



# National Council of Churches Programme on Racism

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PAKEHAS DEALING WITH RACISM IN NEW ZEALAND NEED,  
AMONG OTHER THINGS, STIMULATING RESOURCE MATERIAL  
TO GET THE DISCUSSIONS GOING AND PROVIDE  
ALTERNATIVES AND NEW INSIGHTS.

I HOPE YOU WILL USE THESE PAPERS - EITHER FOR  
YOUR OWN REFLECTION AND ACTION OR SHARED WITH  
OTHER INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS.

WE ARE CONTINUALLY DEVELOPING RESOURCE MATERIAL  
SO PLEASE CONTACT US AGAIN.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL MATERIAL WOULD BE  
VERY WELCOME.

PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR

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# COME OUT FROM BEHIND THE MYTHS

IN AN EFFORT to be more humane, the tendency is often to emphasize similarities in people and to overlook or dismiss their differences. Many programmes in education, counselling organisations and human relations training concentrate solely on the individual, paying little attention to the culture and environment from which the individual comes. It is often simplistic to ignore or try to transcend some of the real differences between individuals and between groups of people. We cannot dismiss the fact that being a woman or a man, (being Black or Asian, a Polynesian, a Maori) are important aspects of our lives. Each of us must acknowledge and explore these parts of ourselves to discover our unique identities. In fact Roberts (1975) states that we are not complete people until we deal with the seven significant areas of which we are composed: personal, sexual, family, ethnic or racial, social class, provincial and cultural.

THE IMPLICATIONS of coming to terms with the socialisation processes of sex role and sexuality have become increasingly evident as the Women's Movement has grown. So too racial identity deeply influences how we see and interact in the world. This concept has long been acknowledged in relation to minorities. Much research has been done on the effects of racism on the self-concept and perspective of minorities. Little research, however, has been done on the effect of racism on Whites. In fact, it seems fair to say that, because the white race has been considered the norm in our culture, racism has simply been overlooked as an issue in the white community. The attitude seems to be that if minorities are not physically present the problem of racism does not exist. Whites easily forget- indeed are seldom aware- that they too are part of a group and are subject to ethnocentrism and a unique collective group experience.

THE REALITY IS: racism exists. It has been part of a way of life since Whites first landed in the country. Although we pride ourselves on our ideologies about human rights and particularly our philosophies of freedom and equality, the bleak reality is that, both historically and presently, this country is based on and operates under a doctrine of White racism.

THE TASK that confronts educators, counsellors, facilitators and agents of change is developing a way of identifying the issues of racism as they exist in the White community, and helping White people grow and learn about themselves as Whites in this society. How can we help White people come out from behind the myths that have sheltered them for so long, and begin focussing on the difficult realities and discrepancies that are present in our society?

-- Judy H Katz  
"White Awareness"

## BECOMING ANTIRACIST/RACISTS ?

As whites in a racist society we have only two behaviours to choose from vis-a-vis the issue of racism. We can choose to be racist/racists - those who recognise the benefits accrued through being white and either consciously or unconsciously support institutional and cultural practices that perpetuate racism. Or we can choose to be antiracist/racists - those who recognise the illegitimate privileges obtained by whiteness, but strive to remove these institutionally and culturally racist benefits, even while still receiving them. Passively doing nothing allows racism to continue.

As whites we frequently find it difficult to recognise when we are behaving in racist ways. When we discriminate against somebody who is not Pakeha, whether consciously or unconsciously, we are racist. When we profit, knowingly or unknowingly, from the past or present racism of other whites, we are racist. When we belong to a group that enhances ethnocentric values ( a professional body or service club ), live in a neighbourhood where only people like ourselves live, or work for a business which exploits or discriminates, we are being racist. When we avoid contacts or friendship because of race, when we use racist language, when we tell or laugh at jokes based on racial stereotypes, we are being racist.

When we consciously do none of these things; when we are careful not to discriminate; when we behave in ways to minimise the risk of racist associations; when we refuse to profit directly from the racism practised and institutionalised by others; when we leave any organisation, neighbourhood or firm that exploits and discriminates; when we open up our social life - do we then become antiracist/racists? A racist/racist takes positive actions (consciously or unconsciously) that encourage, support and perpetuate white racism. An antiracist/racist must take positive actions against white racism.

When we contribute money, time and work to organisations that combat racism in housing, employment, recreation, organisations, civil rights and schools, we are antiracist/racists. When we help to educate other whites on what white racism is and does, we are antiracist/racists. When we support transference of resources and self-determination for black groups, we are antiracist/racists. When we work to eliminate those political, economic, cultural and educational conditions that encourage or perpetuate racism, we are antiracist/racists. When we actively seek out opportunities for social contact with Maori and other Pacific Islands people and encourage others to do so, we are antiracist/racists. And every time we point out to other whites their use of verbal racial stereotypes, we help in a small way to combat racism.

It's not hard to be racist/racists, especially when we have been born and raised in a society that fostered white racism and concealed it, and condones and supports it. It is very hard to be antiracist/racists - whites who work directly and actively against racism in all its forms. But if we as whites are serious, there is no alternative.

Based on work

EDUCATION & RACISM: An Action Manual  
available from National Education Association  
U.S.A.

# INSTITUTIONALISED DISCRIMINATION

From: RACE AGAINST TIME,  
Hiwi Tauroa, Race  
Relations Conciliator

MEMBERS of the dominant culture in a society often do not realise how much they owe their success in life to the fact that the education system, economic system, and political, legal and other social institutions are all constituted along lines that fit in with the culture and value system in which they have been raised. Neither do they realise that people who have been brought up in a culture which does not fit in with these systems and institutions, suffer discrimination purely by virtue of the nature of the systems and institutions themselves.

*"Why should I be made to feel guilty for something that happened 100 years ago?"*

*"I have as much trouble getting what I want, as you say the Maoris do."*

This state of affairs can be described as institutionalised discrimination, where there is an unintentional social bias to the benefit of one race and the disadvantage of another. This institutionalised discrimination affects every aspect of those people's lives whose basic values, principles and customs are different from the majority.

Funeral protocol is affected by the difficulties faced in obtaining the body from hospital for the Tangi. Institutionalised values affect pre-school education, the interpretation of history, land ownership in relation to access and town-planning laws, the concepts of justice.

In fact, ALL aspects of a person's life can be affected by aspects of institutionalised discrimination. The influence of the dominant Pakeha majority has become so pervasive that its members genuinely believe that theirs is the right and proper way of doing things. They cannot relate inequality with cultural practices, believing that the opportunities THEY have are available to everybody. Since it does not occur to them that their practices, ideals, behaviour and beliefs are culturally determined, they do not recognise that they are imposing this belief system on others, and in so doing are penalising them in ways that create inequalities. If they do recognise it, however, they consider it their right to do so, because of some notion that their culture is the better - because they have never experienced another culture.

It is widely believed that inequality is a class problem that has nothing to do with race and culture. The truth is that Polynesians are in the lower socio-economic class because they are disadvantaged by a society which is administered by mono-cultural administrators. Economic disadvantage on a large scale started with the migration, both internal and external, by the Maori and Pacific Polynesian to cities. They started at an education disadvantage which was reflected in their employment opportunities. They faced a system that would not tolerate other languages, an education system based on Pakeha values, and a justice system that had no room for other cultural expressions. This created an economic class with a low income and standard of living. A low standard of living affects educational opportunities. This economic circle becomes a poverty trap, perpetuated to some extent by the dominant majority's apparent unwillingness to take into account the aspirations of the minority.

*"It's not fair! Things are getting better."*

*"I agree, but I've got no power."*

Institutionalised discrimination is also reflected in our political system. Because New Zealand's political and democratic system is based on majority rule, the minority can be consistently outvoted. Thus, if a decision concerning the building of a marae or a fale were put to the vote, the Maori or Pacific Polynesian group could be outvoted because the Pakeha group would not know the significance of these buildings. The decision would be honest and democratic, but it may not be a fair decision to the Maori and Pacific Polynesian, who would rightly feel that their values had not been taken into account.

Democratic decision-making can only operate effectively for the good of all if the decision-makers are familiar with the beliefs and values of all. Decision-making based on majority rule is valid in monocultural, homogeneous societies. In a multi-cultural, heterogeneous society, the democratic system must be expanded to incorporate the views and concerns of the minority groups. If this does not take place, the effect would be to create an outvoted minority whose only method of response is through political protest.

In other words, when all else fails and the 'SYSTEM' doesn't listen, the only course open is to fight back and express concern through means other than the ballot box. This is often construed as civil disobedience...subversive or non-democratic. In reality it means that groups use the only right still open to them - that of freedom of expression. WE therefore have to ask ourselves whether decision-making of this sort is a just process for ALL.

In New Zealand, not only is the formal political decision-making dominated by Pakeha and Pakeha values, but...all occupations which relate to influence and decision-making are similarly based. It is vital that more appointments of people from ethnic minorities are made to Boards and Councils which influence the direction of our society.

*"You know, the Maoris don't agree on this."*

*"Anybody can manipulate statistics."*

*"Don't push me, or be angry - or I won't listen."*

*"What about the Scots?"*

*"I treat everybody the same. We're all New Zealanders."*

Attitudes play an important role in maintaining this form of social system. The attitude of the Pakeha culture is that theirs is the right way: that if you want to get ahead you must adopt the Pakeha way of doing things. Commonly stated is the notion of "One nation, One people" or - "We are all New Zealanders". The 'one people' notion is generally subscribed to by people already in the dominant position - those already enjoying the material advantages and social security that their own value system reinforces. What they are really saying is.. "From my position, we are one people. To be one people, I don't have to adapt or change my position or culture or values or ideals, but everybody else should change in order to be like me." This is the basis for an assimilation policy.

ASSIMILATION has been tried and found wanting. Many past policies had good intentions, based on the assumption that the way to the future was the Pakeha way. What has developed is a mono-cultural society, built on a foundation of institutionalised discrimination and inequality. Without a marked change in direction, the extinction of the Maori language and culture is a real possibility.

This ethnocentric assimilation concept means that those who can, and choose to, accept the majority culture, get a good bite of the economic, educational and social cake. Those who cannot, or do not choose to, get left with the crumbs.

Out of this develops a form of social apartheid where, economically, educationally and socially, the races are left apart, not by law but by social convention. When the minority are dominated by mono-cultural views, they start questioning the system and seeking redress - requesting the dominant group to change, to look beyond their narrow view of the world and accept the need to eliminate institutionalised discrimination. Those who cannot see that we need social change to overcome these problems may be afraid of change and resort to a tendency to shift blame elsewhere. Two ready-made scapegoats are popular in New Zealand society today. First, it is common to blame social ills on so-called 'stirrers' or 'radicals' and to ostracise, ridicule or dismiss anybody who may disagree with the status quo. The more vocal in our community may often magnify or over-emphasise grievances yet this does not mean that the grievances are imagined. Vocal pressure groups do not work in a vacuum, they do not conjure up problems out of nowhere: it is easily established that there is always some basis of fact. The second institution to blame is the family. Any social problem can be blamed on the breakdown of family life. It makes good rhetoric, places the guilt on every "other" family in the country, and the speaker can go away satisfied that another major social problem is solved. The family is not isolated from the rest of society. All major social institutions radically affect the family and the survival of the family unit. Consequently the family unit is rapidly changing. The one parent family has taken the place of the old unit in many cases. Extended family groups are being broken down into single nuclear groups, having a dramatic effect on Maori and Pacific Polynesian people. A more enlightened understanding of the vocal minority and the factual content of their claim needs study. Similarly, the simple dismissal of the "family" as the cause of it all requires an infinitely deeper understanding of all relative institutions that affect the community.

*"When in Rome they should do as the Romans do."*

*"Things can't change overnight."*

*"Why do they dwell on the past?"*

*"At the same time the settler was, quite properly, anxious to extend settlement, nor could his desire for land be properly called greed. It was not individual wealth he was grasping; he was indulging in the healthy wish for the spread of civilisation."*

*J.C. Richmond, Colonial Secretary,  
Parliamentary Debates, 1864-6, p 347*

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# DEFINITIONS

## Acknowledgements:

New Perspectives on Race  
Racism/Sexism Resource Center for Educators

## RACISM

Racism exists when one group views its cultural values, lifestyles, and socioeconomic self-interest as superior to or having priority over those of other groups, and then (covertly or overtly) implements those assumptions through societal norms and institutions.

In New Zealand PAKEHA IS THE NORM.

## INSTITUTIONS

*Institutions are fairly stable social arrangements and practices through which collective actions are taken. (Examples are courts, police, churches, schools, government, business, unions).*

## INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

Institutional racism is the perpetuation by organisations, institutions or agencies, of policies and practices which operate to the advantage of the powerful group and to the disadvantage of particular racial/cultural groups.

## INSTITUTIONAL PAKEHA RACISM

*This is Pakeha control over the economic, educational and political agencies which affect all groups. It is revealed by the way the policies and practices perpetuated by those organisations operate to the disadvantage of people of other races. Whether covert or overt, whether institutional or personal, racism is a destructive sickness. Any nation which permits race to affect the distribution of the benefits from its social policies is racist.*

## A RACIST SOCIETY

In New Zealand, the fact that Pakeha is the norm makes it a racist society. Pakeha values and assumptions underlie all procedures and practices. Institutions follow Pakeha models and ideas, and operate according to rules made by Pakehas. Members of the dominant group hold the power and receive a disproportionate share of the resources. This system is self-perpetuating, and as long as it continues all Pakehas can be described as racist regardless of their personal attitudes.

## INTENTIONS

*Our institutional and cultural processes are so arranged as to benefit whites automatically, just because they are white. It is important for Pakehas to recognise that they receive most of these racist benefits automatically, unconsciously and unintentionally. What counts is what actually happens; outcomes, not intentions. Behaviour is more significant than attitude.*

# PREJUDICE, RACISM

## PERSONAL PREJUDICE

There is an individual or personal aspect to racism. It appears as prejudice or bigotry, and leads to acting on the basis of negative stereotypes of other racial groups. It is expressed through acts of discrimination.

## PREJUDICE

*An unfavourable opinion or feeling formed beforehand, or with little or no knowledge, thought or reason.*

## CULTURE

Culture is basically the whole way of life of a people, the way they go about such things as communicating with each other, making decisions, the way they think about things, what they consider important, and the way they structure their families and their whole society.

## ETHNO-CENTRISM

*A tendency to view other cultures with disfavour and a resulting sense of inherent superiority.*

## CULTURAL RACISM

When whites use power to perpetuate their cultural heritage and impose it upon others, while at the same time destroying the culture of ethnic minorities.

POWER PLUS ETHNOCENTRISM = CULTURAL RACISM.

## SOME THOUGHT PROVOKING, MOCK HUMOROUS DEFINITIONS, WITH A STING

*Pakeha is being in the TV commercials.*

*Pakeha is buying skin-coloured sticking plaster.*

*Maori is learning that your country was "discovered" by Abel Tasman and Captain Cook.*

*Maori is learning that your heroic ancestor, Te Kooti, was a "rebel".*

*Pacific Islander is wondering why white tourists get brown on your island's beaches while you get pale in the Hospital Laundry.*

*Black is going to court to be judged by a jury of your peers and finding that all your peers look bleached.*



## DISCUSSION POINTERS

### 1. MAORI PEOPLE CANNOT BE RACISTS IN NEW ZEALAND

All people can be prejudiced. But if Racism equals Racial Prejudice plus Institutional Power, then only Pakehas can be racists, since only Pakehas control institutional power in N.Z.

N.Z. institutions, values and norms have been created by Pakehas and are controlled by Pakehas, and have always been used to enforce those things which benefit Pakehas. Individual members of a racial minority can become influential in any institution. However, their individual decision-making power is not backed up by the top echelons of white institutional power, if decisions are made which appear to run counter to white interests. Basic policy decisions and basic power are firmly in Pakeha hands. (Note: all Pakehas, obviously, do not share equal power, but Pakehas as a group control institutions).

This helps us understand why Matiu Rata resigned to form Mana Motuhake.

### 2. ALL PAKEHAS ARE RACISTS IN NEW ZEALAND

Every Pakeha baby born automatically receives "white skin privileges". These are undue benefits at the expense of other groups. For instance, Pakehas go through a lifetime of being considered the "normal" New Zealanders. Racial minorities go through a lifetime of being looked upon as "different", as "cultural aliens", their language, even when it is the indigenous local language, being described as "foreign"; and are often made to feel uncomfortable, even when not being discriminated against. Pakehas, as a group, can be predicted to outlive Maori and other Polynesians, as well as to live healthier lives, earn higher incomes, receive more education and have better chances of staying out of prison.

### 3. GOOD INTENTIONS OF PAKEHAS OFTEN RESULT IN UNINTENTIONAL RACISM:

#### BLAMING THE VICTIM INSTEAD OF BLAMING SOCIAL CAUSES

This is placing responsibility for the results of oppression on those being victimised, rather than on the institutional practices responsible for the situation.

Individual example: "What can you expect from those kids, considering the homes they come from?" says a teacher. This teacher, in blaming the "homes", places blame for the children's failures on parents and their living conditions, instead of on his or her own limited expectations and skills, on the school practices which do not meet the needs of the children, or on the structure of society which permits low wages and inadequate housing.

Institutional example: Substantial funds and the research resources of university departments enables white, middle-class researchers with "qualifications" to study 'Race Relations in Ponsonby', 'unemployed youth in Porirua', or 'budgeting skills in Otara', instead of studying the domination of City Council policies by residents of affluent suburbs - or giving those resources to Maori people to do research on Pakehas.

#### CHANGE THE RACIAL MINORITY

Instead of changing Pakeha behaviour and practices which punish cultural difference, the focus is on fitting members of other cultures into Pakeha situations.

Individual example: "Look me in the eye when I'm speaking to you" says the teacher to the Samoan child. Teachers who are not aware of differences in cultural behaviours (in this case, a child who has been taught that it is rude to look directly at an adult) punish children for not behaving according to Pakeha codes. It is important for members of the dominant culture to learn about, and to show respect for, the cultures of all people with whom they are in daily contact.

Institutional example: Employers who will hire racial minorities as long as those hired behave on the job exactly as if they were Pakeha, and speak English at all times.

### LOVE AS A CURE-ALL

Instead of acting to change unjust situations, love is presented as the complete and only answer.

Individual example: "Let's all be kind and caring about each other and pay no attention to the hate outside this room, and long-past history". This approach really means that Pakehas are prepared to allow injustice in society to continue. Their limited "love" will not help to change and correct social conditions for others.

Institutional example: "Race Relations" programmes (sometimes called "Human Relations") which deal with attitudes and feelings and minimal cultural difference, but do not deal with unfair staffing, unequal power, pay etc., do more harm than good.

### COLOUR BLINDNESS

Not seeing colour, instead of facing the fact that skin colour plays a major part in determining one's life experiences.

Individual example: Teacher or employer who says "I never notice people's colour, I treat everyone exactly alike", is really admitting that she or he is insensitive to individuality and special concerns of some in the group.

Institutional example: using tests standardised on whites for hiring personnel.

### NEUTRALITY

Refusing to take responsibility or a public position against racism.

Individual example: "I don't like it but I don't set the policy, I just carry it out."

Institutional example: Justice system which impartially sets bail so high that poor people (a high percentage of the less affluent before the courts are Maori or Pacific Islanders) spend excessive time in custody because they cannot afford to pay fines, post bail or hire their own lawyers, even if they know how to do so.

### CRITICISE MAORI BEHAVIOUR

Instead of criticising Pakeha actions, the focus is on how Maori people should behave. Then Pakehas can refuse to support Maori claims because they do not "approve" of the methods used. This often includes voicing Pakeha ideas about how 'real' 'traditional' Maori people behave, which generally includes politeness, submissiveness and other convenient traits.

Individual example: "The activists are too angry and violent, I can't condone that". In refusing to overlook, or look behind the anger, to see what causes it, the speaker avoids having to deal with the issue, despite the fact that when the parents of today's Maori activists spoke quietly and politely, they were ignored.

Institutional example: Government departments refuse to "bow to pressures" and negotiate with people who don't "use the proper channels", ignoring previous attempts which have come to nothing.

### START FROM PRESENT REALITIES

The idea is to forget about the injustices of the past, and make a fresh start now. This emphasis on "meeting halfway" overlooks our history of Maori concessions and Pakeha takeovers.

Individual example: "We bought our house from a Pakeha. My father never ripped off any Maori land". This attempt to clear oneself personally misses the point about belonging to a social grouping which has benefitted from the historical actions of members of that group.

Institutional example: Offering proofs that land transactions at Bastion Point or Raglan were legal or can be legalised, while ignoring historical evidence about other proofs of violated principles and intentions.