

# Alternatives to anti-Māori themes in news media

## Theme 4 'Māori Privilege'

*In this negative theme, Māori are portrayed as having rights or benefits denied to others in a way that is unfair and 'racist'. It argues that current 'New Zealanders' should not be held accountable for the inequities created by the treatment of Māori in the past.*

### How this is being said in the news

Special treatment, Treaty/grievance industry, the past is the past, taxpayer funds, Māori Parliamentary seats, Māori All Blacks, Māori admission schemes.

### Examples

- 'Spirituality or special treatment?' *NZ Herald* headline, Oct 12, 2004.
- 'National's ETS [Emission Trading Scheme] to include special treatment for Maori'. *3 News* headline, Nov 16, 2005.

### What does this assume?

- Colonisation was in the past and no longer has a negative impact on Māori.
- Society's structures and institutions benefit everyone equally.
- Fairness is a Kiwi value; Kiwis dislike any group being unfairly privileged.

### What does this do?

- Masks the unfair and unequal effects on Māori of society's structures and institutions.
- Deflects attention away from Pākehā control of wealth and politics.
- Masks the very limited nature of Treaty settlements compared to the real value of resources taken from Māori.
- Portrays guaranteed Māori participation as unjust or racist.

### Other ways to talk about this

- Explore Pākehā power in the area under discussion.
- Acknowledge the role of tangata whenua and the Treaty relationship.
- Describe action to reduce Māori disadvantage in context, acknowledging that past injustices have ongoing effects.

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See [www.trc.org.nz/theme-4-maori-privilege](http://www.trc.org.nz/theme-4-maori-privilege)

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