

Alternatives to anti-Māori themes in news media

Theme 13 Treaty of Waitangi

This theme depicts the Treaty as a historical document that is irrelevant to the present and which blocks development. It links strongly with themes 4: 'Māori privilege'; 5: 'Good Māori/Bad Māori'; and 11: 'Māori resources'.

How this is being said in the news

Treaty/grievance industry, grievance mode, gravy train, divisive, never-ending, Treatyism, the past is the past, undermine democracy; any calls to dispense with the Treaty.

Examples

- 'Treaty of Waitangi claims are continuing to delay the sale of Masterton's abandoned schools' (*Dominion Post*, 19 Feb, 2008).
- '...when the orchestrated grievance display that is Waitangi Day passes...' (*Manawatu Standard* editorial, 7 Feb, 2007)

What does this assume?

- Pākehā are entitled to determine the worth and meaning of the Treaty on their own.
- Any decision or process that treats the views of Māori and non-Māori equally is undemocratic.
- A treaty signed more than 170 years ago is no longer relevant.

What does this do?

- Undermines any consideration of the Treaty in debates or conflicts between Māori and Pākehā
- Ensures that Pākehā institutions such as the police, courts and Parliament settle issues, which will usually benefit Pākehā at the expense of Māori.

Other ways to talk about this

- Explain the Crown's breaches of te Tiriti at issue.
- Te Tiriti is a contract enabling Pākehā to live justly in Aotearoa, by according Māori rights as tangata whenua
- Te Tiriti was an agreement between two sovereign peoples, with Māori having an equal say in any interpretation
- Te Tiriti should be a foundation for a new constitution enabling a just, Treaty-based future.
- The Magna Carta was signed in 1215 but is still relevant - our laws banning arbitrary arrest and justice for sale are based on it.
- The inadequacies of media reporting about the Treaty undermine the ability of Pākehā and other non-Māori to consider their Tiriti obligations.
- Pākehā anxiety about their place in Aotearoa will be resolved only through honouring the Tiriti and acknowledging Māori as tangata whenua.
- For the government to determine on its own how claims about Treaty breaches will be settled is unjust - the process should be agreed by both parties.

Published in 2014 by
Kupu Taea: Media and te Tiriti
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Zealand

See [www.trc.org.nz/
theme-13-treaty-of-
waitangi](http://www.trc.org.nz/theme-13-treaty-of-waitangi)

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