be provided with different versions of the same life-stories. Personally, I see the women's openness as a key strength of this research rather than a limitation in reliability. Nonetheless, in the defence of reliability, I point to the fact that many respondents reported similar experiences to me — even those with whom I did not share such a close affinity — which leads me to believe that another researcher (with at least some level of rapport with Māori women) would find similar results.

Another issue regarding reliability is the question of whether women in the focus group would have spoken differently about their lives had they been interviewed individually. Staley (1999) observed that in focus groups some participants may feel vulnerable or self conscious expressing their genuine feelings in the presence of others, and, they may withhold their personal views and opinions which may otherwise have been shared in a more intimate setting. Did women in the focus group withhold particularly personal information? The fact that most women in the focus group knew each other before the study, there was a substantial amount of data collected and the majority of women seemed relaxed as they related their personal experiences to the group suggests my study was not subject to this particular problem. Nonetheless, I cannot help but view the different conditions under which data was collected from older and younger women a limitation in the research because it makes comparison of sensitive personal information somewhat difficult to achieve.

*Other limitations of the study.*

A key limitation of this research relates to the composition of the sample. Three central issues are important to acknowledge in this respect. One, only women participated in the research, so the findings are not applicable to Māori men. In addition, as all the women in this study lived in Auckland, the data reflects the attitudes and behaviours of people who live on or near Auckland — and may not represent the views of rural dwelling Māori (or those from tribal backgrounds not included in the research). While a similar study carried out with a rural dwelling population may yield different results, the 1996 New Zealand census found most Māori (87.5%) actually live in either Auckland, Waikato or the Bay of Plenty regional council areas (Statistics New Zealand, 2004) which implies that the views expressed by the women who participated in this research are not atypical of Māori women as a group.

Finally, a third of the sample comprised women who were in tertiary education, or had completed tertiary education. This is disproportionate to the Māori population as a whole. In addition, nearly half the sample was over 60 years old which is not representative of the Māori population. Younger women who lacked social support and education were therefore not included in this study — an important omission given that the majority of Māori women are under the age of 40 years old and Māori women comprise the lowest socio-economic group in New Zealand (New Zealand Department of Statistics, 2000). While I acknowledge the nature of my sample is a key limitation, I would also point out that all women

interviewed had complex lives and in certain periods of their lives women reported personal circumstances in which they lacked social and economic resources. Women also reported times in which they felt negatively about their Māori identity. While in some ways descriptions of their varied identities allowed me to draw from many ‘different’ lives other than the ones which the women were living at the time they were interviewed, the implications of this issue are pivotal to the results of this study and will be discussed further in chapter eight.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSIS

### *Introduction*

In his examination of analytic methods for qualitative data, Potter (1996) noted that there is no one prevailing or ideal method of data analysis in qualitative research and suggested that, as each research project is unique, the researcher is required to construct a procedure to allow him or her to extract the most insightful meaning from the evidence collected. To achieve this in the current study I chose to combine three methods of data analysis carried out in subsequent stages. This chapter describes my approach.

### *Stage One: Content analysis*

In the first stage I used content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980; Roberts, 2001) defined by Berelson (1952, p.18) as “a technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” to locate and extract any references women had made to their own Māori identity in their life-stories. This process was essential in order to establish a starting point for in-depth analysis. As I had encouraged women to speak freely, I had gathered a large amount of data some of which was interesting but largely irrelevant to their identities as Māori. Further, the only structure evident in the data was that women’s accounts followed a life-story sequence. Descriptions of their childhood, teenage years, young adulthood, and adult life were present for nearly all participants, however their stories were not necessarily linear or regular.

There were also discrepancies in detail between accounts, with some life-stories being particularly detailed and others less so. Because of the nature of the data in this respect, transcripts were cumbersome to work with in their 'raw' form and I needed to reduce them to a manageable quantity by sifting out material which pertained specifically to Māori identity.

According to Holsti and Wesley (1969) content analysis must be systematic in that the inclusion and exclusion of content or categories is done according to consistently applied rules. Following these prescriptions, to locate identity content I read through each interview transcript, identified and marked (using a highlighter pen) any references (statements, paragraphs or longer vignettes) women made to their Māori identities. Each transcript was treated in the same way and was read at least three times to ensure references were not overlooked. Once all references had been identified, to bring consistency across the data and to enable comparison between cases in subsequent stages of analysis, I categorised each statement as being either — definitional, descriptive, or evaluative.

Definitional statements included all those in which women specified to which ethnic group they felt they belonged. For example:

*I am Māori. I am proud to be Māori and I am a Māori woman.*  
(Rangimarie, 30)

Descriptive statements included those in which the participant specified the features and characteristics they believed their Māori identity carried.

For example:

*Being Māori, what does it mean? For me, it's security, just and knowing that I can turn to my own whanau if I need support and advice. (Rangimarie, 30)*

Evaluative statements were those which the participant specified the value they attached to their identity as Māori. For example:

*Basically I love being Māori, just love it, yeah. What I love being about it, about being Māori, what I love is that for me, just me personally, that I can express myself as a Māori. (Ramari, 49)*

***Notes on this process.***

One key complication arose during this stage. Because data was in narrative form it was typical for women to make statements that combined concepts. For example, some evaluative statements were also descriptive:

*Even though I saw myself as Māori (definitional) I was ashamed (evaluation) of the negative things that came along with being a Māori at school like they are lazy and that. (descriptive) (Gina, 34)*

In cases where statements combined two or more concepts I included the statement in both or all categories to ensure that data was not lost or misrepresented. In cases where statements were too ambiguous to be clearly evaluative, for example:

*Overall, I don't think that some people think much of Māori. (Vania, 39)*

or clearly descriptive, for example:

*Some people think being Māori is about Māori culture, but I am not sure how I feel about that. (Vania, 39)*

they were omitted as I felt statements needed to be specific and clear in their meaning to be included.

Once all the statements women made about their Māori identities had been identified and categorised, I recorded them on separate sheets of paper and attached this to each woman's transcript. For ease of comparison between cases I treated these summaries as representative of women's 'identity content'.



## ***Stage Two: Constant Comparison***

### ***Open coding.***

In the second stage I used the constant comparison method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to identify and classify the key factors shaping women's identities as Māori. To do this I identified all influences that shaped identity that women specified in their life-stories and allocated them distinct codes. This was done in two stages – I first found all reported influences and allocated them codes (open coding). I then classified these influences into broad categories (axial coding).

To open code data Glaser and Strauss (1967) proposed that researchers should search their data for indicators (any aspect of the data) that may be related to their topic of interest (indicators are thus called because they are viewed as potential indications of patterns in the data). In this study I defined indicators as 'contextual factors shaping identity content'. Once I had identified appropriate sections in life-stories which explained why participants chose to identify, describe or evaluate their Māori identity the way they did, I highlighted that section (statement, paragraph or vignette), considered it an indicator and allocated the statements a code (the term code in this context simply means a label, title or a statement which denoted the factors they described as pivotal in shaping their Māori identity).

For example, one participant's identity content included the evaluation "I love being Māori, just love it". To locate the source of her evaluation I

read through her interview again and noted that a recurring theme in the story of her childhood was that her parents raised her to be proud of her Māori identity. This comment exemplifies her recollections:

*There was no Māori taught in that school as I recall but we, but our learning was happening at home...because my Mum and Dad speak fluent Māori so, and it was never a case of come “we’re going to have a Māori lesson.” No, it was never like. My Mum and Dad they just spoke all the time... Basically I love being Māori, just love it, yeah... What I love being about it, about being Māori, what I love is that for me, just me personally, that I can express myself as a Māori.*  
(Ramari, 49)

Once I had located the comment, I highlighted it, and coded the data ‘parents promoted Māori language’. I continued seeking indicators in each women’s transcript until I felt that all transcripts had been reviewed thoroughly and all discernible indicators had been located.

***Notes on this process.***

Overall, most women provided a fairly comprehensive range of explanations for their identity content. This is not to suggest, however, that this stage was uncomplicated. As several authors on the topic of qualitative data analysis have observed (Potter, 1996), given the nature of narrative data it is difficult for data analysis to maintain a completely linear process of distinct analytic steps (Mishler, 1986). Rather, Potter

(1996) noted, working with data of this type is a more circuitous process of reading and re-reading, reflection, sorting and formulating tentative ideas about how the researcher may most appropriately draw upon the content of the data to illustrate the topic that is being studied. In my experience, the fluidity and changeability of the identities that women described to me complicated this stage of analysis considerably. Women changed their ideas about their Māori identity several times over the course of their lives. In understanding their current identities, previous identities, multiple events, changing relationships, experiences and values had to be taken into account, and as such locating the sources of identity content required reviewing women's personal histories in their entirety several times. Through engaging in the process of reading, re-reading, and reflection, however, I identified the factors present in the data contributing to identity for the 18 women who attended individual interviews and for 15 women who participated in the focus group (see Table Two).

### *Axial coding.*

Because women's interview content was diverse it was natural that many codes were generated and it was necessary to collapse groups of codes into overarching categories. Glaser and Strauss (1957) termed this process axial coding. Axial coding required more intense analysis of the data, because it required that I look closely at each indicator and identify relationships and connections between that indicator and others found. Once similarities had been found between indicators it was then possible to group them together to form emerging 'core categories.' These were then further

refined as the analysis process continued (see Strauss, 1959). In this study, I identified two key categories which subsumed all the indicators identified. The first category was 'Formative Conditions'. Formative conditions referred to the influences in the immediate social environment that women experienced before they left their familial homes. This factor subsumed: Location born and raised, family background (ethnicity of parents), family composition (number of siblings), socio-economic position of family of origin, employment and past times of parents, extent to which material resources were available to the individual in familial environment, daily activities as a family (including typically Māori activities and marae involvement), parental teachings (and attitude towards Māori identity or more specifically the extent to which Māori was a significant aspect of their role models' identities).

The second category was 'Significant Experiences'. This category included experiences that individuals had over the course of their life time which happened outside of their familial environments. Significant experiences were shaped by the demographic and cultural features of their communities such as the individual's extra-familial social networks, experiences in the work-place and education system and relationships with others (friends and later partners). In a broader sense, significant experiences were shaped profoundly by the socio-historical contexts in which women were born. This influence was addressed in a more focussed way in stage three of data analysis.

### ***Summary.***

Once I had identified the key factors shaping identity for each participant I returned to the identity content summaries I collated in the first stage of analysis and examined aspects of each woman's identity and how she had been influenced by her formative conditions and significant experiences. I made notes of the formative conditions and significant experiences that appeared to have shaped each woman's identity. This process highlighted how identities were shaped by environmental conditions and paved the way for the final stage of analysis.

### ***Stage three: Identity, personal contexts and collective contexts***

Once women's identity content had been extracted and organised, the next step was to determine if there were differences between women from different age groups. To begin this process, I looked carefully at the characteristics of women from each cohort. As noted in the previous chapter: cohort one comprised 19 women born prior to 1950 and aged between 60 and 75 (17 women attended the focus group/hui and two attended individual interviews). Cohort two comprised eight women born between 1951 and 1969 and aged between 35 and 60 (all attended individual interviews). Cohort three comprised seven women born during and after 1970 and aged between 18 and 35 (all attended individual interviews). The characteristics of these three groups are shown on Table One, below.

Table One: Characteristics of Group by Age Cohort

Characteristic No.*	Cohort one	Cohort two	Cohort three
Affiliated as Māori	19	8	7
Tribal affiliation			
Not specified	13	0	1
Te Aupouri	2	2	0
Ngati Porou	3	1	2
Nga Puhī	0	0	2
Te Rarawa	1	2	0
Tainui	0	2	0
Tuhoe	0	1	0
Te Arawa	0	1	1
Te Ati Awa	0	1	0
Ngati Whatua	0	1	0
Ngati Kahungunu	0	0	1
Other ethnic affiliations			
Scottish	1	0	0
Irish	1	0	0
Mixed	3	0	0
Tongan	0	2	0
Pākehā	0	3	2
Chinese	0	0	1
One Māori Parent	2	7	3
Two Māori Parents	17	2	3
Main occupation			
Retired	19	0	0
Tertiary Student	0	4	5
Social Worker	0	2	0
Teacher (Tertiary)	0	1	0
Self Employed	0	2	0
Clinical Psychologist	0	1	0
Researcher	0	0	1
Public Servant	0	0	1

\* Number of participants reporting this characteristic

For each group I examined their personal characteristics carefully and noted the key differences that were evident. I then examined the factors that women reported shaped their identities and kept a record of how many women referred to specific formative conditions and significant experiences. This process revealed distinct differences in the factors shaping identity for women in each cohort. By doing this I was able to discern commonalities among women in the same cohort, and variances between different cohorts. In turn, this process elucidated how Māori experiences and social contexts were historically influenced and, therefore, how their Māori identities were socio-historically patterned.

### ***Summary Chapter Five***

Data analysis proceeded in three stages. Using content analysis I first discerned how women in this study defined, described and evaluated their Māori identities. Using constant comparison analysis I revealed the features of personal contexts (formative conditions and significant experiences) that appeared pivotal in shaping Māori identity for women interviewed. In the final stage, I compared the data of women from different age groups to clarify how women's identities were shaped by the socio-historical contexts in which they were raised. This process of analysis enabled me to meet the overall aim of the study by showing how their interpretations of identity were linked to the wider processes of social and cultural change in New Zealand society.

In the following two chapters I present and discuss women's interpretations of their own identities. Chapter six presents their data and provides a general discussion of the characteristics of women's identities and the key features of each cohort. Chapter seven is devoted to discussing age group differences specifically. These chapters are distinct because I found discussing age discrepancies together with women's identities 'in general' blurred the focus of the discussion. Moreover, there is a cumulative effect when describing and comparing three groups – that is, the process requires describing cohort one, then cohort two in comparison to cohort one, and then cohort three in comparison to the previous two groups (this promotes repetition and needs to be avoided).



## **CHAPTER SIX: MĀORI IDENTITY AS A REFLECTION OF FORMATIVE CONDITIONS AND SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCES**

### *Introduction and Organisation of data*

In this chapter excerpts from women's life-stories are presented. The overall aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the commonalities that were found within each cohort. To do this the personal views of identity each woman expressed are grouped together with comments that are conceptually similar to those made by other women in her age group. This technique is meant to provide a clear picture of patterns in the data by illustrating how shared formative conditions shaped common significant experiences and, therefore, fashioned similarities in identity within each cohort.

Excerpts are also discussed throughout this chapter. The purpose of this is to clarify how each excerpt is conceptually similar to what other women had expressed and to justify how each comment relates to women's formative conditions and significant experiences.

Excerpts are grouped under sub-headings which refer to the significant experiences and formative conditions that women indicated shaped their identities. The sub-headings used to organise the data are drawn from the table below which lists the most common factors women reported shaped their identities. By 'most common' I mean that more than three women had to have referred to each factor for it to be included. Even though this

number seems small, when working with a modest sample one may view them as potentially significant.

Table Two

Codes allocated for factors shaping identity among participants

Code	No.*
Role models' (parents/siblings/grandparents) attitudes/behaviour	34
Family structure and relationships	20
Prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori by 'society'	20
Relationships with other Māori people (non familial)	20
Experiencing racism or prejudice based upon being Māori	18
Relationships with non-Māori	15
Experiences at primary school	15
Marae involvement	12
Relationships with their own children	10
University and other forms of education	8
Representations of Māori in the media	7
Being involved in Kapa Haka	6
Socio-Political awareness	5
Learning about their whakapapa	5
Experiences in the workplace	5
Seeing protests or Māori political activities on television	5
Relationships with Māori colleagues at work	4
Learning to speak Māori	4

\* Number of women who recounted that this particular factor shaped their Māori identity.

Sub-headings used to organise the data were devised by collapsing groups of identity shaping factors into super-ordinate concepts. These were:

1. Features of the community where participant was raised
2. Te Reo Māori
3. Exposure to Māori culture and contexts
4. Family structure and relationships
5. Role models attitudes and behaviour
6. Prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori by ‘society’.
7. Significant experiences
8. Relationships with other Māori people (non familial)
9. Socio-political awareness
10. Education

*Notes on presentation style.*

Because each cohort is different (and the nature of narrative data prohibits ‘it’ from being organised into discrete categories) the sub-headings used vary for each group and are combined for some groups. In cases in which women’s names were known to me I have changed them and given them aliases. When I was unsure of which woman made a particular statement from the focus group, I have noted ‘rōpu kuia’ after their statement, to indicate that excerpt was taken from the hui transcript. In the cases in which the participants’ age is known, this is included after their statement.

To emphasise the relationship between identity content (definitions, evaluations and descriptions of Māori identity) and women's formative conditions and significant experiences references to these factors have been typed in bold print (for example '**Māori identity**'). In some cases I have combined different sections of women's interviews into one vignette in order to render the data intelligible. Apart from this, extracts are verbatim with omissions indicated by dots (...) and my own comments and questions appear in this way (Q: statement).

## ***Cohort One***

### ***Introduction.***

This cohort comprised the oldest group of women (those born prior to 1950 aged over 62 years). Originally there were 19 women in this group (17 women attended the focus group/hui and two attended individual interviews). I included the data from one younger participant in this cohort (aged 49 at the time of interviewing) because her formative conditions were more similar to women of an older generation than her own and her identity reflected these conditions accordingly.

### ***Features of the community where participant was raised.***

Most women in this group were born in the 1930s when Māori were still mainly rural dwelling (often in their traditional tribal areas) and had limited contact with Pākehā. This is evident from the following references.

*We were brought up in Matawaia ... You could say I was brought up in the Māori world, or as Māori from the ages of one to twelve. All through that time we always spoke Māori to each other. When I went home to Matawaia that is when being Māori really set in because everyone there spoke Māori, we actually spoke Māori on the school grounds. (Alice, 65)*

*I was raised in the Hokianga... we actually didn't see too many Pākehās. No, that's not entirely true...their numbers started getting up a bit .... A couple of Pākehās used to come and visit ... they were*

*land speculators... they always seemed to want something and that was the only time when I was little that we had contact with Pākehās ...I can remember that when the European churches started coming into the area we were quite inquisitive. That's how I'll use it, we were very inquisitive and we would go along and see what they were doing. We would just sit and listen to how they were doing their Karakia (prayers) and really, I couldn't really get the gist of where they were coming from... I recall it was very new to us... So we did see them and we went to school with them. But, apart from that you could definitely say I was brought up in the Māori world. (Maraea, 60)*

The vast majority of women in cohort one had two Māori parents and as such their references to ethnic **definition** tended to convey little ambiguity as evidenced by these statements:

*Both my parents are Māori, so I consider myself Māori definitely.  
(rōpu kuia)*

*To me, it seems strange to ask how I would define myself. Māori of course. (rōpu kuia)*

*I am full Māori. Bit and bit of that, but never mind. I think of myself as full Māori. (Alice, 65)*

*I am Māori. I think of myself as Māori through and through. (rōpu kuia).*

***Te Reo Māori.***

Women in this cohort were often raised around fluent Māori speakers. For example:

*There was no Māori taught in that school as I recall, our learning was happening at home... because Māori was my Mum and Dad's first language really and, you know, it was just what they did... it was just a normal part of their communication. (Ramari, 49)*

*I'm an East Coast Māori, born and bred. I went to a Māori School. We had no problems speaking Māori at school. I heard that at other schools you were absolutely forbidden to speak Māori. That never happened to us and we had English teachers, in fact we had English teachers who encouraged Te Reo, they had a Kapa Haka there, and they were only too willing to learn Te Reo. (rōpu kuia)*

Because of their exposure to spoken Māori as children, many of these women spoke Māori themselves (or reported they understood spoken Māori).

*Family Structure and Relationships and Exposure to Māori culture and contexts.*

Large Māori families were more common prior to 1950s, and the majority of women in this group (15) mentioned coming from families that were sizeable according to current standards (family sizes ranged from six to 18 children). Reflecting these **formative conditions**, seven women in this cohort recalled that they were responsible for caring for their younger siblings and cousins when they were growing up. One woman recalled this practice was common in her youth and was one that unified Māori. She observed:

*I'm from the North. In our family there were 14. The eldest was 20 years older than me and I was down the line. All of the Māoris in them days bring each other up, you know, the children would pair off and mind a younger one... That's how the Māori becomes united because the children brought one another up even though the parents were there. And we all went to church and we all, we all had chores to do before we went to school and that was right through, right through our lives until somebody went out to work. (Mavis, aged over 60).*

Several women in this group said that they lived in a culturally 'traditional' Māori way (that is — interdependently with extended whanau) and that, in times of need, their families shared resources. For example:



*My mother had two sisters. They had large families as well. What we would do is spend time at one Auntie's house, then she would send some of us to another Auntie's house. Those days, the doors were always open to anyone in our family. We all shared things together. If we had a lot of sea food one week, Mum would send one of us over to their house with some of it. Same with vegetables from the gardens. That's how Māori never went without because it worked the other way as well. If others had a lot of something, and we were short, then they would share it with us. (rōpu kuia)*

*In our town, most of us were related somehow. I think you could say that about most little towns up North, the Māori families all knew each other. I remember that we used to make do with whatever we had, Mum was amazing the way she used to look after so many kids. Anyway, in those days, we all worked together. We shared gardening and whatever came from each others' gardens was usually shared. (rōpu kuia)*

*We had a family of 15, I remember at one stage, my Aunties and Uncles used to stay in our house. It was pretty small. We only had a kitchen a bedroom and a porch. There were six of us kids in the same bed and four in a single bed, Mum and Dad. Maybe now that may sound like a bit much, but that is how it worked. If someone in your family needed something. Then it was just provided. (Kathleen, 65)*

As a reflection of their **formative conditions**, when these older women **described** their Māori identities, they referred to being raised ‘the Māori way’ that is they enjoyed close, mutually supportive, interpersonal relationships with their whanau. For example:

*Our family was very close and we all looked after each other. Even though we didn't have a lot, it didn't mean that we weren't happy. What I do want to say is that Mum brought us up in a loving, caring way we were the whole world, just Dad her and us. Dad was a workaholic, and his father was from Norway. But it was Mum, if it wasn't for her, I think I would have been a Black Pākehā. But I was proud to be Māori. And me, in turn, I love my family and they mean the world to me. (Kathleen, 65)*

*Being Māori to me is about whanau. Looking after your whanau, that was how we survived when we were younger. And that is what I tell my mokopuna (grandchildren) now. (rōpu kuia)*

*All I can say is that our mother brought us up to look after each other. And that is how I see my own identity as Māori. (rōpu kuia, 68)*

*To me being Māori is about whanau. And pulling together, helping each other out. (Alice, 65)*

*Being Māori is not just about speaking Māori... It's really about how you act towards the next person, doing the right thing... looking after your kids properly. Being Māori is about having pride in yourself and looking after your family properly. (Mavis, aged over 60)*

Apart from references to interpersonal relationships with whanau, references to allied concepts such as collective activities featured prominently in the identity **descriptions** these women offered. Eight women in this older group talked about activities with other Māori in their families as pivotal to how they saw themselves as Māori. For example:

*Every Sunday we would spend time at the marae, we used to go in there and get all the mattresses, put it together and we used to have like a live in for the weekend. We all used to stay together. To me that is what our childhood was about. It was about living that life, you know. Not going oh well "we're Māori this and that". And that is how it was for us, it was a lovely life. Because we shared those things with each other. I had a good life and people say "that's a hard life", for me it wasn't. I think it was good for us. Maybe because I came from a big family, our entertainment was each other you know. (Mavis, aged over 60)*

***Role models' attitudes and behaviour.***

A strong feature of cohort ones' life-stories was an admiration for the survival skills of their familial role models. Up until the time Māori moved to urban centres many Māori still kept large gardens, gathered food from lakes and rivers in their home areas and collected sea food to sustain their families as they had done for generations. Several of the women in this cohort commented upon the efficacy and tenacity of their own role models as providers. These following excerpts demonstrate women's admiration for their own parents' and grandparents' abilities in this regard:

*My grandparents were masters at what they did. They could truly live off the land. They knew when and where to plant, what to plant. Where to get kaimoana (seafood). Any skills that were required to prosper, they knew about it. They were truly self sufficient. My grandfather, he was a master of competency. (Maraea ,60)*

*I was brought up by my grandparents and in those times, it was when Māoris used to rely on themselves for everything. They were great providers, they always kept their gardens perfect. We went without nothing. (Alice, 65)*

*We had huge gardens and, you know, like my Mum and Dad planted rows and rows of kumara, potato, watermelon, sweet corn, tomatoes, just all that wonderful food... and we had an orchard in that same area of garden, we had pears, apples, peaches. So we*

*knew all that, we knew what it was to collect a whole lot of eggs because we had a whole lot of hens and turkeys, and horses and a couple of dogs so, and fishing. So we lived off the land, absolutely. My Dad would go out fishing on the horse and he'd come back early hours of the morning sometimes and he would have this huge bulging sack over the horse on either side, it was so full of fish.*

*(Ramari, 49)*

Women in this group also reported that not only had their parents and role models worked hard to glean a living off the land, but they had also taught them the same skills. For example:

*A comfortable lifestyle didn't come easy so it was important that each child learnt how to take care of themselves and provide for their own. So I always went with my grandparents everywhere they went. Looking back I think that they must have been teaching me ... I had to learn about the bush, the tracks, the mapping of area, which houses were safe, which land was good for growing food and when was the right time to go out fishing. They taught me that from when I was just little. When I was ten years old I went out one time and pulled all the nets off the line near the wharf because we lived near the ocean. I was only ten years old and took the net out and set it! And I knew how to haul it out, and standing on the right part of the boat so I could balance it without tipping. And even the swimming exercises ... I was taught how to paddle and how to hold my head*

*up, and how not to panic, resisting that panic, so that I would be competent enough to get ashore, where I could stand up and not feel scared. They taught me about survival, and living in harmony with the environment they schooled me never to have fear. (Maraea, 60)*

*I was brought up by my grandparents at home, up north on a dairy farm. We were up at 5.30 in the morning. I was out on the farm milking cows at the age of seven. It was karakia (prayers) and then chores, we had to milk the cows before we went to school at eight. (rōpu kuia)*

*We were brought up on a farm. I remember we never had any power. We had to work the land and work with what little we had. For us, that meant that nothing was wasted and every thing was done by hand, cut the wood, fetch the water, wash clothes in the creek things like that. I assumed that was the normal thing to do. (Kathleen, 65)*

*We learnt how to survive, we learnt how to look after ourselves and you know, look after each other. You know our food, we had to learn how to keep it, like you know when my Dad killed a beast, we cut it up and our preserving used to be done in the ground. Dad used to dig a hole and line it, you know, with wood. He would make a box sort of thing, and all the kids used to sit there and watch him salt the meat and pack it. For our water we had carry our water no*

*electricity those days. And that's how we learnt to look after ourselves. (Mavis, aged over 60)*

Because these women had **role models** who were hard working, competent people who had taught them skills in farming, gardening and fishing women of this age group typically **described** being Māori as being related to self sufficiency and resourcefulness. They commented:

*To us, being Māori meant being able to survive I guess, to use what you have to get by. (rōpu kuia)*

*I guess you could say that being Māori to me would mean being able to do all those things. Like the old people, they were really tough. They knew how to grow their own food, you know, all the places to get the best kaimoana (sea food). (rōpu kuia)*

*I was raised at a time when Māori still did everything for themselves and that is how I really see being Māori now. As having that wisdom, that certain skill of survival. (rōpu kuia, 67)*

*We learnt how to work hard. If you want to talk about role models, well we had the best in the world. Our parents taught us how to survive and take care of ourselves and each other. I tell you what you might think that we had a hard life, but we had it better than the young ones in some ways. So if you ask what does being Māori*

*mean to me, I guess it would be about what you do with the things that you have. Sometimes I don't know how my mother managed to feed us all. But we never went without. And I look at myself, and I think that being Māori is about being resourceful – and making the most of what you have. (rōpu kuia, 65)*

Several participants observed that younger Māori were raised in a 'different world'. Two women said that they pitied younger Māori, because they were deprived of the opportunities to achieve the same level of self satisfaction and independence they had had. For example:

*In lots of ways I feel sorry for the young ones now. They are different. Our old people, they were not silly you know. They knew what they were doing. They were tough. No, I mean, really tough. I just feel for the generations of today because they never have that experience, see being born into this present climate, is sort of automatic to live the way that they do. But they miss out on a lot of learning, about how to care for themselves... We had everything... We were luckier than the young ones today. (Maraea, 60)*

*We knew what it was to get up as a young child, go bring the cows in from wherever the paddocks are on a cold, frosty morning, milk cows, you know, and my recollection is, we would have been probably from five (years old) on when we were doing that. Now the idea of my daughter doing something like that? It would just never*



*happen. It's like a different planet now. But back then, you didn't know any different and you just did it anyway, you know, and you're isolated too, you're isolated from other people, your nearest neighbour is probably two miles away so... I guess to us, we had to learn how to take care of ourselves. That stuff all sticks with you know. I look at the way that Māori are now, and I can't help but feel aroha (love/sympathy) for them you know. They miss out on a lot.*

*(Ramari, 49)*

### ***Prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori.***

Women in this group recalled incidences in which they believed Pākehā had treated Māori as inferior (i.e. themselves personally or Māori people in general). Speaking from their own experiences, two participants recalled:

*When I first started being around Pākehā more and more it was quite scary ... it was culture shock because I was taught to feel good about myself. But it wasn't quite like that when I was in the Pākehā world, when I went into the Pākehā world there wasn't quite the safety there, or the trust, and you know, wasn't a problem for them to speak down to Māori. Really speak down to Māori, be demeaning to Māori and leaving them at the background, and leaving them in a queue to serve whoever was in the front, I saw all of that. It was really strange for me. Mind you, it was the depression at the time, a lot of things were not that good. So I saw a lot of horrible things, I*

*saw that. But I just learnt to talk when I could talk, I thought for my safety and how to protect myself. But I knew they were rude, I knew Pākehā were downright, how should I put it, there is a difference between blatant ignorance and blatant arrogance. They were just arrogant and they made it known that they were superior. (Maraea, 60)*

*I was born at a time when Pākehā used to really look down on Māori. Really you would not recognise it now. But it was pretty bad really. Some of them were fine. But some of them, they had no problem looking down on Māori. (rōpu kuia, 65)*

These women were also of the age group who were punished for speaking Māori or acting in a ‘culturally Māori’ way in New Zealand schools. Recollecting this, participants stated:

*They used to smack Māori children for speaking Māori at school. I never got smacked, but only because I learnt from my brother. He got a hiding (beating) for speaking Māori once. (rōpu kuia, 65)*

*When we were growing up it was a time when they punished you for speaking Māori at school. We weren't supposed to speak Māori to the teachers or each other. (rōpu kuia, 68)*

*When I started school, my grandmother made me a kete (carry bag) which she filled up with whatever came out of the garden. Fresh, beautiful vegetables. When I went to school, she told me to take it, you know, share with everybody. Anyway, I took it and shared it, as is the Māori way. But then I spoke Māori at school I got strapped for it. After that my grandmother would say to me “Ha? Why don’t you take that food to share it with the others?” I just thought to myself, I will never take that kai to school again. When I got punished for being Māori I thought to myself I will never take them that kai (food) again. (Alice, 65)*

Despite their awareness that Māori culture was not accepted by some Pākehā, women in this group tended not to complain about racist treatment nor focus on the role of Pākehā in determining the way in which they saw their own Māori identities. This may be because, in their day to day lives they were not exposed to many Pākehā people (and therefore they did not feel overly concerned by them), or perhaps because within their own families they were exposed to mainly positive ideas about being Māori.

***Personal views of identity.***

Women in this cohort seemed to be ‘at peace’ with their Māori identities and the role of ‘being Māori’ in their own lives. In this respect, I mean that these women seemed to have accepted the value of being Māori, and had clear ideas about what that meant for them. Perhaps this was because their socialisation in Māori communities sheltered them and enabled them to

develop a clear and positive sense of what it meant to be Māori. Women's efforts to express this feeling are captured in the following excerpts:

*Do I feel good that I'm a Māori? Yes. Because I've been through it. I lived it. I was raised in it. I know who I am and what I am about. Now even though I have that feeling to protect me, there's a barrier around me, it's still what I do that matters... It seems to be a really issue now for the young ones ... but for us it was just... normal you know. (Mavis, aged over 60)*

*If you're at a place where your identity is something that you, you just take for granted because you feel you've got no option, you know, it's not such a big deal because you almost are conditioned that way, you know, for some anyway. Well, it's not such a big deal, you know where I come from and who I am. Now it's different for some Māori... Because Māori wanted to be accepted by Pākehā they tried to fit in with them... and then, it became this issue for them. But the main reason was because they weren't accepted. Now it's like some Māori are out to prove something... so they take it out on themselves... for us, being Māori was just normal. (Ramari, 49)*

*The thing is, we all grew up around each other. The young ones now, they live in a multi-cultural environment. They have to learn to deal with one another. For us, well we grew up in the Māori world so when it's normal to be Māori you don't really think about it. You*

*don't think to yourself – well is Māori good or bad? You don't have to. It's just normal. (ropu kuia)*

***Summary Cohort One.***

Women of this generation reported formative conditions and experiences that were culturally and socially similar to those that existed in traditional Māori society. Resonating with this, women strongly defined themselves as Māori and the meanings they attached to that definition were characterised by two key aspects: relationships with their family and resource and food gathering from the land. Women in this cohort emphasised ideas of self-sufficiency, hard work and independence in describing what it means to be Māori. Overall, women in this group tended to feel positive about being Māori despite any insinuations of Māori inferiority they were exposed to in their interactions with Pākehā.

## ***Cohort Two***

### ***Introduction.***

This cohort comprised the middle group of women and included those born between 1950 and 1970 (aged between 32 and 52 at the time of interviewing). There were originally eight women in this group, all of whom attended individual interviews. The data from one slightly younger woman, Clara (29 at the time of interviewing), is included in this cohort, because her formative conditions and interpretations of what it meant to be Māori were most similar to this group.

### ***Features of the community where participant was raised.***

These women were born at a time when the majority of younger Māori families were living in larger cities. All women in this group had lived in urban areas for most of their lives (seven in Auckland, one in Wellington) and most of them were raised among Māori, Pākehā and other non Māori. They recalled:

*We grew up around Pākehā... well we lived in West Auckland, and there were different groups of people. But certainly, we were accustomed to being around Pākehā and Pacific Island people.*  
*(Vania, 39)*

*The mix of people around me when I was growing up was about half Pākehā and half Māori. I went to Leabank Primary School in Manurewa that was probably 50% Pākehā and 50% Māori,*

*Intermediate was probably 50/50...too and High School, possibly about 30% Māori and 70% Pākehā. After that, I think most of my jobs I worked around Pākehā. (Gabrielle, 36)*

*We were raised in Tawa which is a White middle class suburb ... and we were probably one of about a handful of Māori who attended our schools... High school it was all very Pākehā, but we didn't know that that was Pākehā really, we just thought being white was normal. (Hinekawa, 42)*

### ***Family Structure and Relationships.***

Many of the women in this middle group reported that they were raised independently from their extended family networks. For example:

*We grew up here in West Auckland... We didn't have a lot to do with our whanau down the line ... We knew where we were from. I mean we would go there for holidays. But Mum would never say, this is where you are from, you are from this iwi, this is your awa, this is your maunga or whatever, because she just didn't talk to us like that. She wanted us to make our own way here. (Trudy, in her 40s)*

*We only saw the city. We didn't see our whanau back home because...we couldn't really afford to go home a lot. It was really hard, well we loved to go, we always wanted to go. Dad was so stressed. He would stress all the time. Probably because of money,*

*you know it was expensive to just up and go so we tended not to see our whanau much at all. (Gina, 34)*

*We really didn't have anything to do with our Māori family. Mum never really talked about that side of things and we didn't ever get to see them. (Vania, 38)*

***Exposure to Māori culture and contexts.***

At the time women were in their childhood and adolescent years many Māori parents focussed on encouraging their children to succeed among and fit in with Pākehā. Reflecting this, women in this group recalled that their parents did very little to emphasise Māori culture or Māori identity in their home environments. For example:

*Both my parents are Māori. They both spoke Māori, but never to us. No, they never encouraged us to speak it, never... so, in terms of being Māori or being in the Māori world, well we weren't brought up like that. If something happened, like if someone died in the family, then we would go the marae, but that didn't happen that much really. My parents really didn't make a big deal out of being Māori or anything. In fact, I didn't really even think about it when I was younger... I think my cousin was saying the other day that it wasn't until my cousin died that she had ever slept on a marae and that's probably the truth for me as well. (Gabrielle, 36)*



*I didn't know much about Māori because I hadn't grown up around it. ...My mother kept the basic Māori stuff with us, like we always used the word kai (food) but apart from that, we didn't have a lot of Māori in the house. The only time I heard my mother speak Māori was when she was on the phone to her sister or something like that. (Trudy, 40s)*

*We had very little to do with our Māori culture. The first time I remember ever going to a marae was when I was 13 and that was for my grandfather's funeral so it was the first experience on the marae so it was a bit of a hellish introduction ... So I guess you could say I was brought up in the dominant culture. (Clara, 29)*

*I grew up in West Auckland so I had virtually no connection with anything Māori. We weren't brought up to be Māori. (Vania, 39)*

Some women observed their parents attempted to conceal their own Māori cultural behaviours from them. For example:

*Both my parents were Māori...my Dad spoke Māori to his friends. My parents didn't speak it to us though. My Mum told us that when she was going to school that they couldn't speak Māori. She never spoke it around us. I didn't even know she was fluent. She speaks now and she uses it with her grandchildren and we all missed out. Yeah. So I am quite disappointed with that. Even my father he said*

*to me he suppressed it in a way. And he chose selectively to do that but I don't know why. He said it was quite strange – that he knew how to speak yet he just didn't. (Gina, 34)*

*We were never encouraged to learn Māori, we were never. Nup, no way. My grandparents actually spoke Māori when I was growing up but they only spoke it to each other. My grandparents, it was really their own language that they spoke when they wanted to talk about us sometimes. So it was never something that we were to learn, we were never supposed to understand or learn it for ourselves. (Clara, 29)*

The influence of these formative conditions on how this cohort defined their identities was crucial. Because women were raised in bi-cultural or multi-cultural communities and were not exposed to Māori culture or taught to focus on their Māori identity, several women reported that they **defined** themselves as 'New Zealanders' rather than Māori when they were younger. For example:

*I never really thought about Māori or Pākehā – we were all one – New Zealanders or Kiwis I suppose. It wasn't until I was about 23 – 24 I had this young Pākehā boy flatting with me, and his friend came over one night and he asked if he could use the phone to ring his Mum, and I said yeah. I heard him say to his mother "I'm over at Peters, you know Peter — he lives with that Māori lady" and that*

*was the first time I looked at myself as a Māori person. I knew I was part Māori – but I never though you know ... “I really am Māori, this is my maunga, this is my waka”. .. Then this boy said this and I thought “I am a Māori, well, I must look like one because he said.”*  
*(Trudy, in her 40s)*

*I think we grew up as New Zealanders, whatever New Zealanders were at the time, I wasn't heavily involved in Māori culture at all as a child at all. I didn't think of myself as a Māori person. (Vania, 39)*

*We weren't brought up in the Māori world so I don't really remember having this like real strong feeling about being Māori or anything when I was growing up. Probably because we didn't really talk about it all the time or make a big deal of it. (Gabrielle, 36)*

***Prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori by ‘society’ and role models attitudes.***

A key theme to arise from the stories of women in this cohort was that their parents wanted them to ‘do well’ in their lives. ‘Doing well’ tended to be equated to working ‘hard’ at school and getting a ‘good job’. These statements capture the ideas to which women were exposed in regards to their social expectations in this respect:

*Yeah so all my life I think that both my parents tried to install in us to get a good education, that's always been an important focus,*

*yeah...that was constantly something that was an issue. Get a good education. Do well at school. Get yourself into a good job...that was the best way, got to have the Pākehā education. (Gabrielle, 36)*

*There was a lot of pressure on us to succeed. Your whole life is centred around going out and getting a decent job. That's all that was really drummed into us... basically being in a position where you would go out and get really strong support for yourself financially. Because, my father is a mechanic and my mother was a mail delivery person...My mother didn't want us to have jobs like them...so that was really drummed into us. So I guess the whole Māori thing didn't really factor much into it. (Clara, 29)*

Clara's comment in this last excerpt that being Māori did not factor into 'doing well' captures the essence of her experience and reflects widely held sentiment about Māori which permeated the collective context in which cohort two was raised. As Clara and other women in her group recalled, when she was a teenager social success for Māori demanded Māori 'fit in' with Pākehā. In evidence of this, some women recounted that they had actually been raised to 'be Pākehā' or at least to conduct themselves in a 'Pākehā way'. For example:

*I was raised very Pākehā; I have had some exposure to Māori culture through my extended family but not very much really... it was bad to be Māori back them ... we knew we were Māori, but... it*

*was more that we didn't want to be roped in to the negative aspects of being Māori. (Clara, 29)*

Three women reported that their parents did not teach them that being Māori was entirely bad – but that their daughters should avoid being perceived or **described** as a certain ‘kind’ of Māori. What kind of Māori was undesirable? Women suggested that their parents did not want their daughters to be seen as Māori who could not ‘fit in’ with Pākehā. In particular, Māori ‘radicals’ were named by three women in this group as being undesirable to their parents because they threatened Māori acceptance by Pākehā. For example, in this excerpt, Gabrielle describes her parents’ distrust of Māori protestors. In the following excerpt she recounts her parents’ reaction to protestors and recalled them being seen as ‘stirrers’:

*I remember, one event that I remember was in 1975 or 1978, 1975 I think, when the Māori land march was coming through Auckland and for some reason like it just sparked me off and I really wanted to be a part of it, I was probably about 10 or 12 or something like that, and I remember having this huge argument with my aunty and my Mum and the whole family about how wonderful these people were, that they were walking for the Māori people. My parents were pretty anti Māori in those days so the protestors were looked upon as bad people and I remember like way back then seeing Donna Awatere on the TV and, you know, they just sort of looked at her like*

*she was strange ...You know, in our house, there was all those negative thoughts around being a protester and stuff. Yeah, that's it, that's what I remember, I remember defending them. Then I just had this huge argument with my family about their credibility and they seemed to think that protestors were just stirrers and trouble makers and that they should go out and get a bloody job and that sort of thing...I don't think that they were seen as having credibility, they were just trouble makers. Whilst we were seen as normal you know, just getting along... not making a fuss of stuff like that... We had a massive argument and I tried really hard to defend myself and the protestors and I just think that it sort of closed me down and I just then started trying to be a good Pākehā.. ..And in my mind there's always been this thing where my parents have really picked Pākehā society and Pākehā ways and all that sort of thing over Māori and to me that was a clear line ... My parents kind of believed that Pākehā were better, not only that Pākehā were better ... but that Māori couldn't really do stuff for themselves anyway. Like I've heard this in my own family lots of times, "Oh Māori wouldn't be able to run their own Government and Māoris are too lazy and the Māoris are this and that" ...I was like, so, you know, after being brought up in that and hearing that sort of thing you can't help but think that it's true because everybody in your immediate environment is saying it. So after awhile it just shut me down, and I began to focus on becoming a good Māori – which I suppose meant a Brown Pākehā.*

*(Gabrielle, 36)*

The last section in Gabrielle's comment above is most telling because it reveals the influence of her parents' beliefs and behaviours on her own identity. She recalled that because her parents' wanted her to succeed among Pākehā, she had to become like them – and distance herself from being seen as a threat – or a 'bad Māori' (radical).

Further illustrating that some features of being Māori were seen as 'bad' by Māori parents (who in turn tried to distance their children from those stereotypes) Karen poignantly recalled how her mother punished her for associating with 'dirty' Māori:

*I was at school and they were doing the kutu (head lice) checks and then I was a Māori for that day, because they only checked Māori children. I had kutus, so they sent me home with a note you know "clean your kid's hair". Well I was rapt you know, because I was Māori that day. When I got home and my Mother got back from work she nearly killed me. She actually literally nearly killed me. She had me over the bath, and was banging my head into the bath, trying to get all these kutus out and she had, like this can of like fly spray. Oh it was terrible, and she kept banging my face on the bath and she keep yelling at me "Do you know what people will say!" and "Do you know bloody Māoris". She had a big thing about us not being 'dirty Māoris', you know, being called 'dirty Māoris' ... So I think she tried to separate us from that image you know, from the common stereotype and you know, that sticks with Māori people,*

*you know that they are 'dirty' that they're 'lazy' 'dumb' and 'stinky' and that sort of thing. (Karen, 40)*

Were parents of these women trying to punish their children for being Māori? No, rather it seems that these parents were trying to protect their children from the negative stereotypes attached to Māori people. To most of the women their parents' motivations were transparent in this regard. They recalled their parents wanted them to do well and doing well meant being accepted by Pākehā. For example Clara and Karen recalled:

*There were certain Māori characteristics that, you know we weren't supposed to do. It's like "Oh no you don't want to do that, you don't want to be seen as that kind of Māori" ... I guess my parents didn't want us to be associated with anything negative. It was not that we were ashamed of being Māori. It was just that they didn't want to lump anything bad onto us. They wanted us to do well, and doing well was not associated with being Māori.... So, I believe that, from where I'm sitting, it seems to be for my parents, the whole "I'm proud to be Māori" thing wasn't easy for them. It is a lot easier for us today, but things were a lot different for them. (Clara, 29)*

*Mum wanted us to be White, because to her we would have a better life, and if you're White people don't pick on you, or things are easier for you if you're White... I understand my mother now, actually I feel sorry for her now... It was just her upbringing...My*



*mother was brought up in Waiuku it's a very racist area, and you know, Māoris were limited in many ways. They couldn't go to the pictures because Māoris weren't allowed there...and I think when you have those sorts of experiences all through your life you don't want that for your kids. So you know ... you look over to the White side, and think yeah things are good over there, they're allowed to go to the pictures. So I guess you can understand why my mother practically dipped us in Janola (bleach)... she just believed if we were educated White you know, and we just acted like Pākehās then no one would hurt us, or we'd be acceptable, but then again Māori weren't because that's not the way of the world. (Karen, 40)*

***Significant experiences.***

Women in this group reported that they had been subject to treatment (from Pākehā) which they perceived as racist from a young age. For example:

*I remember an instance where I used to pick up a girlfriend on the way to school and I was not allowed inside the house unless it was winter and raining. If it was I was only allowed in the little front door, I wasn't allowed anywhere else and ... they put the old couch in the doorway so, if I came in I sat there while the new couch was over there, and there was like this invisible line that I wasn't allowed to cross. It wasn't until years later that I realised that that*

*was so racist... I mean I was so dirty to them. They didn't want to have a Māori in their house. (Hinekawa, 42)*

*When I was seven years old I had this friend a Pākehā girl, and you know, I always used to go over to her place and play, and then I took her over to my place and my Mother was in the kitchen. She goes "Oh, is that your mother?" and I go "Yeah, that's my Mum"... and she goes "Is your mother a Māori?"..."Yeah" and she goes, "I can't play, I'm not allowed to play with Māoris". So that was it she wasn't my friend anymore. Funny how those things are so firmly entrenched, she never spoke to me again. (Karen, 40)*

*It was hard for us at school. We were social outcasts. (Q: You were an outcast?). Definitely I guess I was very traumatised as a child for being a different kind compared to White people... I mean any shade of brown is different. (Q: So did you get teased for being Māori at school?) Yeah ...it wasn't even what they were saying, it's just they'd repeat it over and over and over, it was like a stuck record I was thin and I was a different colour and I was just a Māori. They used to call me Black, which is just absurd because, you know, I wasn't even that dark. I actually got into some fist fights because I just couldn't take it anymore. What would happen is that they'd get like a mob involved, so they just start off and then you know, you'd sit there and you'd feel like you didn't have a friend in the world. (Clara, 29)*

The influence of prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori by ‘society’, their perceived racist treatment, and the attitudes of women’s parents shaped the way that women interpreted their Māori identities profoundly. For example, overall, it was much more common for women in this group to report that they **evaluated** Māori unfavourably in their youth, adolescence and in their twenties. For example:

*I guess, to be honest when I was growing up I didn’t really realise that there was a Māori world in New Zealand, I just thought that it was the Pākehā world and we were just sort of bundling along behind them. I just sort of thought that Māori people were like, behind somehow and the only way to get ahead was to be like Pākehā, or fit in with them. (Gabrielle, 36)*

*The only thing I really remember was thinking that all the Māoris were up in Porirua... that was you know, graffiti, dirty, violence...and poor. I think, absolutely I didn’t want to be associated with that. (Hinekawa, 42)*

Some women in this cohort reported that they believed negative **evaluations** of being Māori and those shaped their own identities. For example:

*I couldn’t accept myself being Māori because we were teased at school so I used to hang out with Pākehās. The Māori children at*

*school those days they were really scruffy and you know we used to get teased a lot. And then you had all these well dressed Pākehā so I used to just model them. I found it really hard like to feel good about being Māori like the work place and Māori are always being put down ... in certain circles you are the only Māori around and you hear a lot of people putting down Māori and it's horrible.. so you can see why I just kind of ignored the fact that I was Māori for much of my life. (Gina, 34)*

Two women recounted that they had tried to conceal or ignore that they were Māori. Clara and Gina recalled:

*When I had my son I always remember thinking that I didn't want to be labelled. Like it was bad enough that I was a teenage parent, but I was not going to be labelled as well. It was incredibly important to me what strangers on the street thought of me. I have always had to go out looking tidy. Well not so much tidy but clean, because it had been drummed into me from an early age from my mother. My mother's hang up was that you don't want to be thought of as a dirty Māori. You didn't want to be ...kind of hooked in with being that kind of Māori. You were different to Pākehā and you were unclean. So it was very important to me to not be lumped in with that. So, my son, well I guess he doesn't look Māori to me, I always look at him as a Pākehā child. I always have to make sure that, well I felt the need to make sure that my son was always spotless, because that's*

*the typical stereotype when a young Māori mother lets her children run around on the street and they constantly have snotty noses, no shoes on their feet and that type of, just running wild, and I never did that, I decided that wasn't going to be me... I never actually did anything that openly made a point that I was Māori, I just didn't want anything to do with it. (Clara, 29)*

*I can remember I used to push my Māori side down so that I could fit in. I can remember one time that really stands out in my mind. We went to this party and of course they had all Pākehā friends and I felt really uncomfortable. We got onto this topic about Māori land. I would never talk I would just sit there because I don't have the confidence in speaking you know, I don't usually speak and I don't know anything about land. Well you know later, I found myself later on agreeing with them. I found it really hard. But then, I guess that I had only Pākehā people around me. Or if I had Māori friends, they were like Pākehā anyway. So, I couldn't really stand up and be the only one out you know. (Q: Do you mean there has been times in your life when you have pushed that side of you down so you could fit in?). Yeah definitely, so I could fit in, most of the time I did that. For most of my life I did that. (Gina, 34)*

Three women reported that over their lives they have often de-emphasised that they were Māori in order avoid any stigma that may be attached to them by Pākehā. For example:

*You know like a landlord for example might have a house that they want to rent and if they have a choice between Pākehā and Māori, well they're likely to pick Pākehā ... I've been very aware of it so, like if I go to get a house I'll make myself look more Pākehā and I'll sometimes go with my brother-in-law who is Pākehā. (Vania, 39)*

*Since Pākehā didn't really accept Māori, then we had to fit in with them... be like them (Q: How do you be like them?) It's all in the way that you dress and how you talk. You know... be like them. (Gabrielle, 36)*

#### ***Role models' attitudes.***

Some women reported that their parents attempted to distance their daughters from identifying as Māori – but at the same time attempted to instil in them a sense of self-acceptance. To do this, they encouraged their daughters to value their Māori identity, but at the same time to avoid alienating themselves from Pākehā. For example, Clara and Gabrielle recalled:

*Don't get me wrong... we were raised to the fact that, that Māori was a good thing and were raised to think, well, you are Māori and that's good, and I wouldn't tell anybody differently, that's how we were raised. But it was kind of strange, because at the same time, we*

*were never encouraged to act Māori (Q: Act Māori?) I mean like learn to speak Māori. (Clara, 29)*

*Like they never really put our family down for being Māori – well not us as Māori people. It's actually quite difficult to say how it worked. But it is more like they encouraged us to do well, and I supposed doing well meant fitting in with Pākehā. Since Pākehā didn't really accept Māori, then we had to fit in with them. (Gabrielle, 36)*

Those who were taught to accept their Māori identity within their families reported that they also accepted their Māori identities despite the stigma attached to Māori by society:

*I didn't take any racism against Māori on board personally at all. My parents always saw through any comments about Māori and all that kind of thing, so it was quite good. ... we were acutely aware of some of the negatives associated with being Māori... but because of the way our parents raised us, we knew it was not necessarily because Māori were bad or whatever. (Raquel, 37)*

*I'm very aware of what other people think of Māori people, but I was quite fortunate in that I was from a very young age, it was continually drummed into us, that everyone on this planet, you know, was born equal, was meant to be born equal, and I think I've*

*carried that through my whole life... Yeah, I've carried it through my whole life, like everyone I see is the same as the next person, you know, and if I'm talking to, you know, a prime minister or a prince or, you know, the person down the road, to me they're all the same..... I think my parents just gave us a really... very high self-esteem, the fact that we could do anything that we wanted to do or fit anywhere that we wanted to fit. It might have something to do with the fact that my parents became Jehovah's Witnesses when I was very little. That particular religion talks about there being no racial superiority so there I was continually around those ideas. That no race was above another race...(Q: And your parents taught you this way?) All the time, all the time, so we never saw any one race as being inferior to another...(Q: Were there differences between the groups?). Not that I really noticed. So, I guess that I felt good about what I was. (Vania, 39)*

Taken along with excerpts from the previous section, women's data in this cohort can be viewed as consistent with two aspects of identity theory discussed in chapter two. One, consistent with the observation that acceptance from their intimate social circles matters more to the individual than the perception of socially 'higher' group members, women who learnt to value their Māori identity within their intimate social groups, reported that they felt positive about their identities despite negative stereotypes held about Māori by society. However, if their parents imparted to them a sense of shame around being Māori, women were more



likely to believe negative stereotypes of Māori and try and align themselves with Pākehā or suppress or ignore the fact that they were Māori in Pākehā social circles.

***Social and political awareness and Educational Experiences.***

Women in this cohort were very young or teenagers during the 1960s and 1970s. As they matured and New Zealand society became more open to the concept of Māori equality, these women came to see the relationship between Māori and Pākehā differently. Relatedly, when I interviewed these women in their 30s and 40s they told me that they were finding a sense of pride and fulfillment in being Māori and described themselves as more interested in expressing their Māori identity in their day to day lives and relationships.

For several of these women tertiary education provided the vehicle by which their Māori identity became more salient and important. For example, Gina told me as a younger woman her **formative conditions and role models' attitudes** did not validate being Māori therefore she **evaluated** being Māori negatively and was embarrassed to be Māori up until her early thirties.

However, her views around what it meant to be Māori began to change when she came to University, made friends with other Māori, joined a Kapa Haka group and learnt about Māori history, culture and language. Her change in attitude is illustrated in the following vignette:

*I guess for me the thing that I really notice is that now we really talk about it. Like we talk about Māori identity and what does it stand for. But it was something I don't think my parents, no my grandparents actually talked about. It was like a concealed thing before... how can I say it... like I know in my Mum and Dads day like it was not that they didn't want to be Māori but they tended to go along with Pākehā and not make a big deal about being Māori... so I guess that's why I was ashamed of being Māori myself for so long... Now Māori are standing up and saying, no we are different and we have our own way of doing things. They are demanding their own way to do things the way that they want to, in a Māori way. Before, that was never really an option... so that's why today I am grasping at trying to be Māori – because it's healing for me. (Q: Healing?) Well, like, before it wasn't. Because of my struggle... Right, what I just said then and what I'm going to say now I can see how you think I would be contradicting myself. But I see it as a result of my struggle. But now, well it's OK to be Māori now, and I have Māori friends here, and we are in Kapa Haka, so I guess I have learnt more about accepting that part of me. So my identity as Māori is different. I love and accept it now, because it is accepted now. People don't frown upon us now. But now it's easier being Māori. That's how I put it. It's easier being Māori now. (Gina, 34)*

Similarly, Gabrielle, Clara and Vania observed that, as they became more involved with other Māori at University and as society became more accepting of Māori people, they also came to accept and value being Māori personally. They observed:

*How I feel about being Māori, well that is something that has really changed. As a teenager I went through a period where I would have done anything to be, just to be normal (Q: To be normal?). Because it felt like I was abnormal. I guess now you could say that I have reached a point where I finally accept myself... I mean, society is accepting Māori now more. For me personally, I've recently, through just, I mean academic life is fabulous... you actually open up as a person and you let new information in. ... I've spent this year just learning as much as I can... Now my affiliation is Māori and I feel good about that... but if you'd asked me twelve or eighteen months ago, I would probably say "hell no, I'm only part Māori". (Clara, 29)*

*Being Māori is very very important to me but I only became quite focussed on it in recent times...I think what triggered that awareness was greater exposure to issues of cultural identity around the university and being around it sort of. It raised my awareness of political things. Not so much my personal experience but especially the experience of other Māori and then I've kind of like taken on that and learnt about it. And I really have thought about it and then*

*thought well maybe if being Māori is so important for them then it must be important for me somehow. So now I personally feel as if being Māori is important to me. I've done lots and lots of different things and my cultural identity was not particularly important to me in certain times of my life for various reasons but now I think it's very important. (Vania, 39)*

*Now I think you could say I have come the full circle. From not really seeing myself as Māori or promoting that side to me, to being fully involved in the Māori world. But that is something that has happened over time. There was a long time in my life that I really just focussed on being a good Pākehā. But how I see myself has changed a lot. It is like a journey or perhaps a struggle to accept yourself, but it comes over time. Things changed for me when I started to learn how to speak Māori and met cool Māori people. Now I see that I have always been Māori, but I guess now it is a bigger part of my life. (Gabrielle, 36)*

Another influence that tertiary education had on women's Māori identities was that, as they gained insight into the structural antecedents of Māori social problems, they began to attribute these to factors external to Māori control (rather than Māori inability to 'cope' with Pākehā society). This helped them to **evaluate** their Māori identities more positively because they were able to talk about how Māori had 'survived' despite the historical challenges they had faced. For example,

several women in this group referred to Māori as being oppressed, and four referred explicitly to the Treaty of Waitangi and historical injustices Māori have experienced:

*Actually I do think we do well considering our history and the barriers that we have. Colonisation is about consistently being shut out of any kind of advantage. You think of all the things that Māori people have been through but we are still here. We are still here to tell the story. I think we need to take pride in that. We need to feel good that we do come from strong, tough people. We come from survivors. (Karen, 40)*

*I just think Māori people are a product of cultural oppression and colonisation in terms of, you know, if you, having our land taken away. There's no place to be, you're kind of dispossessed, we have all those kind of emotions, that emotional and psychological trauma ...I think there's lots of crap about it in the media and there's all these kinds of knowledge that, you know, continue, like for example what you hear on the TV you know, Māori do this, Māori kill their kids, Māori, you know, which the majority of New Zealanders particularly the well educated, take all that stuff on. Then it forms part of their knowledge base, so they're continually looking at Māori, whoever you are, as being part of that group that does these few bad things and so whether they can help it or not... Like a landlord for example might have a house that they want to rent and*

*if they have a choice between Pākehā and Māori, well they're likely to pick Pākehā, the reason for that discrimination is based on all these bloody ideas. (Vania, 39)*

*The most interesting thing that I find about New Zealand society is that the racism and the discrimination is so subtle that the average Joe Blo would not even see it, hear it, recognise it...and like years and years of that sort of secret sort of oppression, it's just almost like this little secret that's going around and um, I think that it all really does weigh down on you. It undermines your self confidence and your self-esteem. It's a form of discrimination, I don't, I can't even pin point it myself... and I didn't really see it as much until I started at University. But I know that I do feel it and it's like because it's on the news every night and you might be, you are an innocent good person in society but there are people looking out their windows at you and all they see is "Māori - this could be danger" but there's always this sort of gap and distinction between Pākehā and Māori... I don't even know how I can even pin point it without sounding like I'm complaining...You know what I mean it's like "oh there they go again, they're bloody moaning the same old thing, we give them all this bloody education" But I think if anything it's sort of, it's a form of damage to your self-esteem but in saying that as well, it's also a form of stress because like here, like when I'm here I feel it's like, it's sort of that oppression. ... Māori have got so much going for them. But other things have been put in front*

*of them to prevent them from progressing. (Gabrielle, 36)*

***Personal views of identity.***

Women in this group were generally positive about their identities as Māori at the time they were interviewed (that is they said they accepted and felt positive that they were Māori). However, several reported feeling ‘unsettled’ or not being completely ‘at peace’ with their Māori identities.

Two reasons for this were given. One, because some of these women had not valued their Māori identity when they were younger they said that they felt saddened when they reflected on their own previously held negative beliefs about being Māori and the behaviours associated with them (such as ignoring the fact that they were Māori). In other words, because women did not value being Māori for some period in their lives (either out of choice or because they were taught not to) this created a sense of ‘loss’ and sadness for them personally. Their sentiments are captured in the following two accounts:

*I feel like I lost so many opportunities to learn about being Māori because I was ashamed of my own Māori identity ... When I was younger my grandfather was a historian and a genealogist and he used to take us around all the marae in Taranaki and he used to talk about the carvings and all the history. He used to make us take notebooks but I used to sit there and not really even take it in because I didn't want to know. I blocked it all out. Now I could kick*

*myself for doing that everyday. Because he offered that knowledge to us and I chose not to learn... I didn't want to know about being Māori because of the way we were treated... now I look back and I really regret that! So, I feel like I lost a lot. (Gina, 34)*

*Yes I find it very hard. I look back and I had a lot of pain and grief associated with my past. It makes me so angry now when I think on how much I missed out on with my Māori side. I didn't even know any better either, which makes it worse. I think that I missed out on so much because I wasn't connected to my Māori identity. All I was taught about being Māori was negative and I didn't have any other way to think about it... and so my identity had little meaning... ..so it has been a very long journey for me. Learning who I am and about my whakapapa... But the pain is still there. (Hinekawa, 42)*

Second, because women in this group had not been socialised culturally as Māori several reported they were still 'learning' how to express that identity appropriately. They also reported that their success in achieving a Māori identity was at least partly constrained by the way they were perceived by others. In reference to this, several women in this group reported that they wanted to be **defined** as Māori, however, found it difficult to be accepted by others as Māori. For example:

*Lots of times I felt that I didn't fit in as Māori ...I can specifically think of an example when I went for a scholarship and one of the*



questions that they asked was “do you have Te Reo?” Well, no I didn’t so I got a zero for that out of five for that. The other question was “how connected are you with you local community?” and because I wasn’t really very well connected with my community, I probably got one out of five. I felt very marginalised with the fact that I wasn’t up to the criteria. That really got to me that, because I had really tried to do the best that I can for Māori students at University and I had really tried to help them you know. I always go out of my way to do the best I can for my own people but just because I didn’t speak the language I didn’t count. I’ve been to hui and kind of felt like I didn’t really fit in. I kind of, well a part of me felt like I was Māori but I know that I subjectively felt as if I was Māori but I know that people looking at me didn’t see me as being Māori, you know... When I was down at the last Māori conference people were kind of looking sideways at me like you know. Subjectively I feel like a part of that group but objectively I know they don’t see me as part of that group because others thought I was a really kind of academic Pākehā kind of person. (Vania, 39)

(Q: Do you find that other Māori make it hard for you?) Some do.

(Q: How do they do that?) Their attitudes towards you, their unfriendliness. I’ve asked many questions (at Kapa Haka) because I don’t know what to do sometimes and I’ve got some weird looks back. It’s scary. I had never experienced that sort of stuff until I went there... (Q: How do you be Māori enough to fit in?) Well if

*you don't understand the reo, or you don't know it enough, you are looked down upon. So you are not treated the same. (Gina, 34)*

*Sometimes I feel like I get treated differently by other Māori because I'm fair, you know. I've got cousins and that say "eeeh, your freckle face, you're a honki, Pākehā... but now I think, It's not about the colour, or, like to me, and even now, and I'm forty now and I still get that. A couple of years ago I had an argument with my cousin. We were having a family reunion and we had this committee and we were arguing over stuff and my cousin said to me "oh the trouble with you is you are too Pākehā. (Karen, 40)*

Because some women in this cohort wanted to identify as Māori but felt ostracised because they were not 'Māori enough' (lacked Māori cultural skills) some were quite apologetic about what they referred to as a lack of Māori cultural competence. For example:

*Now my affiliation is Māori but, but it's like, it's almost like I have to put a disclaimer on myself and say "yes I identify as being Māori but don't hold me up as a Māori example because I don't know my own culture" and it's like I, I'm making apologies for not knowing enough, now. (Clara, 29)*

Others were quite defensive about their right to be **defined** and accepted as Māori the way they were. In talking about what it meant to be Māori

therefore, women tended to emphasise that being accepted as a Māori person should not be predicated upon cultural features known. These comments represent women's arguments for their own acceptance as Māori despite their lack of enculturation or physical Māori features:

*What is a Māori? I mean really, what is a Māori? We all descend from Māori lineage and so I think we shouldn't be frowned upon because of what we haven't got or what we don't know about our own culture... I think Māori is accepting all of us, you know all on one plane – not just different levels of different people.... that main connection (is) that we are all Māori – in blood. Because everyone has to go through their processes with their identity as Māori and they will all finally reach their own way of being Māori. I believe anyway, I don't think that it should be defined in just one way like it is now. (Gina, 34)*

*I don't think there's one type of Māori— or that there should be an ideal way to be. I don't think you can say this is a Māori person and this is Māori identity because it's different for different people. It is really how you choose to identify yourself. If you want to say you are Māori. It's not about te reo, it's not about that. It's about tikanga and what is right. What is right is that you don't destroy someone's mana by putting them down for what they are. That is not tika (right) you know. I don't care if a person can rattle off ten hours of straight reo who cares? (Karen, 40)*

### *Summary Cohort Two.*

Women of this generation were raised at a time when being Māori was not socially valued in New Zealand and Māori were struggling to succeed among Pākehā in urban settings. Reflecting this, women recalled that they were raised in the 'Pākehā world' and were encouraged to see themselves as New Zealanders. They described their parents as trying to distance them from negative stereotypes associated with Māori people (which also had the effect of distancing them from opportunities to learn their own Māori culture). They also made a distinction between 'good' aspects of being Māori and 'bad aspects' (being a 'good' Māori meant being a 'brown' Pākehā and being a 'bad Māori' meant being 'radical' or lowering oneself to stereotypical 'bad' Māori behaviour). Many of these women recounted that they de-emphasised their Māori identities up until their twenties and tended to believe negative stereotypes about Māori people. As prevailing ideas around Māori people and culture changed however and women were became more politically aware they changed their views and began to value their Māori identity. Problematically however, because women had been taught not to identify or express themselves as Māori they felt that being able to accept themselves as Māori was an ongoing and arduous emotional journey. This was further complicated for some women during their adult years because they lacked the cultural skills to be accepted as Māori by other Māori.

### ***Cohort Three***

#### ***Introduction.***

This was the youngest group of women aged 18 years to 30 years old at the time of interviewing. There were originally seven women in this group all of whom attended individual interviews (however, the data from one of these women has previously been presented in cohort two). Five members of this cohort had lived in Auckland for much of their lives (two were raised in smaller towns but were living in Auckland at the time of interviewing) and as a corollary they were exposed to multi-cultural social networks during their formative years. Only three women in this group reported having two Māori parents (two had one parent who was part Māori), whilst three reported one of their parents was Māori and the other Pākehā. Another participant had one Chinese parent and one Māori parent.

#### ***Prevailing ideas and stereotypes about Māori by 'society', Te Reo***

#### ***Māori and exposure to Māori cultural contexts.***

Probably the most defining feature of this group was that their formative years were heavily influenced by Māori political activism of the 1960s and 1970s. Due to the rapid political changes in New Zealand society throughout this period these women were much more likely than Māori women born only a few years earlier to have been socialised to be proud to be Māori and learn about Māori culture, history and language. In testimony to this, four reported involvement in Māori community activities from a very young age.

*Although we were raised in Mangere at a very young age I was exposed to life on the marae and Māori groups ... For the first four years of my life I was immersed in Māori — you had to listen to it, it was the only form of language that was spoken so, you know, you fully immersed in it and being Māori... so I suppose you could say I definitely know who I was and I have always felt very comfortable with that side of myself— whereas I knew who I was and where we fitted into things as a Māori person. (Rangimarie, 30)*

*The earliest memory I've got, of my culture probably when I was ... about nine... is well, we've got really strong links in the tribe I was brought up in ... I remember, because what they'd use to do is they'd fundraise on the old marae. I can't even remember it was that long ago. They wanted to build the new one, and just stuff like that. I remember each year they'd fundraise and one of the fundraisers was the walk from Napier to Lake Tutira and somehow they got sponsored. And my grandparents would do that every year, and we'd all drive out and meet them, I remember that, and we used to have discos in our wharekai...we were really brought up with Māori culture.(April, 28)*

*To do with Māori identity I was brought up with all things Māori I suppose, it's just a way of life. I don't think you can call it one thing as such. If my nana had to go to a meeting or to a marae then so did I. Yeah, I wasn't holding her hand I'd be in her handbag, you know.*

*And I was brought up with big boil ups and rewana bread... and so, you could say that we were brought up in a Māori way. (Maxine, 20)*

Six women in this group recalled they were either involved in Kapa Haka and/or had learnt Māori language at school. One participant attended Kohanga Reo as a pre-schooler. She recalled:

*I started Kohanga Reo when I was 18 months old... so I had that upbringing... so I was pretty lucky. Then I joined a Kapa Haka group and so that was a big part of my younger years. I spent most of my spare time there and learnt a lot. (Donna, 18)*

Because women in this group were socialised to identify themselves as Māori and learn about Māori culture many **evaluated** being Māori positively from a young age. For example:

*I was brought up very Māori... you know Māori culture. I can say I have only had positive feelings about that. Yes, I mean we were very lucky. So, yeah, for me I see my own identity as a good thing. (April, 28)*

*I always had that in my mind. That I was Māori and I knew my whakapapa. I was taught that I come from women who are strong ... there's that lineage of staunch women within my family...that*

*won't take any crap...and I am proud of that identity. (Rangimarie, 30)*

*To do with Māori identity I don't think you could say that I saw anything not good about it. (Maxine, 20)*

*I feel good about being Māori. I can't remember a time I actually felt anything bad about being Māori in itself. (Donna, 18)*

Because these women had more exposure to Māori culture and language their ideas about their Māori identity appeared reminiscent of those valued in 'traditional' Māori society – such as whanau loyalty and cohesiveness.

For example:

*(Q: What does it mean to be Māori do you think?) What comes to mind is whanau values, definitely whanau, always saying you look after the whanau. Whanaungatanga is the major thing that our Mum taught us. To me if you go back to the marae and find your roots, everything else will be okay, you know it gets better, to me you know who you are and where you come from and if you know you're got like, anything can happen but I can always go back to my marae at any time you know. (April, 28)*

*What does it mean to be Māori? I think to be Māori, or Māori values, it's about being whanau orientated I think the first thing that*



*we learnt, since I was a baby, was just being whanau orientated. I think that's a Māori thing. Like a live with my Auntie now, and she's Pākehā and it's quite a bit, its different. About tikanga Māori, I just remembered another thing like...respect for elders, I mean regardless of who they are in the Māori world, so to speak, "you know this is so-and-so" you always go up and kiss them, you know give up your chair for them. It's just normal to do. It's just a bit weird going to my Auntie's house and her, she's got three children, and hers are all sitting down and she was standing up, you know just little things like that. (Maxine, 20)*

*I think Māori priorities are like family and... support and stuff and that's no really, oh well it is, but Pākehā people have a more like "me first" and then "if I'm all right, then I can look after everyone else." Māori people help others and then they help themselves from, you know, being a support system for others, like they feed each other. (Donna, 18)*

### ***Socio-Political Awareness and Education.***

Not only did women in this group **evaluate** their identities as Māori positively from a young age, but because they had been exposed to socio-political education through the media and education system they were well informed about Māori rights, the Treaty of Waitangi and the obligations of Pākehā towards Māori. In speaking about these concepts several of them

referred explicitly to Māori political activism of the 1970s and how that had changed the way that society saw Māori people. For example:

*You see, what happened is that Māori have gone out there and claimed their rights... we have made others listen to us and respect our culture. New Zealanders have to accept everyone, you know, I mean, in our country there's the Treaty issue as well, you know, it's like that Black and White partnership, but we're more willing to actually settle but the Whites aren't really, they're not into it yet. Now people are now waking up and actually seeing that there are different sides and different ways of actually living, in a sense that like um, that we acknowledge our Māori history and it's actually being acknowledged and it's taken 22 years to be acknowledged, you know, since the first protest march of getting the Treaty legalised within New Zealand back in 1980. (Rangimarie, 30)*

Women's knowledge of Māori history combined with their own positive views of being Māori meant that this group tended to be quite critical of stereotypes held against Māori by 'society' and refuted negative views attached to Māori people. In testimony to this, several women recounted instances when they had defended Māori as a group whilst around Pākehā who were 'putting Māori down' or were treating Māori unfairly. For example April and Maxine recalled:

*(Q: Do you think that you have ever experienced any racism?) We had a family event a few years ago, we held it at this Christian camp and we had such an awesome time. The owners came up and were amazed how as a whanau we got on and treated our babies and our people and they just were so surprised and shocked because they didn't know Māori could be good people. They were paying us a compliment, but we were like what? You know? Because they told us themselves that all they see on the news is bad things about Māori people, and because they don't associate with Māori in their general lives they didn't know any better... I think that the media plays a lot which makes me angry...did have experiences when I was working at the dockyard ... there were a lot of Poms, and they would hear something on the news... and they'd go "bloody Māoris don't need all that man!" ... I just said, "You don't know the story — you've only been here five years" They would hear something, you know like the land occupation at Moutua Gardens...and they'd just make comments and stuff when they actually wouldn't know. When I would hear people make derogatory comments I would get angry, you know because, I would know that they knew I could hear and that's rude. (April, 28)*

*My ex-boyfriend and I went to a chemist once, and we were just looking and I wanted him to buy this perfume for me. I walked in and that was cool. Then he walked in, looked around and said "No, I'm going". I said "what's the matter?" and he pointed to this*

*Pākehā lady who was obviously following us around. Checking up on him... I think it was because he was Māori. It happened one other time when we stopped at the Bombays (an area South of Auckland) to put petrol in his car, and the Pākehā lady came up to him. Maybe five or six other people were putting petrol in their cars at the same time. And she came up to him and said "have you paid for that?", and he said "yeah" and she said "oh, well can I see your receipt?" I mean, who is she to ask us? He was just standing there like everyone else and she didn't ask any other people where their receipts were. He got really intimidated. But I was like "Whoa, why don't you ask everyone else here?" and I wouldn't give her the receipt. (Maxine, 20)*

Women's defence of Māori rights and people in the face of Pākehā prejudice (if not real, at least perceived) is reflective of the historical period into which these women were born. Women in this group refused to accept any negative views of Māori people because they were raised to see Māori as at least 'equal' to Pākehā. This attitude is also evident in Rangimarie's comment:

*I really think Pākehā need to catch up... they need to learn about the Treaty... they need to be educated in the basics of Māori culture... The Treaty is an actual living document which Pākehā are ignorant about... I mean I get sick of their underhand comments and I think for me... like I said, I am proud to be a Māori woman. I don't buy*

*into any of their ignorant beliefs... Māori and Pākehā have an equal share in this country. Pākehā have to meet us half way.*  
(Rangimarie, 30)

***Relationships with other Māori people (non familial).***

While all of these women identified as Māori, some women in this group did not look physically Māori (a phenomena which may be seen as a reflection of the complex and multi-cultural **formative conditions** in which they were raised) and found that they sometimes received a subdued response from other Māori as a corollary. Their experiences are recounted in the following excerpts:

*(Q: Your parents are dark?) My parents are dark. But I am fair. I have a twin brother and he's very fair but he has brown eyes, and I have blue eyes, and I'm the only one in all my extended family that I've ever seen that has blue eyes. I think that we're throw backs from my Mum's side. ... It's been quite amazing, cause in my experience, I've had felt people judge me because I am fair. They call me waka blonde.... When we were 6 her (my friend) and I ...she was very like a Māori girl... we went to join the Māori club ... after school and this, kid ...she poked her head out the window, and she must have been about standard three, and said "Whereabouts are you going?" and we said "Oh we're going off to Māori club", and she looked at me and she says "you can't bring her, she's a Pākehā, she can't join Māori club! (Brenda 28)*

*I noticed the difference between cultures more in the Kapa Haka group than I did being at school because in Kapa Haka all the others were brown and I was the White one. So, they always used to say that I'm the Pākehā one, even though I've got Māori blood in me. I've never ignored it but, I don't know, probably now that I'm older I don't really make a big deal out of it. If it's not an issue I'll just not mention it. I'll say something if I think I should, but it's probably not something that you really need to talk about. It's ironic that it's probably more Māori people that think that I'm not Māori, like Pākehā people will say "oh, have you got Māori blood in you, well that's weird, you're so White" but Māori people don't believe it. Like they are thinking "you don't look Māori to me"... so in that respect it is hard being a White Māori... When I was younger there were older people in the Kapa Haka group who used to get quite annoyed with me because I always be winning the trophies (for skilful performances)... One day we were at the prize giving and we were sitting, sitting behind a whole group of people who were saying about me "she shouldn't have got that she's just a Pākehā, she's just a Pākehā" and Dad got so offended, he was so hurt.*

*(Donna, 18)*

*I was brought up in a very strong Māori community ... it's got probably between 50% and 60% Māori people. I got teased so much when I was young for looking Chinese and then I think that when we got older and they realised that I wasn't just Chinese, I had some*

*Māori in me, I mean I know that we were young, you know, kids walk around and they go "I'm Māori", guess what "I'm Māori" and we would say, "yeah yeah, we are too" and they would go "no you're not" and as a child it's hard to, I mean, it's hard to identify when you don't look like them, do you know what I mean? But, I really wanted to be Māori you know. (Janet, 24)*

These vignettes demonstrate that the process of identity development for light-skinned Māori or those who do not look physically Māori may be particularly complicated as Māori people's capacity to see themselves as Māori is reliant upon other people verifying that they are – either explicitly (e.g. by letting them join Māori groups) or implicitly (e.g. by acting towards them as if they are Māori).

***Personal views of identity.***

Another marked aspect of this group is their tendency to focus on ethnic diversity in New Zealand as being relevant to how they personally interpreted being Māori. For example, five women in this group spoke about their Māori identity, but also mentioned that Māori were another 'group' in society and that all people should be accepted equally:

*I accept that Māori, Pākehā, Islanders whatever. That's what happens when you are a bi-racial person. You just accept all groups, cultures, colours and breeds. (Rangimarie, 30)*

*I really like the diversity of our society you know. Like you can be Māori, Pākehā or whatever and that is O.K. We are all equal, well supposed to be. Whatever the case, I would accept Māori and Pākehā equally. I have no bad feelings about either group. (Donna, 18)*

This acknowledgement of ethnic diversity reflected women's social networks. Women in this group had partners, parents, friends and work colleagues that were Pākehā (or non-Māori) and, therefore, to focus on their own Māori identity all the time seemed inconsistent with the reality of their lives. Rather than emphasising that they were Māori women recognised a complexity in their own identities and that how they expressed themselves as Māori changed according to social contexts. This theme of flexibility manifested in a number of ways throughout the data. Several women told me they could move among different kinds of people changing themselves to what was appropriate in each social setting. For example:

*I think I can fit in with Māori and Pākehā both equally. When I was younger I would say more Māori society but now, like, my aunty is a Pākehā, I work with Pākehā and that's all cool, so that's alright I can yarn to and fit in with anybody, it's like, yeah, it's all right I would say equal. In fact I would say, 50/50 – you know, I can fit in equally as well. (Maxine, 20)*



*I think I am lucky that I can fit in with Māori and Pākehā. You can talk about us being Māori and what does that mean. Well of course it means that we are proud of who we are and be proud of our culture. But in reality, we are all urban Māori. We live in a Pākehā system. So to get by, we have to make the most of who we are in the world around us. That doesn't mean that we turn our backs on our culture, but we got to be realistic. You know, I would never deny who I am as Māori - but that is something that is a part of me. That does not mean that I don't value it, of course I do, it is always there. But, it doesn't mean that I have to be not cool with Pākehā. You know I can fit in wherever I like – I think that you can do that without even thinking about it really. (Q: How do you do that?). Well when I am with Māori I am Māori, act Māori, speak Māori. When I am with Pākehā, at work or what have you, I do the Pākehā thing –you know, speak like them, share their sense of humour. (Rangimarie, 30)*

*I feel that I fit into a Pākehā society pretty well ...Well, oh just because it's all around you and you just have to fit in with what's normal (Q: So do you think that when you move from situation to situation you fit in according to what's required?) Yeah basically. (Q: If you were around Māori people all the time, do you think your attitude towards your Māori identity would change?) To be Māori it's not that important to me at the moment. Probably because I am not around Māori all the time. I've got a mix of friends, but my*

*Māori friends are like me, they're not that hard out (colloquial language that indicates they do not emphasise or focus on their Māori identities) Yeah... I think I'd probably get a lot more defensive when I was around other cultures but I was like, I was emerged in Māori I think, I'd be like, I'd totally defend my Māori side and forget the whole that I'm Pākehā. (Donna, 18)*

*I used to work for banking, in ANZ in Wellington, there were, we had a lot of Māori and Pacific Islanders, so not, there were a few Pākehā, they were a bit more, sort of in management, but they weren't kiwi Pākehā, they were like German and like, all kinds of people. I don't recall being treated differently, and um, when I was working at Devonport my boss was married to a Māori so I guess that you couldn't say that they were racist. I was used just to being around lots of different kinds of people and I didn't feel uncomfortable at all. So I guess in that sense, I could fit in with most people. I think that you have to just act appropriately when you are in certain situations. (April, 28)*

Not only did women report that they acted appropriately around Pākehā and other non-Māori to 'fit in' with them, but also that they sometimes managed themselves differently around Māori to be accepted by them also. For example, one participant recalled that she would act differently around younger and older Māori in order to be acceptable to them:

*I have some very diverse groups who I'm working with in my research and some are them are these old Kaumatuas, very tribal people and some are young people who, you know, are miles apart from the Kaumatua.... so for research I can pull my form out in terms of um, when I might need to talk to a kaumatua for part of my research you can start pulling out you know, you can drop words in and you know, whatever, and I have to think of, you know I don't want it to come across like I'm trying to think of a um, is it something kind of manipulative. It is about (Q: Just acting the right way at the time?) Yeah and it doesn't mean I'm not those things because I am those things but, more then that too...So when I'm talking to young people you need to be able to use... the right language. Your language that you use, can you actually talk to them at a level that they can understand, a lot of it is about the clothes you wear...so that they will identify with me (Brenda, 28)*

Another observed that she would talk in a Māori 'way' around her relations to ensure they could 'relate' to her:

*Sometimes when I go back home to Gisborne and I'll catch up with my 'cousie bros' (colloquial speech for relations in same age group) and they'll go "oh, here comes the urban Māori" And I always say to them, I say "what is your definition of urban Māori guys, come on, you know, be truthful" and they say "you, you're an urban Māori. You got all the gears and a flash car. You guys live*

*in a nice house, you know, got a good education, yeah, you're an urban Māori" So when I am with my cousins from the bush, I adapt my verbal speech. Yeah I always do that. It's actually quite funny. When I talk to anyone who "talks like that bro" (changes accent) I make sure that I talk like that too. And, I don't tell them what my job is just in case it puts them off me. It's that who thing you know, so I can just turn and change the way I talk and what I talk about to fit in. I think you can't make yourself seem too different from people else they can't relate to you eh?*  
*(Rangimarie, 30)*

What these excerpts illustrate is that overall, because these women moved in complex and differentiated **personal contexts** how they **described** their identities and how they expressed themselves around others reflected those conditions. Overall, it seemed that these women saw their Māori identity as an aspect of their identities as a person that could not be described in one specific way.

Because there was no one 'right way' to be Māori for this group, three of these women made the observation that 'proper' Māori characteristics should not be limited to specific features. Several commented that they were aware that the common perception of what it means to be Māori required they knew their whakapapa, could speak Māori and had close supportive relationships with their hapu, iwi and Māori whanau. Women agreed that these were positive and desirable for Māori and themselves

personally, however, frustrating for women who could not relate to them personally. General consensus among women was that defining Māori identity in one way was therefore exclusionary. This view was expressed most explicitly by Brenda:

*I mean to me, where we are living now is like cultural slavery you know. We're imposing ideas about what being Māori means on our young people and we're absolutely ignoring the identity issues they may have that are important to them... That's were you get comments like "its so sad that they think like this", "its so sad that they don't care about learning Te Reo" ... I'm not saying that te reo and Kapa Haka aren't important, they are important but that's not all there is, you know, for us to think that that's all there is denying the whole majority of us ... if you look at the people who ... are the culturally connected in that strongest sense, they are a very small proportion of all of us and yet so much resources and so much decision making power is centered in that small group, it makes me wonder who ... are we aiming at, it ain't us... you know.. As far as I'm concerned you are Māori if you have whakapapa. And whakapapa is a concept that I think transcends all those things because it exists regardless of your knowledge of it. (Brenda, 28)*

In this last section, Brenda posits the view that Māori identity should be predicated upon whakapapa and all manifestations of Māori should be accepted. This is perhaps an indication of emerging view in younger

Māori, that identity as Māori should no longer be categorised or defined in cultural terms.

***Summary Cohort Three.***

Women of this generation were raised in a time when Māori had established themselves within urban environments and had made significant progress in attaining recognition of Māori social, political, and cultural rights. As such, women in this cohort were often socialised to be proud of their own Māori heritage, were socio-politically educated and were confident in claiming that Māori was a valuable identity despite the continued prejudice they believed Māori experienced. These women also claimed that they had the right to express being Māori the way that they wanted to and also described incidents in which they ‘played up’ certain aspects of their own identities in order to fit in socially and achieve their aims around others.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION OF AGE GROUP DIFFERENCES**

### *Introduction*

In this study I found marked similarities in Māori identity ‘content’ (descriptions, evaluations, meanings) and experiences between women in the same age group and marked differences in Māori identity between women from different age groups. This chapter provides a discussion of the key features that differentiated each cohort.

### *Cohort One*

The overarching factor unique to cohort one was that these women had been raised in Māori communities at a time when Māori social and cultural structures were still largely intact. The fact that older women formed early ideas about their identities within these ‘protected’ communities is a pivotal difference of this generation from the others. Several implications of their shared experiences in this respect were evident.

Firstly, the majority of cohort one had two Māori parents and lived mainly among Māori during their formative years. Because of this women reported relatively uncomplicated self-definitions. While several women in subsequent cohorts said they used to think they were ‘New Zealanders’ and did not explicitly identify as Māori when they were younger, the majority of women from cohort one said they were always conscious of

being Māori, that being Māori was ‘normal’ in Māori communities and, therefore, never questionable to them personally.

Secondly, while women in all three cohorts reported that family relationships were important to their identities, older Māori spoke about the influence of familial relationships in quite a specific way. Because many of cohort one had been raised in traditional tribal areas this group was more likely to emphasise that their extended whanau played a role in their socialisation and therefore were central to how they saw themselves as Māori (specifically they spoke of their grandparents, uncles and aunts as being role models for them in their younger years and that large families contributed to the ‘unity’ of the Māori people).

Thirdly, because this group had been raised among their own kaumatua they observed role models living in a ‘culturally Māori way’ from a young age. This was important for identity in this group in two ways. First, as children, they had had the opportunity to learn Māori culture and hear Māori spoken as part of their ‘normal’ day to day lives and as such, they were the most enculturated group. Reflecting this, when they spoke about their own identities as Māori they drew from what they recalled of the virtues of Māori community life. Secondly, cohort one had routine exposure to Māori role models who were competent and successful according to Māori cultural and economic standards. In testimony to this, women described grandparents, great grandparents and older aunts and uncles who provided for their own families by cultivating gardens, fishing,



and 'living off the land'. Women spoke fondly of these role models who they described as 'great providers' 'tough', 'hard working' and competent people who 'relied upon themselves' for everything. What this meant was that when these women spoke about what it meant to be Māori they spoke about the qualities they saw modelled by their older relations and parents model such as self sufficiency, skill, hard work, and independence. This pattern differentiated them from women in younger cohorts who did not report seeing Māori people as competent or successful when they were younger (as they had been socialised by role models who were struggling to 'fit' in with Pākehā in urban environments and were not able to achieve the same level of social success and value among them).

These two factors in combination seemed to have a positive impact on cohort one as they helped women value their Māori identities and describe Māori people in favourable ways. Since women saw Māori people as successful people (unified, hardworking and competent) when they were younger they applied this view of being Māori themselves. Three reported being grateful for their experiences in this respect because their exposure to competent Māori role models overrode (at least in terms of how they spoke about their Māori identities) any prejudice that they faced from Pākehā later in their lives. Several kuia explicitly referred to their childhoods as 'protective'. One woman told me she had a 'barrier' around her and four mentioned how they were lucky to have been raised in the 'Māori world.'

Because of their formative conditions, compared to the younger women in this study these older women appeared more at peace with themselves as Māori (none reported feeling anxiety or shame about being Māori at any time in their lives). Nor did women discuss colonisation as a phenomenon or express resentment towards Pākehā per se (this is important because these ideas were expressed repeatedly by women in the next two cohorts). There may be several reasons why older women were more 'resolved' in their identities. Their quiet self acceptance and lack of animosity towards Pākehā may have been a reflection of age, relative wisdom, and maturity or simply due to their upbringing in Māori communities which enabled them to consolidate a positive, firm sense of self and identity from a very young age which they carried with them throughout their lives. Another may be because the majority of cohort one reported their life-stories in a public forum (hui) and, as such, they may not have felt completely comfortable talking about material that they perceived as objectionable (i.e. politically sensitive issues or their own personal feelings of anger, grief or sadness).

### ***Cohort Two***

Older women differed markedly in their views of what it meant to be Māori from women in the 'middle cohort' who were in their 30s and 40s at the time they were interviewed. This cohort was raised in urban environments among Pākehā and other non Māori, at a time when Māori still faced considerable prejudice from Pākehā and it was common for people to believe that Māori stood the best chance of thriving in modern

society if they assimilated with Pākehā. The fact that these women formed early ideas about their Māori identities within these contexts was an important factor shaping the identities of women in this cohort because it influenced how they perceived their Māori identities.

For example, many women reported that they had always been aware of negative stereotypes held about Māori people (i.e. ‘poor’, ‘dirty’ and ‘violent’ were stereotypes described). Many recalled that their parents wanted them to succeed and because of the stereotypes attached to Māori being successful meant being ‘like’ Pākehā and not being seen as Māori. In testimony to this pattern two women reported that when they were younger the ‘right way was the white way’ and in the words of one woman it was common for Māori to be brought up to be ‘like Brown Pākehā.’ In addition, as a general rule, women from cohort two were not taught the Māori culture or language when they were younger because their parents and grandparents had been influenced by earlier assimilation policies and, reflecting, this continued to reinforce them among their own children.

The impact of these experiences on cohort two were profound. Women from this group reported that they struggled to feel good about being Māori in their younger years. Three reported ignoring being Māori and trying to pass as Pākehā when they were teenagers and young adults. One woman recounted being Māori had been a ‘struggle’ for her for much of her life.

The central difference between many of the women from cohort two and women from cohort one was that for cohort two women being Māori did not have social and cultural value in any social context they moved in during their formative years. These women faced discrimination from wider society yet were also often socialised by their parents to reject (or distance themselves from) their Māori identities. In this way, women born in the 1950s and 1960s bore the brunt of historical legacies of assimilation. They faced negative concepts and experiences associated with being Māori in the absence of conceptual resources and relationships they could draw from to assert any alternative views. Reflecting this, three out of the nine women from this middle cohort told me that they felt shame and embarrassment about being Māori at some stage in their lives. Three others told me that they had put their Māori identities 'to the side' for much of their lives. Another told me she still avoids Pākehā people because, at some level, still thinks that Pākehā will see her as inferior somehow.

Another unique feature of this group was that they reported a shift in how they saw being Māori later in their lives. While many of these women struggled to value being Māori when they were younger as they matured they were influenced by the ideological changes associated with the Māori renaissance and were increasingly encouraged to value their Māori identities. This meant that women felt positive about being Māori at the time interviewed. However, four women reported that learning to accept being Māori had been a difficult process which had absorbed their

attention and emotional resources at some stage in their lives. One factor which complicated their process of developing a positive view of being Māori was that their lack of cultural knowledge meant they found it difficult to be accepted as ‘authentic’ or ‘real Māori’ Māori by other Māori (this applied particularly to Māori women who were part Māori and/or light skinned as they did not look Māori physically). Because some of these women lacked the ‘cultural skills’ to express themselves as culturally Māori, four of them conveyed a sense of inadequacy around expressing their Māori identity.

### ***Cohort Three***

The experiences of women in the middle group sat in stark contrast to those of the younger women interviewed. The youngest group of women in this study were socialised in similar communities as the previous cohort (multi-cultural and urban) but these women benefited from the cultural and political renaissance and associated ideologies of ‘bi-culturalism’ and equality increasingly acknowledged by the New Zealand Government and education system from the 1980s.

By virtue of these socio-historical conditions cohort three women were more likely to be exposed to positive messages about being Māori within both their familial and extra familial environments. For example, most had been encouraged by at least one of their parents to learn how to speak basic Māori. Moreover, all women in this group had some exposure to Māori language and culture at school. Because of their experiences, there

were several quite distinct differences in the interpretations these women gave to their identities compared to cohort two.

Of central significance was that while women born only two decades earlier struggled to distance themselves from their Māori identities cohort three had been raised to see Māori as being a valuable and desirable identity and, therefore, wanted to be identified as Māori by others. For example, while women in the former cohort reported feeling unsure of or embarrassed by their Māori identity in their 20s and 30s this younger group recounted that they were proud to be Māori and expressed that clearly in their self-definitions. In addition, women in this group did not appear to go through the same emotional struggles with accepting themselves as Māori as women of the previous cohort had done (that is being Māori had always been valuable to cohort two participants and, therefore, they did not have to ‘learn’ to value being Māori as adults).

Cohort three also talked more about New Zealand history than the previous two cohorts and eloquently and openly about the obligations Pākehā have towards Māori as Treaty partners. Because of this, these women appeared less likely to accept or tolerate racism against Māori at a younger age than did the women before them. The tendency for women in this group to defend the Māori position and the value of being Māori much more confidently was a pattern demonstrated time and time again by younger women. This suggests there has been a huge psychological move forward for Māori of this generation – and they enjoy a considerable

advantage in evaluating their Māori identities positively that the previous cohort did not enjoy. This does not mean that women in this group were not aware of negative stereotypes attached to Māori people but that they all had access to alternative concepts that helped them resist ‘buying into them’ personally.

While younger women may have gained in terms of their own capacity to accept being Māori and publicly affirm Māori rights to equality, by virtue of being raised in communities in which Māori were a minority among Pākehā, on the whole they did not express the same sense of closeness to the Māori culture and lifestyle that the oldest group of women described. These women had learnt Māori culture and language mainly within a Pākehā dominated social environment. In this sense, they differed from the oldest cohort of women in that when they spoke about being Māori they did not relate being Māori to another whole ‘way of life’ or broader cultural values, rather, when they spoke about what it meant to be Māori they tended to refer to specific experiences and activities (such as going back to their own marae, visiting urban marae or joining with other Māori people to engage in cultural activities). They also tended to speak about being Māori as related to ‘not being Pākehā’ – in other words being Māori seemed to be interpreted as related to their difference from Pākehā – and not because being Māori was ‘normal’ in itself.

A final feature of interest for this group was their identity complexity and changeability. These women were raised in multi-cultural urban

environments, away from their extended families. In addition some of these women had mixed ethnic affiliations which complicated how they defined themselves as individuals. As such, when women in this group spoke of their Māori affiliation as an aspect of their identity they saw ‘it’ as something that emerged – or became salient in social contexts which validated it. They did not see being Māori as related to some essential cultural features rather, being Māori was an aspect of their identities which they could draw from when it was appropriate to do so.

### *Summary Chapter Seven*

Socio-historical factors were pivotal in shaping the identities that women described. Patterns in their data showed as collective conditions changed so did women’s formative conditions and then so did their identities across generations. Several key differences between the three cohorts were found. The oldest cohort were the most enculturated (in that they were the most connected with and familiar with traditional Māori society and culture), and had exposure to competent Māori role models in their formative years. As such, they expressed positive ideas and a sense of security around being Māori. The middle group struggled considerably with learning to accept, value and express their Māori identities because they had been raised in urban environments and faced negative concepts associated with being Māori for much of their lives. The youngest participants were raised in multi-cultural environments and were able to operate effectively within both Māori and Pākehā society. They appeared



comfortable affirming Māori political and cultural equality even in the face of perceived Pākehā prejudice.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: GENERAL DISCUSSION

### *Introduction*

The purpose of this chapter is to consider how the life-stories gathered for this thesis contribute to current understandings of how Māori identity operates in a broader sense. Three questions which feature prominently in contemporary debates around Māori identity structure the first part of the chapter. These are: How should Māori identity be defined? How does enculturation (involvement in Māori social networks, the ability to speak Māori and an understanding of Māori culture) support Māori well-being? And, how may Māori identity be best supported and nurtured?

In the second part of the chapter I discuss how women's life-stories elucidate the various ways in which contemporary Māori 'manage' their identities within diverse social contexts. In the final part of the chapter ideas for possible intervention programmes and future research are offered and an overall summary of the study is provided.

### *How should Māori identity be defined?*

The personal experiences many women recounted as part of their life-stories revealed that the 'cultural view' of identity continues to influence how many people distinguish between who is 'really Māori' and who is not. Most women recognised that the orthodox view of Māori identity is that 'it' involves knowing one's Māori ancestry, understanding cultural traditions and protocols and being able to speak the Māori language.

While many appreciated that these things were beneficial for Māori people, they also recognised that these particular conventions carried negative consequences for Māori who were not culturally competent. Women who recounted incidences of feeling rejected for not being ‘Māori enough’ illustrated the potential negative influence of the stereotype that ‘real Māori’ should ‘look Māori’ and act in a ‘culturally Māori way’. For some women, their inability to fulfil what others saw as the ‘proper’ Māori role made them feel left out, as if they did not belong.

***The centrality of social networks to identity.***

If women were not all culturally competent, but still purported to have Māori identities how did their identities differ from the conventional enculturated ideal? In answering these questions I am struck by the relevance of the often cited Māori whakatauki (proverb):

*Hutia te rito o te harakeke*

*Mai wai te komako e ko?*

*E patai atu ahau ki a koe,*

*He aha te mea nui o te Ao?*

*He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.*

*When you slice open the heart of the flax plant*

*Where will the Komako sing?*

*Let me ask you,*

*What is the most important thing in this world?*

*It is people. It is people. It is people.*

The significance of this proverb to this thesis is obvious when one examines the factors women identified when they explained how they came to interpret their own Māori identities. Foremost, women interpreted their identities in ways which reflected the views of those around them – particularly their parents, grandparents, older role models and relatives, friends, partners and, in some cases, their children. In this way the identities they described were socially derived and constructed through interactions with others within their social networks (as predicted by several theories of identity reviewed earlier, particularly the ideas of Baldwin (1897), Cooley (1956) and Mead (1934)).

Stryker's (1968, 1980, 1987) role theory may also be utilised to demonstrate how women's identities reflected their social relationships. Stryker contended that the significance that people give to their identities as well as the meanings they attach to them depend upon their close relationships with others. In role theory, the more people expect the individual to 'be' a particular kind of person (express a particular identity) the more the person acts in accordance with that identity and the more committed, focussed on and loyal to that particular identity the person is (Stryker & Statham, 1985).

An example from the oldest cohort of women illustrates the applicability of role theory to the way that women interpreted their identities. Although women in this group were, by and large, raised in communities in a 'culturally Māori' context many reported that for years during their adult

lives, because they were away from their extended families and lived in primarily Pākehā social contexts, they did not emphasise the fact that they were Māori to others or themselves. Some women described this phenomenon as being ‘away’ from their Māori identities. However, another way to describe this is that when women’s social networks did not value their ‘Māoriness’ their Māori identity became less relevant and salient to them personally. At the time of interviewing however, all the women in this group were part of the Trust’s rōpu kaumatua or elders group and highly respected by younger people who often relied upon them to offer guidance on how to deal with the Trust’s affairs. Reflecting this, women reported that being a member of the Trust ‘renewed’ their Māori identity because they were among mainly Māori people again, were treated as Māori by others and, in turn, this influenced how they saw themselves as individuals (women described this as ‘coming back’ to their Māori identities). The following excerpt reveals this:

*What does Māori identity mean to me? Well up until the last few years I was really living in a Pākehā system and I have been away from it. But since I’ve come into this group I have really found my roots and that’s how I identify myself as a Māori woman, and being involved in the community and my whanau....since I’ve been around Māori people, I have been Māori. (rōpu kuia)*

This example captures a theme present throughout all women’s life-stories, that is, women’s identities were an adaptation to their social

milieu. They constructed identities which enabled them to ‘fit in’ with the people around them. Women’s identity ‘content’ (how they defined, described and evaluated themselves as Māori), therefore, changed over time, and reflected what was appropriate in relation to the attitudes and orientations of those in their immediate social networks. What this meant was that each woman had a distinct identity because each had unique personal characteristics as well as different life experiences and sets of relationships.

Women who were socialised in culturally Māori contexts spoke about te reo Māori, Māori culture and their whanau and hapu connections as pivotal to their Māori identities. However, those who were not socialised in contexts which were culturally Māori did not interpret their Māori identities as related to these ‘distinctively’ Māori cultural markers.

What were the alternative meanings women attached to being Māori? Some women spoke of Māori socio-economic deprivation as being part of the experience of many Māori people which gave them commonality and, therefore, affinity with each other. Others regarded understanding ‘Māori humour’ as important to their own Māori identities because it was something that only Māori people could ‘really’ understand. Younger Māori spoke about their identities as being influenced by the ‘oppression’ that Māori faced, the Treaty of Waitangi and the Māori renaissance. One participant spoke about a shared affinity with ‘Black’ music (particularly ‘hip-hop’) as being important to Māori youth identity. Others mentioned

having shared interests and an affinity with other Māori they had met through pan-tribal urban Māori organisations, Māori sporting groups, church groups and work related social groups as pivotal to how they defined their Māori identities. Older women spoke about family responsibility, skill, hard work and resourcefulness as Māori qualities which shaped their own views of what it meant to be Māori.

While it is possible to see features such as family connection as being ‘traditional Māori’ cultural features, many other features of identity women described were not distinctively the domain of traditional Māori culture. This finding highlights the need to see cultural knowledge (speaking Māori and understanding Māori culture) as a potential resource in the development of Māori identity and not as the essential gauge of who is a ‘real’ Māori. This concept points to an alternative definition of Māori identity as: the person’s unique interpretation of what it means to be Māori which reflects their own social background, relationships and circumstances.

### ***Why does enculturation support Māori well-being?***

As noted in chapter three, common perceptions of the relevance of Māori culture to Māori people have changed markedly over recent decades.

While quite recent Māori forebears were encouraged to assimilate with Pākehā, the current trend is for Māori to embrace their unique Māori identity by acknowledging Māori whakapapa and learning about Māori

history, culture and language (Metge 1990, 1995). The Māori renaissance paved the way for this position as this period gave rise to the view that enculturation was fundamental to Māori progress. In line with this ideology many Government funded initiatives developed after the late 1970s meant to reduce Māori inequalities in relation to health (Ministry of Health, 2003) criminal offending (Cram, Pihama, Karehana, & McCreanor, 1999) and education (Hohepa & Jenkins, 2004) have aimed to enhance outcomes for Māori by fostering Māori cultural ‘needs’ and aspirations.

Several recent initiatives support the validity of this approach and indicate that promoting a sense of pride in being Māori through the provision of opportunities to learn about Māori culture are an important feature of successful interventions for Māori in various domains. For example, the New Zealand Department of Corrections has endorsed the importance of recognising Māori cultural ‘needs’ for reducing re-offending among Māori (Department of Corrections, 2005). As part of their response to Māori rehabilitative needs, the Department offers Māori inmates Tikanga Māori programmes. According to the Department’s 2004/2005 Annual Report the Tikanga Māori programme aims to promote self-esteem and positive change among participants by equipping them with cultural knowledge and ‘regenerating’ their Māori identity. The report also acknowledged the promising implications of the inclusion of Māori cultural protocols in a treatment programme designed to reduce male sexual re-offending against children (Te Piriti). Key findings from an evaluation of the Te Piriti



Programme found the use of Māori cultural protocols in combination with cognitive behavioural therapy is an effective form of treatment for Māori offenders (also see Cram, Pihama, Karehana, & McCreanor, 1999 for a discussion of the role of enculturation in the rehabilitation of Māori offenders).

Several recent health interventions which have utilised Māori community health workers, marae based hui and culturally appropriate services to meet needs of Māori have reported high participation rates and acceptability within Māori communities (for example see Beasley et al., 1993; Broughton, 1995; Edwards, McManus & McCreanor, 2005; Pipi et al., 2003; McCreanor & Watson, 2004; McCreanor, Tipene Leach & Abel, 2004). The factors that make culturally tailored programmes more effective for Māori are not clear, however some insight into the relationship between Māori identity, culture, and health was provided in a study by Huriwai, Sellman, Sullivan and Potiki (2000). These researchers investigated the role of cultural factors and identity in the treatment of alcohol and drug-use in a clinical sample of Māori. They found the use of Māori cultural practices enhanced the rehabilitation process. Moreover, a number of participants believed that identifying as Māori and having a sense of belonging to a specific tribe were pivotal to their process of recovery (also see Huriwai et al., 2001).

The finding that a sense of belonging to one's ethnic group and feeling positive about one's ethnic identity enhances psychological well-being is

consistent with a large body of international research that indicates a relationship between ethnic identity and various psychological constructs including self-esteem, self-efficacy, personal mastery and an internal locus of control (for example see Bamaca, Bracey, Umana-Taylor, 2004; Crocker et al, 1994; Phinney, 1995; Phinney & Alipuria, 1990; Phinney & Chavira, 1992; Roberts et al., 1999). Higher levels of enculturation have also been associated with higher levels of preventative health behaviours among ethnic minorities. For example, Zimmerman et al., (1998) found that Native Americans who scored highly on measures of enculturation (as assessed by identification with their native culture, involvement in cultural activities and knowledge of cultural practices) reported having stronger familial ties and were less likely to engage in drug-taking behaviours which threatened their personal well-being or the well-being of their family members.

Several patterns evident within the data gathered in this study also indicate knowledge of Māori language, history and culture is beneficial for Māori. For example, women who were enculturated or socialised in Māori communities in a ‘culturally Māori way’ reported that Māori culture provided them not only with a sense of personal worth, but also with clear guidelines for adaptive living. Several women from the oldest cohort reported that those fundamental ‘rules’ had kept them on the ‘right’ pathways in their lives (hard work, respect for others and resourcefulness were prominent Māori cultural values to which women referred).

Women who reported that they were valued (and cared for) by other Māori (particularly their parents and close family) also reported caring about themselves. Cultural knowledge and knowledge of Māori history also helped women deal with discrimination. Women reported that discrimination (if not real at least perceived) was commonly experienced by Māori people. The experience of discrimination over the life course varied for different women depending on their appearance, personal characteristics and interpersonal relationships. As a general rule, however, women who were knowledgeable of Māori culture seemed somewhat more 'protected' from the psychological set-backs associated with discrimination. The reason given for this was that their knowledge of Māori culture protected them because they were less likely to believe negative stereotypes about Māori and, therefore, less likely to take them personally 'on board'.

Overall therefore, the data gathered for this thesis indicates that Māori who are confident in understanding their own Māori culture and heritage may be at a psychological advantage compared to those who do not. However, in this study the value that women gave cultural knowledge was inseparable from the relationships they had which were consolidated by the shared expression of that cultural knowledge. That is, when they spoke about their cultural competencies they were invariably experienced within their interactions and relationships with others. This raises the question of what is more psychologically advantageous for Māori – is it having

cultural knowledge or having a sense of belonging and connection with others?

Some evidence suggests that a sense of belonging may be more important for Māori people (e.g. Borrell, 2005). Consider the example of one younger participant who described her Māori identity as related to her role working with Māori people. Since her work enabled her to help Māori she derived both a sense of definition and competence from that role. Following this, descriptions of her own Māori identity cohered around ways in which she was able to make a positive contribution to the Māori community. She lamented that because she had a tertiary education and was unable to speak Māori herself one of her relations had accused her of being too 'Pākehā' and therefore 'different' from others in her Māori family. However, her response to this was to emphasise that her acceptance as Māori by other Māori people authenticated her 'Māoriness' and therefore, her Māori identity.

Younger women also tended to refer to how their accomplishments in their 'Pākehā' places of work and in the education system helped them feel positive about themselves and, therefore, good about being Māori. Several women said these achievements made them feel competent and successful within social networks which were socially and financially important to them. This finding suggests that many Māori may gain a sense of self value and identity from high levels of acculturation, or movement into the Pākehā 'middle class.'

Borrell (2005) also found that Māori youth in South Auckland described their identities as being influenced by variables that were relevant and specific to their own social networks and daily practical needs as opposed to traditional markers of Māori enculturation. Borrell used qualitative interviews to explore the subjective perceptions of identity among young Māori living in South Auckland. Participants were aware that having an ‘authentic Māori identity’ was typically related to cultural features, however, many participants talked about a sense of being Māori that reflected their own urban locations. Participants referred to the ‘Southside collective’ identity which incorporated a wide array of meanings and connections which were positive, associated with South Auckland, but differed from the orthodox cultural view of Māori identity. Participants said they gained a sense of self-confidence, status and belonging from being raised in South Auckland and feeling part of the physical environment and local community. References to pride in coming from particular neighbourhoods, the uniqueness of the South Auckland area and having strong alliances with Pacific peoples were all mentioned as being relevant to their identities.

From looking at these accounts, what one might suggest is that when it comes to having a positive Māori identity enculturation may be subordinate to a more fundamental need to achieve a sense of belonging and acceptance as a person and as Māori. Some of the data gathered in this research indicates a sense of belonging does not have to be predicated upon shared, traditional cultural features. A sense of belonging may derive

from many sources, including sporting affiliations with other Māori, shared formative conditions in urban contexts, through relationships with non-Māori and within distinctively non-Māori cultural contexts. This finding has implications for interventions that aim to support and nurture Māori identity in several respects.

*How may identity be best supported? Implications for contemporary Māori identity.*

Discussions in this chapter so far suggest that a key requirement of a positive Māori identity may not be the degree to which Māori are deculturated or enculturated, rather, the extent to which they can experience a sense of belonging and acceptance among others. This suggests that a key challenge for contemporary Māori individuals (particularly urban dwelling) may be learning to strike the balance between valuing being Māori while also accepting non-Māori perspectives. Dubois (1970) has referred to this balance as a form of cross-cultural competency or ‘double-consciousness’. In his view, people who exercise double-consciousness have learnt two ways of coping with the tasks, expectations and requirements of their society. They know how to respond to their ‘own people’, as well as other cultural groups. Dubois believed this capacity was essential for minority psychological well-being because it enabled them to experience a deep sense of belonging among ‘their own’ people, while accessing economic success primarily enjoyed by members of the dominant social group (also see Phinney, 1990).

In the New Zealand context, this concept has also been described by Meredith (1998) who drew upon Bhabha's (1994, 1996) concept of ethnic hybridity to describe the way in which bi-cultural Māori simultaneously manage and live 'Māoriness and Pākehāness' in relation to social interactions, relationships and cultural practices (Meredith, 2000). Given the cultural diversity of many areas of contemporary New Zealand society urban Māori, in particular, increasingly require these kinds of social skills because they equip them to respond positively to diverse cultural perspectives in their day to day interactions with others. The findings of this research indicate promising developments in this regard because they suggest that many Māori already have a rich array of techniques which enable them to interact effectively and amicably with Māori and non-Māori alike. For example, several women observed that when they were around Māori people they would play up their Māori 'side' in order to 'fit in.' Others commented that when they wanted to be accepted by Pākehā or other non-Māori they would de-emphasise their Māori 'side' and emphasise aspects of their identities that they knew would be easier for others to accept and relate to. Younger women seem to engage in such strategies quite naturally and, in doing so, showed an intuitive tolerance for various cultural perspectives as well as an acute sensitivity to the complex historical relationship between Māori and Pākehā. Consider this comment:

*I think I am lucky that I can fit in with Māori and Pākehā. ...We live in a Pākehā system. So to get by, we have to make the most of who we are in the world around us... You know, I would never deny who I am as Māori - but that is something that is a part of me...it doesn't mean that I have to be not cool with Pākehā. You know I can fit in wherever I like – I think that you can do that without even thinking about it really. (Q: How do you do that?). Well when I am with Māori I am Māori, act Māori, speak Māori. When I am with Pākehā, at work or what have you, I do the Pākehā thing –you know, speak like them, share their sense of humour. (Rangimarie, 30)*

Such a comment may reveal an increasingly sophisticated Māori identity form — whereby individuals draw from a pool of cultural competencies they have gleaned from their exposure to Māori and non-Māori social networks. Moreover, this example demonstrates that Māori identity may be supported by providing Māori with a range of skills which enable them to be accepted, not just by other Māori people, but by other cultural groups as such competencies are important for upward social and economic mobility.

***Overall summary and suggestions for future research.***

Although this study is small and has limitations, I believe that it does form an initial step towards re-conceptualising how we view and work with Māori identity at the level of the individual.



As a starting point, it seems clear that the stereotype of Māori identity as being culturally determined needs to be expanded to incorporate the individuality of many Māori who have adapted positive identities which reflect their idiosyncratic sets of relationships, experiences, characteristics and social-cultural contexts. At the same time, this thesis endorses the view that enculturation plays a powerful role for nurturing a positive sense of being Māori for many Māori people. As women in this study reported, Māori cultural knowledge has the capacity to provide adaptive guidelines for behaviour as well as conceptual resources to deflect discrimination against Māori.

Apart from gaining a sense of value and competence from their Māori cultural knowledge women also described adaptive identities that reflected their own personal idiosyncrasies, formative conditions and significant experiences. Because women achieved a sense of being Māori that did not rely upon traditional cultural features this indicates that alongside cultural revitalisation it is equally important that resources be directed towards equipping Māori with tools that will help them access a sense of belonging in diverse sections of New Zealand society (socially and economically). Why? Because the more contexts in which Māori individuals feel accepted the more they are likely to benefit from that socially and psychologically.

Further, although this concept has not been fully explored through research in this area the findings of this study suggest that a particularly

important personal asset appears to be the ability to have pride in being Māori with a healthy respect for the experiences and views of other ethnic groups. This suggests that interventions that promote understanding and dealing with ethnocentrism are useful for Māori, as these may enable them to develop their own cross-cultural competencies, while avoiding feelings of resentment and intolerance towards non-Māori people.

In terms of intervention design it seems important to keep in mind that Māori families are central to shaping Māori identity. Positive Māori role models (particularly familial) who model and express favourable ideas about being Māori are important for young Māori. Although this seems obvious for all ethnic groups, having close relationships with people who endorse being Māori may be extra important for Māori as they need help ‘filtering out’ negative stereotypes perpetuated by the dominant culture. A specific intervention for Māori may aim to equip Māori parents with techniques for teaching their children positive ideas about Māori identity as well as specific skills and strategies for understanding and dealing with discrimination or evaluating it objectively should it be encountered. Such interventions may involve teaching Māori youth ways of understanding their own motivations and emotional reactions to non-Māori people in the course of day to day social interactions. Teaching Māori how to understand stereotypes held against Māori, distancing themselves from those stereotypes personally, and dealing with them constructively as they are encountered would be also be beneficial.

Having access to a repertoire of techniques for finding common ground with other ethnic groups will also be a vital skill for Māori in the future as our society continues to diversify socially and culturally. As such, interventions which aim to help Māori to understand Pākehā communication styles, appreciate how Pākehā and Māori perceive each other as well as their differences and similarities may help Māori overcome barriers to interaction they face in mainstream New Zealand society.

Finally, women in this study who were able to operate effectively among both Māori and non-Māori, that is, who were competent culturally in a number of domains, seemed well placed to deal with New Zealand's increasing cultural diversity. Further research could focus on identifying what kinds of people and groups exemplify this identity form. Possible research questions may include: Who is able to focus on the positive strengths of other ethnic groups while not forfeiting their integrity as a Māori? What kinds of characteristics and social skills do high achieving, culturally competent Māori have? Better understanding of how some Māori typify this identity form and how they find an affinity between Māori and non-Māori viewpoints may shed light not only on how Māori may move forward as a people, but also on how New Zealand's wider social fabric is continually transforming.

## APPENDIX ONE A



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Exploration of Māori identity among Māori women.

### **Participant Information Sheet**

Kia ora. My name is Carla Houkamau, I am of Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Porou descent. I am a PhD student in Psychology at the University of Auckland. I am seeking participants for a study that looks at Māori identity. This sheet is to provide you with information about the research.

Women of Māori descent are being asked to attend an interview. The interview will take between one to two hours to complete. Should you wish to participate the interview will be conducted at a time and in a place that suits you. The interviews will focus on your life-story particularly how you feel about your Māori identity. The results of the study will be used to improve understandings of Māori identity and how that relates to well-being.

Participation in the research is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate all efforts will be made to ensure that you feel comfortable at the interview. You may bring family/whanau support with you if you wish. All the information provided at the interviews will be kept strictly confidential. The interviews will be audio-taped. However, all names and any other information that may identify you will be changed or removed when the tapes are transcribed. You may withdraw any information from your interview by contacting Carla Houkamau within one week of participating in the research. If being in the research upsets you in any way arrangements will be made for you to talk to an appropriate counselor about how you feel. You will be compensated for your time with a koha.

Thank you for taking the time to read about this research. Kia ora ano.

If you would like to take part in the study and have any questions please contact Carla Houkamau on 3737599 ext. 7198. Dr. Niki Harre and Dr. Tim McCreanor are her supervisors. They may all be contacted at the Department of Psychology, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. The Head of Department who may also be contacted at the above address is Professor Dianne McCarthy, ph: 3737599 ext. 8516. For any questions about ethical concerns please contact: The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Subjects Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland ph: 3737599 ext. 7830.

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 13/06/01 for a period of 3 years, from 13/06/01 Reference 2001/132.**

## APPENDIX ONE B



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Exploration of Māori identity among Māori women.

### **Participant Consent Form**

Researcher: Carla Houkamau

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered.

I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information from my interview within one week of attending an interview without giving a reason.

- I agree to participate in this research.
- I agree that the interview will be audio taped.

Signed:

Name:  
(please print clearly)

Date:

**APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN SUBJECTS  
ETHICS COMMITTEE ON 13/06/01 for a period of 3 years, from 13/06/01  
Reference 2001/132.**

## APPENDIX TWO: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

### *Interview Procedure and Question Guide*

#### *Section One: Introduction/Explanation of research*

To begin the process of data collection I will introduce myself, talk about my iwi (tribal) affiliations and the reasons why I am carrying out this study. I will also explain that the information that comes out of the study will increase understandings of Māori identity. I will talk participants through the information sheets and consent forms and give them time to withdraw from the research and/or ask questions. I will ask for permission to record the interviews and take notes. I will also explain that they do not need to answer all of the questions that I ask if they do not want to.

#### *Section Two: Demographic information*

The aim of this section is two fold. One aim is to find out demographic information. The other is to establish a rapport with the participants so that they feel that they can talk freely without being judged by me. Thus, time will be taken to ensure that the participants feel at ease with the interview situation.

I will begin by asking participants to tell me – in an informal way, about themselves their age, marital status, if they have children (and what ages they are), what work/training they may be doing, where they live and who they live with. I will promote informality during this time. Given the Māori cultural expectation of reciprocity in social exchanges, I will also share with them the same personal information about myself.

#### *Section Three: Exploration of identity through life-story interviews*

I will then ask participants to tell me about their lives – focussing on episodes which have shaped their Māori identity by saying:

I would like you to tell me the story of your life. I would like you to focus mainly on your Māori culture and identity. To do this, would you please describe some of your earliest memories from when you were a child. Then some of your school experiences, from primary through to high school, when you left school and then your work experiences, or when you had your child/children (if appropriate). Please recollect your life as it has happened – from year to year – until the present time. When you are doing this please remember I am interested in the events which contributed to how you feel about being Māori, your experiences of Māori culture, and how you have come to feel about that side of you. Please take your time thinking

and talking about these things. Put in any details you wish and speak as freely as you like – whatever is important to you to talk about is also important to me.

If clarification is sought I will say:

It may be easier for you to think mainly about important life events that have contributed to how you feel about being Māori. Can you think of any key experiences in your life that shaped the way you feel about being Māori? Would you describe these to me please?

***Specific questions.***

If participants do not address the topic under study, say things that are not clear or request that I clarify/guide them as to what to talk about, specific questions will be asked to gauge their affiliation with Māori culture. These questions will be asked as and when it is appropriate to do so. Careful attention will be given to how open and comfortable each participant is with the interview situation and how issues may be most sensitively broached. When possible questions will be asked as a natural extension to the material participants themselves choose to discuss. The following questions (in no particular order) will be asked:

***1) Formative conditions and role models (social relationships and role models women believed influenced their Māori identity).***

1. What was your family and community like when you were growing up?
2. When you were growing up was being Māori or Māori culture an important aspect of your family life?
3. Were both your parents Māori? Did they identify as Māori?
4. Can you recall Māori family members, teachers or other significant people who have acted as role models?
5. Who were the main people in your life that shaped the way you see your identity as Māori? Can you tell me about them please?
6. What did you learn from these people about being Māori when you were a child?

***2) Identification as Māori (how women defined themselves and how important their Māori identity was to them).***

1. Do you think that being Māori is an important part of who you are?
2. Do you feel that you identify mainly with Māori, Pākehā, another group, neither groups or both?
3. Do you feel accepted in Māori society (comfortable being Māori around Māori)?
4. What percentage of your friends and family are Māori?

***3) Perceptions of social role expectations (ideas about how Māori people are perceived by 'wider society').***

1. What kind of ideas do you think that society holds about Māori people?
2. What do you think Māori people are supposed to be like?
3. Do you think that there is prejudice about Māori from other people in New Zealand ? Does that affect you personally?

***4) Details of significant events (salient events women believe shaped their Māori identity).***

1. When you look back on your life, can you think of any key events that shaped how you view your Māori identity?

***5) Māori culture (women's understanding of and competence in Māori culture, te reo Māori, and tikanga Māori).***

1. Do you speak Māori?
2. Do you feel that you have a lot of knowledge of Māori culture ?
3. What is Māori culture to you? What kinds of beliefs and values are important to Māori ?
4. How important is it to you to maintain and learn about your Māori culture?
5. How different do you think that Māori culture is from Pākehā/European culture?

***Summary and Conclusion.***

At the end of the interviews, participants will have an opportunity to talk about anything else they think is important and reflect upon their interview. Participants will also be asked to clarify any issues they brought up in the previous section that were not quite clear.



## APPENDIX THREE PROFILES OF PARTICIPANTS

Although it is not possible to provide personal profiles of each woman who attended the focus group five are available. Profiles are included for all participants individually interviewed.

### COHORT ONE

All women in this cohort resided in Auckland at the time of being interviewed.

**Maraea:** Aged 60 years old at the time of being interviewed. She is married and has six children and 13 grandchildren. Maraea was raised in rural area by her great grandparents who were born in the 1860s. She describes herself as raised in the ‘Māori world’.

**Mavis:** Was aged in her mid-to-late 60s at the time of being interviewed. She was raised in Catholic family of 14 children in the upper part of the North Island. Like other women in this cohort, she spoke of learning how to garden and doing her ‘fair share’ of domestic chores when she was a child.

**Emma:** Was in her early 70s when she participated in the study. She was born in Waipiro Bay and is of Ngati Porou descent however, she spent most of her life in Christchurch. She says she was raised as a Pākehā and had little contact with her family in the North Island during her formative years.

**Kathleen:** Was in her late 60s at the time of being interviewed. She, like others in this cohort, comes from a large family and is the third youngest of 12 children. She was raised on a farm in Northland and attended a Native School as a child. As a teenager, she recalls being sent to live with Pākehā families where she was treated as a domestic servant. When she was 14 she went to live with a Māori family where she learnt to speak Māori. She reported that for much of her life she was ‘distanced’ from her Māori identity.

**Alice:** Was in her 60’s at the time of being interviewed. She is of Te Aupouri descent, born in the Hokianga. She recalled a detailed childhood, adolescence and young adulthood, during which she was not encouraged to speak Māori or acknowledge that side of her identity. She claimed that for her, being Māori is about knowing your whakakapa – or genealogy.

## COHORT TWO

All women in this cohort resided in Auckland at the time of being interviewed.

**Ramari:** Is of Te Aupouri descent, lives in Auckland and was 49 at the time of being interviewed. She attended a Native School as a child, is married to a Māori and has two children and one grandchild. Ramari expressed immense pride and confidence in being Māori. This is a reflection of her family background. Both her parents were fluent native speakers, and taught her and her siblings to speak Māori and feel positive about Māori culture.

**Carrie:** Was also in her late 40s at the time of being interviewed and works in urban Māori organisation as a social worker. She has one child. Her account of her own identity refers to spiritual aspects, by noting that being Māori meant understanding spiritual aspects at a deeper level.

**Hinekawa:** Is of Te Rarawa descent. She was 42 at the time of being interviewed. She is married to a Pākehā and has one child. Her account of her Māori identity was particularly detailed because she has spent many years reflecting on her identity as Māori. During the closed adoption era, she was adopted by a Pākehā couple and believes her search for her Māori identity is part of her search for belonging.

**Trudy:** Was in her early 40s at the time of being interviewed. She is from a family of nine and had lived in West Auckland all her life. She has a Māori mother and Pākehā (English) father. Although her iwi is Tainui, she talks about her self as being 'from' West Auckland. She recalls she did not embrace her Māori identity fully until her thirties.

**Karen:** Karen was 40 at the time of being interviewed. She has a Māori mother and Pākehā father. However she was raised by her mother's family and had very little to do with her Pākehā family. She has no children of her own but has parented her partner's children. Karen's mother was ashamed of being Māori and this shaped Karen's formative years profoundly.

**Vania:** Was 39 at the time of being interviewed. She is of Māori (Te Aupouri) and Tongan descent and is one of the older members of a family of eight siblings. She is well educated. She said she has always felt like a 'Palagi' or Pākehā because of her fair appearance and lack of relationships which validated being Māori. In recent years, however, she has become more interested in her Māori identity and has studied Māori history and culture through University. She has three children and one grandchild.

**Raquel:** Was 37 at the time of being interviewed. She is of Tongan and Māori (Te Aupouri) descent and describes herself as a ‘child of the Pacific’. She is well educated and very articulate. She cites her religious upbringing and positive environment as formative in her identity development and describes her Māori identity as a very dynamic feature of herself which has changed markedly over the years.

**Gina:** Was 34 at the time of being interviewed. She is of Te Ati Awa descent (from Taranaki). She has two Māori parents and currently lives in South Auckland. She is married to a Pākehā man and has three children. Although she said she felt proud to be Māori at the time of being interviewed she said that the racism she experienced in her youth made her feel embarrassed to be Māori for much of her life.

**Gabrielle:** Was 36 at the time of being interviewed. She is of Ngati Porou descent and has two Māori parents. She grew up in South Auckland. She says her parents brought her up to be a ‘good Māori’ which, in the 1970s, meant being a ‘brown Pākehā’. She has travelled extensively and sees New Zealand as a place where it is acceptable to be Māori now.

### COHORT THREE

All women in this cohort resided in Auckland at the time of being interviewed.

**Rangimarie:** Was 30 years old at the time of being interviewed. She is of Ngati Porou descent, single with one child. Her mother is Māori, her father Pākehā and she has spent much of her life living with her grandparents in South Auckland. She can speak Māori and has been involved in Kapahaka for some years.

**April:** Was 28 at the time of being interviewed. She is married to a Pākehā and has two children. She recalled positive Māori role models in her family and involvement in her own marae as formative in her development of her Māori identity.

**Brenda:** Was 28 at the time of being interviewed. She has developed her own thinking around Māori identity thoroughly and this is a reflection of her work and educational experiences.

**Clara:** Was a 29-year-old University student at the time of being interviewed. She is single with one teenage son. She has one Pākehā parent and one Māori parent. She recalled her parents were not secure in their own identities as Māori, which inhibited her from developing positive feelings about being Māori herself.

**Janet:** Was 24 at the time of being interviewed. She has a Māori mother and a Chinese father. She recalled ‘struggling’ with her identity as Māori because she did not look physically Māori and lacked supportive role models.

**Donna:** Was an 18-year-old University student at the time of being interviewed. She is of Ngapuhi descent and has a Māori father and Pākehā mother. She recalled positive Māori role models in her childhood and involvement in kapahaka from a young age. She developed self acceptance through these experiences though she has found that Māori may not accept her due to her fair appearance.

**Maxine:** Was a 20-year-old University student at the time of being interviewed. She is of Ngapuhi and Te Arawa descent and was raised by her grandparents in Northland. She cited her marae involvement and whakapapa as the central elements to her Māori identity.

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