

Alternatives to anti-Māori themes in news media

Theme 12 'Financial management'

In this negative theme, Māori are represented as financially inexperienced, incompetent or corrupt.

How this is being said

Fraud, forgery, inappropriate use of money, allegations, incompetence, mismanagement, nepotism, financial disarray, fake, Treaty settlement, audit (of Māori organisation), conflict (within Māori organisation).

Examples

- 'Iwi Services investigated by police' *Northern News* front page headline, Feb 7, 2007.
- 'Maori drug and alcohol service Te Rito Arahi faces a torrid time after a devastating audit and a staff rebellion.' *Press*, Mar 17, 2007.
- 'There's more drama at Maori Television Service following the sudden announcement that its third chief executive in less than two and a half years is quitting.' *One News*, Aug 27, 2004.

What does this assume?

- Māori are not accountable in the same way as Pākehā for money they receive.
- Māori handling money is a new thing; accounting is not part of Māori culture.
- Māori will often employ their family members - nepotism.

- Māori shouldn't have this money in the first place.
- Māori don't generate wealth.
- Pākehā are better at financial management.

What does this do?

- Māori groups are under constant scrutiny by the government and non-Māori about how they deal with their money.
- Māori have difficulty getting loans and development finance.
- Undermines Māori Treaty claims and Māori provision of health and social services.
- Provides ammunition for those opposing Māori initiatives.
- Stigmatises Māori as a people.

How else could this be said?

- Bad management is common in NZ corporations (Blue Chip, South Canterbury Finance, Nuplex, National Finance, BNZ, Bridgecorp, Hanover Finance, Lane Walker Rudkin, Five Star Finance...) yet no one uses that to imply that Pākehā as a group are financially incompetent.
- Māori have a long history of being entrepreneurial. By 1840, Māori were supplying Auckland and Sydney with food transported in their own ships.
- Māori do a lot with little.
- Focus on where Pākehā wealth comes from, and the advantages Pākehā gained from obtaining Māori land and resources cheaply or for nothing.
- Family businesses are seen as a positive Pākehā institution; why are family businesses bad when they're Māori?

- Māori do things for others for free; Pākehā often charge.
- Māori ethical values are built into Māori business.

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See www.trc.org.nz/theme-12-financial-management

Submit your own examples of this theme in the media and suggest your alternatives. Suggestions will be moderated and uploaded to the site.