

Social Anthropology

Completed PhD Theses

2020

Lewis, Marshall S. (2020) *Approaching a ritual design strategy: Thinking ritually to support an organisational collaboration strategy*

This thesis traces the design of a method – a ritual design method – for thinking through the design of activities and things. My research goal was to evolve and apply a design method informed by ritual scholarship and based on the analysis of empirical ethnographic data. This resulted in a new way of approaching the analysis and design of interventions and of seeing, thinking and writing which I call a ritual design strategy. I developed this method during my tenure at Air New Zealand, the national airline of New Zealand, where I was a member of the Workplace Relations team. Our team's mission included sustaining an organisational strategy that intended to build a more collaborative culture, to embed collaborative problem solving across the organisation and to strengthen the working relationship between company management and the labour unions that represented two-thirds of the approximately twelve thousand employees. This organisational strategy was called High Performance Engagement, or HPE. The mission required the design of interventions: 'activities' such as governance meetings, training sessions, collaborative problem solving workshops and informal conversations, and 'things' such as texts, graphics, digital and audio-visual materials. I evolved my ritual design strategy through my engagement with each intervention opportunity and this yielded a method that is generalisable for application across a wide range of circumstances and design-related problems. Ritual design is not specifically for designing rituals; it is a novel method that can be ritual-like itself, through which meaning is created and operationalised.

Robinson, Ella J. (2020) *Sussing out ageing: Sharing lesbian & queer women's knowledge of ageing in Aotearoa New Zealand*

This thesis is a qualitative study exploring how some lesbian and queer women (aged 45 to 88) conceptualise, and experience ageing, old age and the life course in Aotearoa New Zealand. Combining semi-structured interviews with fieldwork conducted in Dunedin, Auckland, Wellington and the Kāpiti Coast, this project shares 32 participants' insights into the importance of multfigurative (tacit and verbal) knowledge exchange in forming subjectivities at the confluence of age, sexuality, and gender. Through personal stories of agency, adjustment, appropriation, and resistance, this multigenerational group of women discuss the changes ageing bestows on multiple levels of personhood – including changes to the body, temporal orientation, sexual drive, and one's sense of embodiment. They offer humorous, poignant and inspiring perspectives of an ever-changing world where 'the personal is political' at all ages, especially when confronted by

heteronormative representations of old age, deficit-based rhetoric, and gendered representations of the life course that privileges a reproductive trajectory. Amid the cacophony of 'successful', 'positive', or 'active' ageing discourses, alongside medicalised narratives of decline, this critical, ethnographic study makes space for lesbian and queer women's phenomenological and social knowledge of ageing to be shared. A key insight is the importance of intra- and intergenerational encounters, friendships, older family members, lovers, and 'peripheral role models' for imagining alternative life paths, older age, and how to leave the world.

Participants' stories and impressions of ageing unfold against recent attempts to raise awareness of the difficulties faced by older 'rainbow' citizens navigating the New Zealand health and aged care sector. Informed by a multidisciplinary body of literature and the theoretical perspectives of critical, queer, and feminist scholars interested in ageing, I contextualise women's personal experiences against a backdrop of neoliberal, consumerist and political economic forces. I reveal how such social systems influence both participants' fears of entering health and aged care institutions, and the language employed by advocates seeking to improve these services. I thus join an increasing number of scholars highlighting the limitations of expanding models of 'cultural competency' in biomedical contexts to include queer identities and suggest returning to Irihapeti Ramsden's (2002) important work on Cultural Safety. With an increasingly diverse ageing population, I argue that lesbian and queer women's perspectives on ageing, and their attempts to create alternative spaces for 'ageing well', raise important questions about the future of aged care in New Zealand for everyone.

Wate, Ben (2020) *Negotiating the sacred space: A comparative study of the impact of the dynamics of culture and Christian theology on women in the South Sea Evangelical Church, and in the Anglican Church of Melanesia, Small Malaita, Solomon Islands*

The discourses on women's empowerment, leadership and development in the contemporary Pacific, and Melanesia suggest that local women in these regions are discriminated against and denied gender equality with men. The experience of disempowerment, and the unequal relationship between men and women is evident in all levels of societies, including local communities, government agencies, civil society and even church organisations.

Contemporaneously, women continue to seek, advance and aspire to forms of leadership empowerment, and embrace their own visions of development for themselves and their communities in specific areas, such as the main Christian churches and the fellowships, unions, groups and committees that constitute them.

This thesis is a comparative study of the dynamics of gender relations and women's empowerment, and development in the South Sea Evangelical Church (SSEC), and the Anglican Church of Melanesia (ACOM), in the Solomon Islands with particular attention to Small Malaita. The study draws on local church women's experience, particularly the SSEC Women's Fellowship, and the ACOM Mothers' Union. The study suggests that major differences exist between the two churches, regarding doctrines and faith traditions, missionary philosophies, the treatment of the Bible, and approaches to local culture. Nevertheless, despite the differences, local women in both

churches have continued to experience unequal treatment in the relationship between men and women in formal leadership in the two churches. Men assume formal and public leadership, while women take on a leadership role in fellowship groups, youth and children's ministry and at the same time oversee the general care of local church buildings. This present scenario is historically constituted and shaped by missionaries' philosophies, and reinforced by local cultural beliefs.

However, I argue that while these experiences have become widespread, the local church women are not passive but actively deal with local situations in an appropriate manner relevant to their respective socio-cultural contexts. This has provided a framework for personal and collective development, self-fulfilment and varying forms of leadership in specific gendered domains.

2018

Wallis, Keziah J. (2018) *The Bonds of Water: Strings of Connectedness in Bamar Buddhist Life*

Yeseq, or the connections of kan (P. kamma) formed between people who pour water together as part of shared merit-making, is a fundamental part of Bamar inter-personal relations. Based upon ten months of immersive fieldwork across two main fieldsites---Yangon, the largest city and former colonial capital, and Shwe Tan, a medium-sized village in the Bago region to the north of Yangon---and with multi-sited research at other nearby locations in Myanmar, this project examines the multiple dimensions of yeseq, including its aspirational, performative, affective, and political dimensions. In so doing, this project examines how Bamar actors draw upon yeseq, both explicitly and implicitly, in building and articulating feelings of connectedness.

Drawing upon current trends in phenomenological and experiential anthropology as well as lived and feminist approaches to religion, this thesis argues that yeseq as the foundation of Bamar notions of connectedness, needs to be taken into account when examining connectedness in the Bamar context. It illustrates how the adoption of yeseq as a framework of analysis allows for a significant reimagining of the nature of Bamar bonds of kinship and community, the connections between people, supernatural beings and the spaces both inhabit, and the connections between the past, present, and future. In so doing, it also emphasises the often-underrecognised role of women in building and performing connectedness in Myanmar.

2017

George, M. (Molly) (2017) *Ageing in an Increasingly Diverse Aotearoa New Zealand*

Well within the span of older New Zealanders' lifetimes, the country's population has changed substantially from its bicultural roots consisting primarily of Māori (the Tangata Whenua and indigenous peoples) and a non-indigenous population of British settlers and their descendants to

a multicultural nation with urban centres reflecting images of “super-diversity”. The complex inter-weavings of time and space, now characteristic of a globalized and transnational world, have brought many older New Zealanders (aged 65 and over) into frequent contact with a diverse array of cultures and ethnicities personified in the mobile immigrants now sharing their churches, neighbourhoods and shops. Older New Zealanders’ “then and now” comparisons confirm that while moving only through time, these older folk now live in “a different country” to that of their memories. Older New Zealanders often readily express significant “macro” concerns about the impact of large numbers of diverse migrants on New Zealand. However, their interactions with individual migrants often typify cosmopolitan moral ideals. Partially facilitated by more “free” time and a slower pace of life, older New Zealanders are often described by immigrants as more approachable, welcoming and predictable than their younger, hyper-mobile counterparts. Based on one year of ethnographic study in two New Zealand cities, this thesis explores older New Zealanders’ localized perspectives of sociocultural change over time and their quotidian interactions with immigrants - both fleeting and more sustained. These older New Zealanders’ experiences of their changing surroundings remind us that “ageing-in-place” does not avoid novelty nor negate contact with difference that may be new. This research recognizes older people as members of contemporary multicultural settings and presents them as steady “moorings” within the seas of change as the tide of mobile people has ebbed and flowed around them. If integration of immigrants is one essential ingredient for the success of new sites of multiculturalism in New Zealand, perhaps older New Zealanders are not the social and economic “liability” that discussions of population ageing would have us believe. Instead, as this thesis will argue, they are a quiet asset in their micro interactions.

McGuirk, Emma (2017) *Timebanking in New Zealand: Academic and Activist Discussions of its Challenges and Pleasures*

This ethnographic and participatory action research project explores the emerging movement of timebanking in New Zealand. Beginning in 2004, timebanks have developed in more than 25 locations around New Zealand, drawing inspiration from models in the United States and the United Kingdom. Timebanks are small-scale alternative currency systems in which members use one hour of work as the unit of currency. Members maintain an online account balance, which tracks their earning and spending. Forms of labour commonly exchanged in these reciprocal networks include: music and language lessons, rides to the airport, working bees on members’ gardens, CV editing, cooking lessons, pet care, skype and smartphone tutorials, home maintenance, and projects completed in partnership with community organisations. One of the initial points of interest for this research was the timebanking promotional literature, which has a tendency to describe timebanks as largely self-managing, simple to understand and explain, and likely to be taken up with enthusiasm by the members of a given community once the online software is provided. In contrast to this simplified presentation, ethnographic and participatory action research methodologies reveal the more varied experiences of timebank developers and members. Timebanks encounter, overlap with, and have impacts on existing community

ties and informal networks of support. Alternative currencies also emerge and are utilised within existing knowledge about payment, debt, and fairness. Part of the work of timebanking is to reassure members that spending time credits is as important as earning them, because all members' accounts need to move in and out of a negative balance in order for labour to flow evenly through the network. This work of reassurance, education, and wider dissemination of the timebanking philosophy and practice is one of many jobs performed by timebank coordinators. Most of these coordinators are women, they are sometimes paid, but mostly in voluntary positions. The coordinators also carry out social event organising, networking, fundraising and grant writing, administration support, technical and IT support for members, training and induction of new members, and national and international collaboration with other timebanks. All of this work is conducted within a broader framework of efforts to increase opportunities to exchange labour outside of and beyond capitalism, whilst remaining embedded within it. This project explores in particular the engagement of New Zealand timebanking and its community members with the notions of community, debt, activism, and the contradictions, challenges, and successes of this approach to intentional community building and developing alternative currencies.

2016

[Bower, Sherrema](#) (2016) *A Woman's Glory: A Study Exploring Experiences of Spiritual Power and the Gendered Lives of Women in Two Pentecostal Communities in the USA and New Zealand*

The question of whether or not feminisms can be located amongst Pentecostal and evangelical women has been widely debated in the field of women's and gender studies (Franks, 2001; Ginsburg, 1997). Yet my research has uncovered that Pentecostal women have a unique brand of feminism through their spiritual power and submission, drawing from a distinctly female spiritual experience of Pentecostalism, when they give submission first to God before all others. Many of these practicing women employ 'biblical feminism' (Scanzoni & Hardesty, 1992), an aspect of feminist theology that looks at biblical representations of women through a 'developing egalitarianism' approach.

The stories of these women were told to me by them during my ethnographic, cross cultural and comparative PhD research from September, 2012 to February, 2014. I conducted more than 60 interviews around New Zealand and River City and Fountain City, Missouri (USA), with women in two Pentecostal denominations, the Assemblies of God (AG) and the United Pentecostal Church International (UPCI). Their stories are put in conversation with submission doctrine while exploring the social contexts that shape how these women experience God, faith, and themselves. In this religious and social context women's lives are structurally and systematically different from men's lives, thereby producing a set of different as well as differently complete knowledges (Wood, 2005:pp. 61-66).

Both lay women and leaders told of the transformative power of their conversions into Pentecost and their sense of purpose through actively applied

call narratives to demonstrate the aegis of their God-given authority. They spoke of having spiritual giftings like healing, prophesy, and tongues and interpretation, which they regularly enacted for the benefit of other members in their faith communities. They placed protocols around their giftings to ensure that the gift-bringer was operating under God's authority rather than her own. Participants revealed the multi-dimensionality of submission and their own cerebral approach to the concept. This placed them in what I call woman space, a place of spiritual power constantly regenerated by the woman's prayers and the strength of her belief that God works through her. My work uncovered that submission – given always to God before all others - is an inseparable tenet of these women's spiritual power.

Wardell, Susan E. (2016) *Living in the Tension: A cross-cultural comparative study of the meaning and management of care, self-care, and wellbeing across two communities of faith-based youth workers.*

This ethnographic project explored how faith-based youth workers in two communities – Moment of Truth Evangelistic Ministries (MOTEM) in Kampala, Uganda, and Canterbury Youth Services (CYS) in Canterbury, New Zealand – managed and made sense of their own wellbeing, against an ongoing tension between care and self-care. The comparative approach enabled an examination of two local articulations of a global faith system, as well as two situated examples of the effect of neoliberalism on the faith-based organisations (FBOs). The experience of burnout, as a culturally-grounded idiom of distress with strong ties in existing literature to care labour and the non-profit sector, was the entry point into this study. The analysis of interviews, focus group material, primary texts and ethnographic field notes drew heavily from a narrative discourse approach. This highlighted the significance of language, metaphor, and narrative in their sense-making, but with a performativity focus that examined these not as static texts, but as part of subject formation. This study also applied a post-structuralist perspective to examining the discursive construction of the 'good' leader in a specific historical moment. This provided context for the moral and emotional labour observed in each site

My findings were that balance, paradox, and re-categorisation were key techniques used to manage discursive tension. Such strategies were both storied and embodied. Distinctive local 'aesthetics' which patterned practice were also identified, including self-awareness and balance (in Canterbury), and self-control and empowerment (in Kampala). Through all of these, neoliberal discourses were shown to be contributing to a responsabilisation of the youth leader for their own wellbeing. Ultimately, although numerous institutional and ideological forces are at work in their complex and morally-fraught social fields, faith-based youth workers exercise creativity, agency and resilience in navigating these to maintain their cherished identities and manage their wellbeing whilst conducting the demanding care labour involved.

Bailey, Rochelle-lee (2014) *Working the Vines: seasonal migration, money, and development in New Zealand and Ambrym, Vanuatu.*

This research contributes to anthropological knowledge of Melanesian international labour mobility, specifically ni-Vanuatu, in the 21st century. A new era of international labour mobility opportunities began for the region in April 2007. This thesis examines the multiple social and economic consequences of ni-Vanuatu participation in New Zealand's Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme (RSE). The RSE scheme was a grower initiated policy to provide New Zealand growers with reliable labour in the horticulture and viticulture sectors. At the same time, New Zealand government officials promoted the RSE as a way forward for economic development in the Pacific region, via remittances sent home. With a lack of waged employment at home, ni-Vanuatu perceive the RSE as an additional source of income that can meet individual and community needs. Nonetheless, there are competing claims to these incomes and workers are in constant negotiation in how their incomes are redistributed among various interests and more importantly, maintaining social obligations through reciprocal relationships.

In this thesis, I explicitly focus on how earnings from New Zealand are recirculated into communities in Ambrym and add that these incomes also provide local New Zealand economies financial rewards. In Vanuatu, RSE earnings have contributed to school fees, new housing, water infrastructure projects, community projects, new businesses and have been included in funding the ceremonial exchange economy. Workers note that they are 'working for the community good' and aim to 'improve livelihoods'. Through various forms of remittances, they have been reaching their 'development' specific goals and continue to generate new targets for their families and communities.

Ding, Mei (2014) *The Travelling Minzu: Uyghur migration and the negotiation of identities in China and Australia*

The concept of minzu (民族) operates at the juncture between nationality and ethnicity. From the 1950s to 1980s, 56 minzu groups were officially identified and recognised by the state (nationality). This was part of the minzu identification project, within which Uyghur became one of China's largest non-Han or shaoshu minzu groups located in its northwest border. This thesis demonstrates that although minzu is a contextualised Chinese concept, it has been internalised and filled with local meanings by people and has subsequently travelled across geopolitical borders and among various cultures. On the institutional levels, the concept of minzu was introduced to China at the end of the 19th century through Meiji Japan to support the formation of the Chinese nation. During the wars against the Qing Empire and the establishment of the Republic of China, Sun Yat-sen (also known in Chinese as Sun Zhongshan) extended the notion of minzu from Han to include Mongolians, Tibetans, Manchu and Hui (Muslim in a broader sense). Given the Soviet experience, the Chinese Communist Party promised national equality to all groups within the nation to unite the country against

imperialism, Japanese invasion, and promote proletarian revolution. The notion of minzu also conveys ethnic identity. It has been transformed from an abstractive and official-imposed identity to the level of Uyghur individuals, filled with meanings and practised in everyday lives. This thesis examines Uyghur in small and medium-sized enterprises in both China and Australia, as significant sites of reinterpreting and negotiating the meanings of minzu identity in the context of transnational migration. The notion of minzu is intuitively invoked by Uyghur migrants in terms of access to employment, business and education opportunities in both countries. This notion of minzu has been reconstructed as a new form of ethnic and diasporic identity for Uyghur in multicultural Australia, especially in relation to their shaoshu minzu status in China. The concept of minzu not only travels with Uyghur migrants but it was also prevalent in fieldwork relationships, which actively involved the researcher's own minzu identity. My own transnational fieldwork and migration experiences provide a parallel and embodied experience of the travelling concept of minzu, and a wider model for 'Chinese overseas' studies.

2013

[Bagley, Kerryn \(2013\) *Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder diagnosis and intervention: An investigation of professional practice in New Zealand.*](#)

Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is an umbrella term used to describe a range of neurodevelopmental and physical impairments associated with prenatal alcohol exposure. It is a brain-based disability which manifests in behavioural symptoms and cognitive deficits that adversely impact on the affected individual and their family. While FASD has been acknowledged as a disorder since the 1970s, it remains poorly understood in the New Zealand context, and does not attract much support from health and allied health services. Meanwhile, the normalization of alcohol in New Zealand culture affects the ways in which FASD is approached and perceived by medical specialists and lay people alike.

This thesis investigates the ways in which professionals within health, allied health and social service systems in New Zealand encounter, approach and manage FASD and cases of suspected FASD. It examines the circumstances surrounding diagnosis of and intervention for FASD in New Zealand, and the factors that inform professional practice in these two fields. It questions how FASD fits within specific professional practice contexts, how social and cultural forces influence the actions of professionals, and what barriers may exist in FASD-related practice. It aims to provide a nuanced analysis of how FASD is currently handled, and suggests potential strategies for achieving more effective service provision for FASD.

The research presented in this thesis is theoretically and methodologically grounded in applied medical anthropology, involving extensive participant-observation fieldwork in health and allied health training contexts in New Zealand and internationally. Over thirty in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out with health, allied health and social service professionals in New Zealand. This data has been subjected to a

thematic analysis that informs the scope of the research discussion, and provides the basis for my conclusions. Based on this data, my research suggests that professionals do indeed come into contact with cases of prenatal alcohol exposure in their work, and that many have developed innovative strategies for assisting individuals with confirmed or suspected FASD, but continue to face systemic and social barriers to achieving best practice in this area.

2012

[Prochazkova, Jana \(2012\) *Foreign Seasonal Workers in New Zealand: An Ethnographic Account of the Nexus of Labour and Immigration Policies and Employment Practices.*](#)

This qualitative study explores the nexus of labour and immigration policies and employment practices in New Zealand. This thesis focuses on multiple experiences of the foreign workers employed under the main labour immigration policies. The ethnography, using both observation and semi-structured interviews of these different groups of seasonal workers provided sufficient data to review and elaborate core theoretical immigration issues. This dissertation contributes to a growing body of qualitative studies on guest workers and temporary labour migration. My research provides an original methodological contribution by utilizing not only interviews but also participant observation including the work season before beginning this thesis. This dissertation is one of the few insider studies of foreign workers conducted by another foreigner. The main advantage of this methodology was the willingness of most informants to open their hearts to a person with the same status of a foreign worker who had similar experiences. Situating my research in an orchard, I aimed to explore how the temporary labour policies shaped both workers' experience with working conditions and their treatment by the employers. This research revealed questionable employment practices associated with rural work. These practices included visa-dependent controversial treatment of some foreign workers, misuse of the piece rate system, stereotypical gendered division of labour and even racial assumptions about the work performance depending on physical characteristics of different nations.

2010

Blondet, Marieke (2010) *American Samoa and National Park; the social impacts of conservation in Samoan Islands.*

American Samoa is a small American associated territory in the Pacific, which has few resources to exploit and a weak economy. The territory is largely dependent on US aid. The colonial history of American Samoa under US administration led to an unusual development, with the American influence

causing many social transformations. Ninety percent of the land is communally owned by local Samoan extended families.

Today American Samoan culture, or *fa'asomoa*, suffers from significant changes, which especially impact on the traditional system of land and the chieftainship organisation known as *fa'amatai*. *Matai* is the name given to any chief and head of an extended family or *aiga*. A *matai* title is associated with some land, which is the *aiga* land. The *matai* is in charge of managing the family affairs and land. Land tenure is also totally intertwined with both the *aiga* internal organisation and the whole society's social organisation. In 1994, the National Park of American Samoa was established by the US government and American conservationists. Most of the protected land is owned by local Samoan *aiga*, which not only receive rent from the National Park Service but also continue to live on their communal land inside the Park. The description of this unique context is at the core of my thesis. I was interested in the interactions between the Park and the local populations, and the possible impacts the former may have on the local social organisation. The rent paid by the protected area to local *aiga* may have unexpected effects at different levels of American Samoa society.

Traditionally, any asset in an *aiga* is shared between relatives, by their senior *matai*. This person is also in charge of managing the rent from the Park and redistributing it. The *matai* may, however, keep for himself a part of this income if not all. This creates conflict within the *aiga*, and resentment against their senior *matai*. Moreover, the National Park having fixed a monetary value to land, which before its creation had more a symbolic value than a material one, participates in the shift of the meaning of land for American Samoans and in changing their perception of it.

Communal land becomes a good, which can be bought and sold. Samoan people want to individually benefit from the land and the Park, and they implement different strategies to reach this target. In my analysis, the National Park of American Samoa, without such an intention, is affecting two of the pillars of the American Samoan social organisation; first the extended families and their *matai*, which are the basic social unit, and secondly the communal land which is intrinsically associated with the *aiga* and its internal organisation. This process may weaken *fa'asomoa*. I will demonstrate this in the thesis.

Hofmann, Daniel (2010) *Virtually tribal/tribally virtual: Shareholders in indigeneity.*

In this thesis I will explore the use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) amongst members of the Ngāi Tahu tribe, a Māori tribe located on the South Island of New Zealand with tribal members scattered all over the world. The thesis topic originated out of previous research in which I investigated why the tribal corporate, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (TRoNT), had developed a web presence. During the prior research employees of TRoNT made arguments for the use of inner-tribal CMC. This thesis was intended to explore whether or not these arguments were accepted by tribal members. During the course of this research the focus shifted towards a more encompassing view on tribal membership and how the use of CMC influences the understanding of tribal membership.

I will argue in this thesis that the use of CMC has not engendered but emphasised existing tensions between many locally active and distant or passive tribal members but at the same time new communication technologies also offer possibilities to overcome these tensions.

To make this argument I will show that a part of the tribal membership and the iwi corporate, TRoNT, favour an inclusive membership discourse, focusing on a single entry criterion, ancestry. For this group within the iwi the use of CMC is a possibility to further inner-tribal democracy with distant and passive tribal members being able to participate in inner-tribal debates within being physically present. Other, mostly locally active members argue that ancestry only generates the potential for membership and that actual membership is reliant on physical participation. For this group the use of CMC as a form of participation is of limited value only and further threatens to undermine the status of locally active members by equalising all members. Lastly I will show that despite the resistance against CMC for inner-tribal communication all of my interview partners used CMC to a greater or lesser extent to stay in contact with family members who were temporarily or permanently geographically distant. Family web sites and emails are used for this purpose. This use, I argue, creates a tribal network of partially autonomous family networks.

The thesis is based on 52 ethnographic interviews held with tribal members, TRoNT employees, and members of the public closely working with the tribe. The interviews were interpreted through a dual focus on literature concerning tribal segmentation, and the concept of the network society (Castells 2000). The literature on tribal segmentation shows the fluidity of the social structure of Māori society and the influence of colonial ruling with the resulting ossification of the social structure. The literature further shows that forces within Māori society are at play which have aimed for the installation of iwi as the main body of Māori culture and political representation. The concept of the network society in turn offers a widely accepted terminology for processes at work within the Ngāi Tahu tribe, but also within other locales, making it clear that the current processes within the Ngāi Tahu tribe are not unique.

2009

Dobson, Stephanie (2009) *Faithful Living: Muslim Women in New Zealand and the Articulation of Islam.*

This research explores the narratives articulated by a cross-section of Muslim women in New Zealand. The women interviewed often felt defined and overlooked by dominant discourses that tend to stereotype and essentialise Muslim women. Muslim populations are part of growing populations within Western host societies and New Zealand is also indicative of this. The New Zealand Muslim community is comprised of diasporic, immigrant Muslims as well as New Zealand born Muslims and converts (reverts) to Islam. Recent international tensions and conflicts have had significant impact on Muslim women in terms of increasing experiences of hostility and racism in New Zealand, which may manifest in forms of social prejudice, such as

employment discrimination. Western, non-Muslim stereotypes also tend to objectify Muslim women as passive, oppressed victims of their own culture and religion.

This study examines the practical realities of living in New Zealand for Muslim women, as well as discussing the ways in which the participants negotiate non-Muslim perceptions, religious and cultural ideologies and identity construction, as well as exploring deeper levels of faith and meaning for Muslim women in New Zealand. New Zealand society is unofficially 'multicultural', within an officially bicultural framework, which can be problematic in terms of practicalities and definition for minority ethnic or religious groups. The women interviewed expressed a dynamic and fluid attitude towards identity definition and construction, emphasising their gendered Muslim identities but also claiming 'Kiwi' and other self-definitions. The women also discussed the ways in which individual hermeneutics are utilised to interpret Islam for the benefit of women, as well as isolating cultural inputs inappropriate for women and Islam, in a process of 're-Islamisation' that is occurring as part of a global phenomenon. The participants also talked about faith and deeper meanings for practicing Muslim women.

Muslim women in diasporic or minority populations may experience marginalisation and isolation, so this research also explores the active agency that women employ to counter these. Islam and faith are 'anchors' and form a foundation for these women in, often insecure, contexts. Faith and community tend to ameliorate the negative experiences for the women, as well as providing social networks and support. As minority populations interact with the host society, intercultural dialogues are occurring that create new spaces for identity and interpretation. So-called 'Islamic feminism', in which women use Islam as a source of agency and rights appropriation, is an example of this and challenges, even redefines, some Western, feminist paradigms.

Hijab (modest dressing) is also examined through the lens of faith and practice. Hijab is a symbol of identity for women, communicating that the wearer is Muslim, but it has also acquired new definitions in Western contexts. Hijab, however, also embodies deeper meanings of faith and community, which are often overlooked in commentaries regarding this practice. The women interviewed directly contradicted the stereotypical assumptions that non-Muslim Westerners may make about them and articulated self-definitions and meanings that emphasised their agency and choices within Islam.

2008

Anderson, Vivienne (2008) *The experiences of international and New Zealand women in New Zealand higher education.*

This thesis reports on an ethnographic research project that explored the experiences and perspectives of a group of women in New Zealand higher education, including international and New Zealand students and partners of international students. The study had two aims. The first was to disrupt the inattention to gender and to students' partners and families in New Zealand

international education research and policy. The second was to problematise Eurocentric assumptions of (predominantly Asian) international students; 'cultural difference', and of New Zealanders' homogenised sameness. The theoretical framework for the study was informed by a range of conceptual tools, including feminist, critical theory, post-structural, and postcolonial perspectives. In drawing on feminist perspectives, the study was driven by a concern with acknowledging the importance and value of women's lives, looking for women where they are absent from policy and analysis, and attending to the mechanisms through which some women's lives are rendered invisible in internationalised higher education. In considering these mechanisms and women's lives in relation to them the study also drew on post-structural notions of discourse, power and agency. It explored how dominant discourses in internationalised higher education reveal and reproduce historically-grounded relations of power that are intentionally or unintentionally performed, subverted and/or resisted by women and those they encounter. Using Young's (1990, 2000) approach to critical theory, the study also considered alternative ways of constructing internationalised higher education that were suggested in women's accounts.

As a critical feminist ethnography the study was shaped by my theoretical framework (above), critical literature on heterogeneous social groups, and feminist concerns with relationship, reciprocity and power in the research process. Fieldwork took place during 2005 and 2006 and involved two aspects: the establishment and maintenance of an intercultural group for women associated with a higher education institution, and 28 interviews with 20 women over two years. Interviewees were recruited through the group and included eight international students, nine New Zealand students and three women partners of international students.

Study findings challenged the assumption that international and local students are distinct and oppositional groups. They also highlighted the importance of recognising the legitimate presence of international students' partners and accompanying family members at all levels in higher education. International and New Zealand women alike found the intercultural group a useful source of social and practical support and information, and a point of access to other sources of support and information. Women reflected on moving between many different kinds of living and learning contexts, highlighting the importance of: clear processes and pathways for accessing information and practical support when experiencing transition; teaching that is engaging, effective, and responsive; and opportunities to develop connections with other people both on and off campus. Rather than revealing clear patterns of difference or sameness across women, the study highlighted the importance of policy, research, teaching and support practices that are open and responsive to women's actual viewpoints and needs, and that neither re-entrench difference nor assume sameness.

Hale, Beatrice (2006) *The Meaning of Home as it becomes a place for Care; a study in the dynamics of home care for older people.*

This work is a study of the day to day experiences of older people in receipt of in-home care, the experiences of their family carers, and of their careworkers, resulting in a hypothesis about the structure of the lifecycle towards the end of life, and a consideration of both structured transition and individual transitions to and within this life stage. It has taken off from Laslett's (1989, 1996) seminal work on age divisions, into Third and Fourth Ages. Through an initial examination of secondary sources, I have hypothesized that the older people in this care bracket are in fact in a new life stage, between that of the independent Third Age and the dependent Fourth Age. I call this life stage the stage of 'Supported Independence'. Further references to the secondary sources, and references to the data, have supported this hypothesis, and have shown that there is a structured transition from the stage of independence to that of supported independence. The value of building such a life stage lies in the ability we then have to emphasise the situation of in-home care, bringing to prominence the experiences of the three stakeholders in this care environment. I have used the rites of passage concept to make known the issues involving the move from independence to dependence and those issues predominant in received in-home care, in being the carer at such a time, and in being the careworker within the invisibility of home. This has shown a formalised separation from the independent identity, and a prolonged stage of liminality because of an often uncertain form of service delivery. In this liminal stage also are revealed the emotions of living at home with a disability and with care, the improvisatory practices, the passivity and assertiveness of this time of ageing. By applying this concept also to the family carers, I show the movement of families into and through the caring role, the job of caring and the difficulties of taking responsibility without authority. I have shown carers' own improvisatory practices, and their determination to maintain the care recipient at home as long as possible. For the careworker, the rites of passage concept shows how she (and the careworker participants in this study are all women), can act to either maintain the liminal position of the recipients or assist in their reconnection to greater autonomy. Exploring the careworkers' own positions by means of the rites of passage concept highlights their inter-structural position between the public and private sectors, and highlights too, the care industry's position, between that of a time managed industry and a recipient-directed industry. Whether this can be regarded as liminal depends on the philosophies of care adopted by the industry. In summary, the study examines the significance of the place of care, challenging the dominant ideology that home is best, and putting forward for consideration principles of care for other models of service delivery.

Robertson, Julie (2006) *Of Scarecrows and Straw Men: Asylum in Aotearoa New Zealand.*

Asylum seekers have become the primary symbols of – as well as participants in – contemporary struggles over geo-political, intellectual and moral

terrain. By moving place, by their refugee status claims be examined, by exposing themselves to all the techniques of scrutiny and evaluation in the presentation of their claims, asylum seekers displace traditional western ways of feeling at 'home', and of knowing about and acting in the world. In doing so, they reveal the extent to which the legal system of rights upon which the international refugee regime is based is a messy zone of contested demands, refracted by the varying material circumstances and political power of participants. This thesis looks at asylum in Aotearoa New Zealand from the perspective of those most involved; asylum seekers, lawyers, adjudicators, members of non-government organizations and medical professionals. Situated mid-way between abstract human rights talk and the details of individual claims, it presents refugee status determination as a complex negotiation through culturally-laden frameworks of understanding and operation that are as prevalent as they are often camouflaged. In doing so, it explores how we are to evaluate the credibility and legitimacy of representations of the cultural 'other'.