

# Technology, freedom of expression, identity and inclusion: Fresh perspectives

## Introduction

In 2019, the New Zealand National Commission for the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) contributed a special section to *Curriculum Matters* with a range of perspectives on Global Citizenship Education, which is a key area of focus for UNESCO nationally and globally. In this issue, we take another area of focus for our organisation, that of Freedom of Expression.

At the international level, UNESCO upholds Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stating that it, “defends and promotes freedom of expression, media independence and pluralism, and the building of inclusive knowledge societies underpinned by universal access to information and the innovative use of digital technologies.”<sup>1</sup> UNESCO considers freedom of expression to be a cornerstone of democracy where the free flow of information builds mutual knowledge and understanding.

However, in recent times, especially in our own country, the rise of mis-, dis-, and malinformation, conspiracy theories and hate speech brings into question what is meant by “freedom” of expression. Freedom for whom? For some? For all? To do or say whatever they wish? Online and offline? Is freedom an unassailable personal right? Or does it bring with it wider personal and social responsibilities?

UNESCO’s definitions of some of the key terms include:

- **Misinformation** as “information that is false but not created with the intention of causing harm.”
- **Disinformation** as: information that is false and deliberately created to cause harm to a person, social group, organization or country.”
- **Malinformation** as “information that is based on reality used to inflict harm on a person, social group, organization or country.”<sup>2</sup>
- **Hate speech** as “a virulent form of discrimination that targets and undermines the human rights of persons and peoples based on their – presumed – identity and serves as a driver of populist narratives and violent extremist ideologies.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.unesco.org/en/communication-information> (para.1).

<sup>2</sup> <https://en.unesco.org/fightfakenews> (para.1).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Addressing\\_hate\\_speech\\_through\\_education\\_A\\_guide\\_for\\_policy\\_makers.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Addressing_hate_speech_through_education_A_guide_for_policy_makers.pdf) (p.9)

In attempting to contribute to discussion and debate on these issues, the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO has commissioned a series of thought pieces, in which the authors reflect on themes relating to changes in technology, freedom of expression, inclusion and diversity. In particular, we wanted to include some younger generation voices, as they will be our future leaders. The papers in this special section combine personal reflection with discussion of relevant issues. We asked the authors to keep these pieces 'fresh', in the sense that we wanted their own voices, experiences and ideas to come to the fore. Each author took up the challenge in a slightly different way. Our hope is that one or more of the pieces will resonate with readers, who will find themselves reflecting on their own experiences as they come to make sense of the contradictory and complex interrelationship between technology, media, information, freedom of expression, and human rights.

This set of papers opens and closes with commentary by Fiona Cram and Kate Hannah, who responded to the brief of contextualising the themes of the papers as they related to their own areas of interest and experience. Fiona Cram (Ngāti Pahauwera) is Director of Katoa Ltd, a company that specialises in Kaupapa Māori research and evaluation. By using her memories of the introduction of the television set and its unintended consequences on her whānau's life, she hopes to encourage today's young people to be more aware and critical of the benefits and pitfalls of changing technologies. Kate Hannah is Director of The Disinformation Project. Her work focuses on how disinformation is used to target, radicalise, divide and disrupt. She concludes this set of papers by highlighting the power of stories, and the importance of viewing stories as 'data with soul'.

The three middle papers are from our emerging writers, two of whom are New Zealand UNESCO Youth Leaders. These writers share how their personal identities have shaped their interest in, understandings of, and engagement with modern technologies and the complex issues that they raise. Kauri Tearaura (Ngāti Mahuta), a current UNESCO youth leader, picks up the themes of identity and diversity. He argues how the use of current technologies, when left unchecked, leads to hate speech and hate crime, especially against minority communities. Katja Neef, also a current UNESCO youth leader, examines technology and media in Aotearoa New Zealand through a migrant lens, which enables her to highlight structural racism and the harm that it has done, and will continue to do, unless we begin to take individual responsibility for our part in its perpetuation. Hannah Christini, a final year teacher education student, brings a note of hope. After outlining her motivation to become a teacher, she discusses how she intends to prepare the young people she will teach to be more discerning consumers of technology and media, in order to build a more inclusive society.

We hope you find in each of these reflective pieces, a provocation, an insight or a challenge to spur your interest in engaging in this important topic.

*Ultimately, the goal is for each community to have safe, inclusive and respectful living and learning environments where everyone feels that they belong, are respected, have a sense of purpose and can*

*interact with others across dividing lines with tolerance, compassion, patience, empathy and a collaborative spirit.*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Addressing\\_hate\\_speech\\_through\\_education\\_A\\_guide\\_for\\_policy\\_makers.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/documents/publications-and-resources/Addressing_hate_speech_through_education_A_guide_for_policy_makers.pdf) (p.14)

## Setting the Scene: A Room with a View

*In this opening piece, Fiona Cram (Ngāti Pahauwera) reflects on her introduction to the new technology of her childhood—the television set. She intersperses her memories of how this device changed her whānau's dynamics with advice for today's young people as they clamour for new technology to think more deeply about the associated consequences.*

My childhood memories of a new technology – television – are interspersed here with my speculations about how rangatahi (young people) are engaging with a new technology of their time – mobile devices and ease of connectivity. I make no claims that my memories are in anyway generalisable to my generation, just as I make no claims that I know anything much about what's going on for rangatahi today, apart from what they choose to share with me and various media portrayals of their lives. In writing this piece I'm seeking connection across generations to propose that there are some experiences we share of growing up in a 'new' technological world, just as they in turn may also seek such a connection when they are parents and grandparents of young people who are inhabiting a world with another iteration of new technology. So, to begin...

Some of my earliest childhood memories are of the arrival of television in our neighbourhood. I say 'neighbourhood' because this magic entertainment box did not make its appearance in the corner our living room until sometime after it was welcomed into other people's houses. As a small concession we were able to occasionally visit our neighbours and watch their television. I can recall Felix the Cat cartoons, in glorious black and white, that made us marvel at this new technology and kept us riveted in place – quiet and attentive. The view in a room with a television was marvellous and exciting, and not accessed anywhere near often enough as my mother didn't want us kids bothering neighbours.

When I think about the burning desire I've observed, of young people wanting a mobile device and the ability to be connected, I wonder what they're expecting. With television, we wanted to have the social capital that would enable us to join in conversations with our friends. We didn't want to be left out or left behind. Adults are often challenged about when to get their tamariki (children) or mokopuna (grandchildren) their own device and, like my whānau (family), it may be something that's delayed because it's unaffordable. In the COVID lockdown lots of young people could not do remote learning because there was no device they could use, or they had to share the one device with siblings and adults in their household. A lack of connectivity that prevents learning shutters the view from a young person's room.

Finally, and sometime later, my father gave in, and our very own television took pride of place in our home. The living room furniture was shifted to make space for this treasured possession, with the couch and armchairs reoriented so we could all watch from good vantage points. What followed were nights of us assembling in the living room after dinner and baths to watch television until bedtime. The view in our living room was of us cosying down in our pyjamas, watching the television intently, shushing those who talked, and occasionally being treated to two squares from a block of Cadbury dairy milk chocolate.

Rather than being about family members sitting and enjoying entertainment together, a mobile device provides young people with a curated, private form of connectivity. Parental controls and restrictions can moderate this but still, we're opening a world up to young people that we're often naïve about and may not seek to inquire after. This world may also consume many hours of their time each day and disrupt other activities, including whānau occasions. The ways in which those with parental responsibilities seek to express their guidelines can be a catalyst for meaningful discussion and/or perceived by young people as curtailing their freedom of expression. When a young person is in a virtual room with friends who are both known and unknown to their parents or grandparents, how do these adult caretakers get some sense of the view being seen from that room?

What I don't remember much about are the television advertisements I saw when I was young. Mostly they played in short blocks every 15 minutes or so and this provided an ideal time for those watching to run to the toilet or for someone to put the kettle on and make a cup of tea. Looking back, however, I now realise that so much of what I take-for-granted or consider ordinary is actually a consequence of early efforts to sell us stuff via this new medium of television. The jingles for sweets stick with me and continue to fuel my sugar cravings (for example, 'Pinkies the bar for you...'). I also continue to wash and condition my hair with various bottled concoctions. I attribute this to growing up in the 1960s when detergent technology was new and companies were touting new products that would make us, our stuff, and the surfaces we leaned on cleaner, sparklier, and more hygienic. The view from the television when the advertising was on was of a very sweet, very clean world.

The persuasiveness of television advertising has been replaced with information streams that can be just as entertaining, inviting, and compelling. A personal, curated experience of social media platforms can be subject to the whims of algorithms that narrow what's seen or recommended. We have a new vocabulary of people being 'radicalised', 'going down rabbit holes' and buying into 'conspiracy theories'. While it can be difficult at times to tell what's tika (true) and what is teka (false), checking in with whānau and friends can help young people distinguish between the two. By continuing to hone their intuition about these things, young people can become very good critics, just ask any adult researcher who has asked them research questions. My hope is that the view from their room is clear, so they see things as they truly are, without any disguises or traps set to fool young players.

There are other things I remember about the role of TV in my early years that were to have repercussions in later life. The first is Sunday night's screening of 'Disneyland'. The mournful theme tune of 'When you wish upon a star...' still brings me down, but not as much as it did earlier in my adult life. Then it would induce a mood swing reminiscent of the Sunday night blues I experienced as a child, as Disneyland came to signal the end of the weekend. My second memory is of the few Māori who were on TV. There was entertainer Howard Morrison, Tina Carline bringing us the weather, and my father's favourite, Ernie Leonard, commentating the local wrestling programme 'On the Mat'. As had happened in many urban residential settings in the 1960s, the view from our room was of Māori pepper-potted or scattered across what was largely a Pākehā (non-Māori) suburban television landscape. In the 1990s, Leonard returned to television on 'Panui', providing Māori-centric commentary on how the media covered Māori events and issues. Above all the other memories, and perhaps because I was a little older then, I remember his commentaries and especially his sarcasm when the media got it wrong. He not only provided a window into the Māori world, but he also chastised those who tried to represent Māori in ways he found unhelpful – ways that were not mana enhancing. The view from the television room when he was on was, refreshingly, of a Māori world.

Gathering, viewing, and considering information can be an important part of identity formation, with joy potentially following on from making connections with others in the same 'tribe'. That is, others who are like us, who are feeling the same way we do, and who are facing and trying to overcome the same life

challenges. It's not good to be pepper-potted and subjected to the gaze and possibly judgement of those who don't quite get us. So, we should encourage young people to seek out connections with those they can relate to, and to sidestep those who demean and discourage them. I want rangatahi to have a view through their window on the world that is full of the same aroha for them that is present among the tīpuna (ancestors) who stand behind them.

Another change introduced by TV was when my father found a very small television that he could put on the dresser by the dining table. This meant he could watch the news when we sat down to dinner. It wasn't as if our dinner conversation prior to this had been sparkling or intellectual, but I'm sure we had had something to say to one another about our day, our worries, or our celebrations. The little television put pay to that, and we ate mostly in silence. The messages that were imparted by newsreaders went undiscussed and therefore unchallenged. This could have left me with an abiding faith in the media as arbiters of what was newsworthy except that the small television was really small, and my dining table seat did not have the same viewing advantage as my chair in the living room. Still, the view from our dining room was of quiet kai (meal) times, with our whānau held in check by a news-watching father.

My hope for whānau is that they keep gathering around their tables for kai and kōrero (talk), unencumbered by technologies. At the same time, the conversation that flows can be about what everyone is discovering, laughing about, and sharing with a network of friends that will be familiar to those around the table because of the stories they have heard about them. In this way, whānau can stand beside young people to peek through their window.

The next big thing to come to our neighbourhood was colour TV. The family in the big house on the hill where I sometimes babysat got theirs as soon as they became available. It was weird finding out what colour things were on programmes where we had only ever imagined what a dress, a room, a landscape might look like in living technicolour. Unsurprisingly, my father was not convinced of our need for a replacement television and said he'd be getting a colour TV when the old black and white one died. So, even in the midst of colour bursting forth from more and more televisions in our neighbourhood, the view from our living room remained steadfastly black and white and shades of grey. As I was older, what may have been a pain point for me instead became a story I told with pride, 'Yeah, our TVs still black and white 'cause my dad won't get a colour one until it explodes'.

So, my message to young people is that whatever the view from your room is, it that can get a little easier to interpret as you get older. You can become more inclined to be self-deprecating and to chuckle to yourself when you pull up the blinds and see things that may have made the younger you feel ashamed, neglected, or isolated. Just as you may become more analytical and slightly wistful about the things you loved and the things you might have taken for granted. I will leave you with encouragement to remember how you and your whānau negotiated life with new technology, so that you can pass these stories on when your moko (grandchild) is asking for the latest technology.

## **Diversity, Inclusion, Hate Speech and Minority Communities**

*Kauri Tearaura (Ngāti Mahuta, Tainui and Cook Islands) shares his personal story before expanding on the harm that is done by hate speech, especially to minority communities, such as the Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics community (SOGIESC). He suggests that a way forward might be found in diversity, inclusion and allyship.*

*Ko Taupiri te maunga,  
Ko Waikato te awa,  
Ko Tainui te waka,  
Ko Tūrangawaewae te marae,  
Ko Ngāti Mahuta te hapū,  
Ko Waikato te iwi*

Taupiri is the mountain,  
Waikato is the river,  
Tainui is the ancestral vessel,  
Tūrangawaewae is the sacred meeting  
place,  
Ngāti Mahuta is the clan,  
Waikato is the nation.

I recite the pepeha (lineage) of the Waikato peoples. This descent comes to me from my father. We descend from Tāwhiao, the second Māori king, through his elder son to his second wife Rangiaho, Pokaia Tāwhiao. On my mother's side, I descend from the Māori peoples of Tongareva (Penrhyn) and Avarau (Palmerston) in 'Avaiki Nui (the Cook Islands).

Identifying as a member of the Rainbow Communities, I recognise that this places me at an intersection of multiple marginalised identities. Being Brown, Māori, Pasifika, and Queer has given me a unique perspective on life.

Belonging to Generation Z, and born in the 21st century, I have had access to digital technology for most of my life. My parents bought two of the first 3G-capable mobile phones after the 3G mobile data network was introduced in Aotearoa New Zealand. The internet has always been present. Thus, I consider myself a 'digital native'. Together with an innate curiosity, my access to digital technology and the world wide web has brought the world to my fingertips.

This level of convenience presents both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities for learning and sharing, and challenges in verifying what is being learnt and shared. I admit that, at many points in my life, I have been prey to the unsophisticated misinformation and the remorseless disinformation that exists on the internet, causing great harm especially for marginalised communities. As artificial intelligence and machine learning gain in popularity, there is a potential for misinformation and disinformation to cause greater harm unless we take action.

### **Free speech and diversity**

Being that Māori represent just 17.4% of the New Zealand population (Statistics New Zealand, 2022), they are a minority. Thus, their indigeneity remains a unique aspect of their collective identity and I

acknowledge my whakapapa Māori (Māori genealogy) through my pepeha at the beginning of this paper.

Diversity is the key to combating conflict and misinformation (Mallet, 2021). In a related manner, I also argue that – alongside principles of allyship and inclusion – it has a vital role to play in countering hate speech. Wong (2022) refers to the rise of false and misleading information as an ‘infodemic’. In a recent survey, (Classification Office, 2021) of more than 2,000 New Zealanders, 61 percent believed that false or misleading information has had ‘a fair bit’ to ‘a lot’ of influence on their views about minority groups, such as religious, ethnic, and diverse Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics (SOGIES) communities. In addition, 84 percent of respondents agreed that action must be taken to combat misinformation and, in this paper, hate speech is understood as a manifestation of misinformation and disinformation.

To understand and address the issue at hand, we must consider the following questions: what is the context in which New Zealanders are granted the right to free speech? How is hate speech experienced, and what are the conditions that generate it? How can we take action?

New Zealand has international commitments and statutory obligations to free speech. Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) reads: "everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers" (United Nations, 1948). New Zealand was one of 48 countries that voted in favour of the UDHR, which was ratified on 10 December 1948. In 1990, New Zealand’s legislature put it more plainly: "Everyone has the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and opinions of any kind in any form" (New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, s 14). While the UDHR is not legally-binding, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act is explicit in granting protection for freedom of expression, or free speech. I find it difficult to imagine that the United Nations, in 1948 – or even the New Zealand legislature in 1990 – could predict the circumstances we face today, where the right to free speech is used as licence to generate and perpetuate hate speech on such a large scale.

### **Hate speech and hate crime**

Hate speech is on the rise and many minority groups find themselves repeatedly victimised (United Nations, 2022). One such group is the diverse SOGIESC communities. Tweedie (as cited in Daalder, 2022) contends that recent attacks on these communities, such as the suspicious circumstances in which the RainbowYOUTH drop-in centre in Tauranga was burnt down, and the vandalism of a church painted pink in Greymouth, were “built on the back of transphobic sentiment still being widespread and somewhat acceptable (needs page number)” Indeed, I consider these physical demonstrations as extremist actions, which occur as a result of hate speech that has been left unchecked.



With respect to diverse SOGIESC communities, there have been examples where the right to freedom of discrimination has been weighed against the right to freedom of expression. Bennachie (2009) details the Living Word case, which saw a Wellington-based Human Rights Action Group take a complaint to the Classification Office against two videos which dehumanised LGBT people, and people living with HIV/AIDS, as inferior to others based on their sexuality or HIV status. The Film and Literature Board of Review ordered the videos be classified as objectionable. In the video distributor's appeal, the High Court treated freedom of discrimination as prevailing over freedom of expression but when the case reached the Court of Appeal, all earlier decisions were reversed. While the content was ultimately not deemed objectionable, or hate speech, I suggest that this example gives us a glimpse of what may occur when we use our legal and social freedoms to re-define the parameters in which we hold conversation – first, on whether speech is considered hateful and, second, whether the speech in question has the potential to incite violence.

Hate speech is often a precursor to hate crime. An anxious or fearful person with loosely held radical beliefs might become the victim of bullying because of these beliefs. This experience can leave the person feeling ostracised and gives them reason to strengthen their beliefs. These beliefs incite them to fear and target communities that are different from themselves. Their verbal attacks can escalate into physical harm to people and property.

In the US, McDevitt et al. (2002) studied hate crime and described four types: *thrill-seeking* i.e. the perpetrator believes that they will be lauded for their assault; *defensive* i.e. the perpetrator justifies their assault as necessary in order to defend a community to which they belong; *retaliatory* i.e. the perpetrator believes that their assault is due revenge for a prior assault against them; and *mission offensive* i.e. the perpetrator believes that they are engaged in a total war against members of a rival community. These themes all exist on the same premise—that the perpetrator believes they have the assent of their society to commit their hateful acts. Thus, society has a collective responsibility to recognize, prevent, address, and eliminate hate speech.

### **Combatting hate speech**

Any action against hate speech needs to be taken with leadership from the victimised communities, and I use the term 'leadership' in its broadest sense. In situations of redress, we know that members of victimised communities often have an additional task of managing their emotions where members of unaffected communities do not (Evans & Moore, 2015). This is known as emotional labour. It is invaluable that non-members of victimised communities play their part in addressing hate speech. Listening to and following alongside victimised communities is crucial. This is known as 'allyship'. Just as young members of diverse SOGIESC communities require accurate and positive representation in media to be inspired of what they can become (Zafar & Ellis, 2022), wider society requires visibility of allies who choose to stand with victimised communities.

The wider approach to addressing hate speech should be founded on principles of diversity. Even while the UDHR was being drafted in the late 1940s, the representative of China, Dr Peng Chung Chang suggested that it should “reflect more than simply Western ideas” (United Nations, n.d.). I echo this sentiment. I believe that all design should incorporate genuine input from the most diverse groups of people. This ensures the greatest reception and impact (Clarkson et al., 2003). McDevitt & Levin (2008) suggest that “many hate crimes are perpetrated by young people who do not yet have a profound commitment to bigotry and therefore may be dissuaded from repeating their offence” (page number). While earlier intervention is ideal, hate speech is often a precursor to hate crime, and it is for this reason, I believe that it must be addressed before it devolves into more malevolent action.

Hangartner et al. (2021) concludes that, of humour, warnings of consequences, and empathy, the latter was most effective in reducing online hate speech. Thus, intervention at this point may require the employment of empathy rather than condemnation. Victims of hate crime often want three things following the offence: a statement from community leaders denouncing the act and the beliefs which led to it; that law enforcers take the act seriously; and that communities value the victims and declare opposition to the hostility expressed by the perpetrator (McDevitt & Levin, 2002). These actions also give us a strong foundation from which to begin our remedial measures once hate speech has been communicated.

Left unchecked, hate speech has the potential to cause grave harm. We must support victimised communities and the avenues through which they can take action. While it is impossible to legislate against all ways in which freedom of expression can be exercised, we can re-define how we hold courageous conversations about hate speech and where we draw the line. As the Internet constitutes a favourable environment for radicalising, particularly young people, we must ensure that our response to hate speech is not only remedial but also preventative.

Minority groups such as diverse SOGIESC communities are already vulnerable to negative outcomes. A recent survey indicated that almost two-thirds of young members of diverse SOGIESC communities in New Zealand have contemplated suicide in the 12 months prior (Earley, 2022). For them, hate speech has the potential to be a literal nail in the coffin. Therefore, we must rally our allies to support diverse SOGIESC communities and other minority groups in recognising the circumstances where hate speech has the potential to take root and spread. I see this as an important step in creating a society which celebrates diversity and fosters inclusion.

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# **Being a Migrant in Aotearoa New Zealand: Freedom of Expression and Racism**

*In her paper, Katja Neef reflects on her personal experiences of living as a mixed-raced Asian migrant in Aotearoa New Zealand and how technology and media can exacerbate racial stigmatisation and structural racism.*

## **Encountering New Zealand**

My family migrated to Aotearoa in late 2013 and—being of mixed descent, half Thai and half German, I have witnessed and encountered racism. From living in Aotearoa for the past decade, I can see that racism has become entrenched in our systems and society. Colourism and everyday racism are frequently experienced by Asian communities.

After having spent the first 13 years of my life in Asia, I ended up going to a majority white school on Auckland's North Shore. I became aware of the misconceptions and gaps in understanding of the history of Aotearoa and the inequalities that have disproportionately affected Māori and Pasifika communities due to colonisation and racially entrenched systems. At my school, we only learned about the Land Wars in Year 10 but never covered colonisation and its devastating impacts, its legacies within our system or the need to decolonize. Learning te reo was not seen as important for non-Māori and, embarrassingly, we were never exposed to it.

It was not until entering university that I became more aware of the racism in our housing and our education systems through school zoning. I learned about 'redlining' and how real estate agents consider your job, ethnicity and class and only show you properties based on where they believe you 'belong'. When we first moved, we were looking at housing in West Auckland but were explicitly told we shouldn't live there. Such attitudes foster the perpetuation of inequalities and attitudes that are persistent in our education system. School zoning allows those, who have the financial means to, to move to an area with higher decile schools, whereas those in low socio-economic areas may not be able to send their students to a higher decile school due to zoning restrictions.

## **An unequal starting line**

Not everyone begins at the same starting line and, even when public education is free, there are many disparities, including the unequal distribution of funds and teaching staff. When we fail to invest in students and their education, we also miss the opportunity to provide young people with a clear understanding of their positionality in Aotearoa and learn about their own history and how to navigate these spaces. The current reform of how Aotearoa's history is taught in schools allows for the reframing of our education system to critically reflect on the realities of colonization.

Diversity and social inclusion need to be central to the social discourse in Aotearoa for, as a country, we are not only bi-cultural but multicultural. As a migrant, I have come to see that there is much to learn, and unlearn, to begin to understand the spaces and the land we inhabit. In Aotearoa, we all must find our own roles in honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi to enhance diversity and social inclusion.

Globalisation has made it easy for the wealthy and those educated in Western education systems to move between countries and settle wherever they can find work. Having grown up in Thailand and Japan, where I attended several international schools, gave me a first-hand experience of both advantages and disadvantages of globalisation at a personal level. As more and more people relocate and have identities which do not fit conventional social norms, the lines between cultural identity and sense of national belonging are becoming increasingly blurred. Yet, it is also important to not lose cultural meaning and values by becoming more globalised or cosmopolitan in our thinking.

Craig Calhoun (2020) is sceptical about cosmopolitanism and “the class consciousness of frequent travelers,” in which travel does not necessarily equate to improved cultural understanding, especially when it is short-term. It can even reinforce stereotypes and foster skewed mindsets, such as in the case of the terrorist who attacked two mosques in Christchurch. The terrorist’s extensive travel experience further radicalized him and amplified his white supremacist ideas rather than making him more appreciative of other cultures and beliefs.

Another point of contention with cosmopolitanism is whether a homogenised global society creates stronger unity or more disparities and tensions between successful global citizens and those left behind. Kwame Anthony Appiah’s book, *Making Conversation*, (2006) emphasises the fact that both globalisation and cosmopolitanism can be problematic and argues there is no ideal one-size-fits-all model for future global civil society. Instead, he proposes the position of partial cosmopolitanism because it highlights that maintaining cultural roots and preserving one’s distinctive identity should be valued.

### **Stigmatisation and structural racism**

As a migrant, I have heard many people comment on why they do not need to care about racial tensions and the historical relevance of colonialism, as ‘we played no part’. However, I would argue, we all have benefitted from the violent dispossession and unequal systems that were put in place. I am able to live here without having my residential status contested, and my rights were never put into question. Having been born and raised in Thailand and having spent several years in Japan, I grew up within an international education system with strong cultural influences which highlighted cultural understandings and plurality. My tertiary training is grounded within a Western institution, which requires constant reflexivity in the way I generate findings – whose views I am validating, and whose voices I am centring within my work. Therefore, within my writing, I emphasise the need for critical self-awareness of how place, space, and identities are constructed, including within the media, and how we interpret the information that we consume.

Stigmatisation and othering have a long tradition in Aotearoa. During the notorious Dawn Raids in the mid-1970s, many Pasifika were stigmatised as overstayers, had their homes and workplaces raided, and many were deported (Mitchell, 2003; Dunsford et al., 2011; Barber & Naepi, 2021). Even people from the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau, who are legally New Zealand citizens, were affected by indiscriminate state-led assaults on Pasifika communities, confirming that most New Zealanders of European descent did not differentiate between Pasifika from different nations and territories (Mitchell, 2003). This dark chapter in New Zealand's immigration history has become a source of intergenerational trauma among Pasifika communities that persists today (Dunsford et al., 2011). The Dawn Raids have also caused a deep distrust in New Zealand's government institutions among Pasifika communities (Mitchell, 2003; Dunsford et al., 2011).

While at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, blame was attributed to distant others, such as Chinese in Wuhan or Asians more generally (e.g., Stechemesser et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2021), many Pākehā shifted the blame quickly to the more proximate others – first to Chinese/Asians living in Aotearoa (Nielsen, 2021) and then to Pasifika communities.

Pasifika communities were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 (Ioane et al., 2021; Ratuva et al., 2021). Being initially hailed for playing their important part as essential workers, Pasifika were later villainised by online haters and victimised by mainstream media when their neighbourhoods and churches were perceived to be centres of new outbreaks, particularly in the country's largest city Auckland, where most of the diasporic Pasifika communities are located. During the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign, Pasifika communities were also called out for trailing behind European New Zealanders in terms of vaccination rates.

While mainstream media outlets in Aotearoa New Zealand have come a long way from their deep racist underpinnings of the 1970s and now give more space to Pasifika voices in their reporting and call out Pākehā online haters for their interpersonal racist attacks, there is still a lack of understanding of how sensationalized, clickbait headlines and revelation of specific identities of Pasifika communities during a pandemic sparked renewed waves of hatred and reinforce stereotypes and stigma. Blame attribution and othering find particularly fertile ground and can infect society during a crisis where uncertainties and anxieties drive people to look for institutions and/or people to blame for these unsettling circumstances (Bhanot et al., 2021; Choli & Kuss, 2021).

Structural racism and the wounds of colonialism can be exposed through what may seem as banal or unremarkable media reports, yet upon closer inspection still reflect and embody racially driven sentiments. I argue that these sentiments are not static, but blame can be shifted from one ostracized group to another during a pandemic or any other form of crisis.

### **Freedom of expression, inclusion, and diversity**

It is important for society and decision makers to recognise the progress made in Aotearoa over the past few years as well as to take the further steps that are needed to enhance and promote freedom of *responsible* expression, to have open conversations and to learn from one another. I also think that creating spaces for youth, BIPOC, and those that identify as LGBTQIA+ could be done in a more genuine and empowering way. Oftentimes, this can be tokenistic and more of a tick-box activity to engage youth and minorities in conversations without actively listening to, and providing the resources for, the change needed. An effective means of inspiring change to promote responsible freedom of expression is to create forums and encourage alternative ways to engage communities in the discussion of the importance of social inclusion and diversity.

The embracing of different and shifting identities needs to be central to the future social discourse in Aotearoa. As a country and society, we are not only bi-cultural but multicultural. We must begin by honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I contend that it is part of our own individual responsibilities to recognize our own unconscious biases and whether we perpetuate negative stigmas on other cultural and community groups. Race relations cannot only be discussed between Māori and Pākehā but needs to be extended to all that have come to live on this land, no matter for what reason. Wider engagement is particularly important as racial prejudice also exists *between* minority groups which, in turn, perpetuates racialized stereotypes. We can only move forward as a nation and society if there is greater solidarity, understanding and dialogue between all community groups and tangata whenua.

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## **Preparing the Next Generation of Learners**

*Hannah Christini concludes the section featuring young people's experiences of changing technology and links this to her choice of becoming a teacher. She highlights that critical literacy and critical digital skills will be important components of her teaching practice.*

### **Technology – a double-edged sword**

I am a twenty-year-old university student currently studying my third year and final semester of my Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree, specialising in primary education. I am a Pākehā woman with Māori whakapapa and I grew up with my two parents and younger sister in a small suburb in central Auckland. When I reflect on my childhood, I had a very unique experience given the emergence of new technology in my generation. When my family first got the iPod Touch, I was no longer limited to a computer monitor. I now had access to everyday use of a handheld device. I would spend hours exploring various applications while gaining new information about this technology. I no longer had to dial the landline and hope my friends would be the ones to pick up the phone. I could instantly message the friend I wanted to talk to. This excitement of instant messaging was somewhat short-lived. Over time, I felt and experienced the harm of cyberbullying. There was greater ease with which a person could anonymously abuse another person on a device. As I was among the first generation to use such modern technology, I lacked knowledge in navigating such situations. I often left bullying issues to continue rather than seeking help.

While technology proved both beneficial and harmful in my personal life, I discovered it was valuable to meet my needs as a learner. Throughout my primary education, I often struggled to engage in learning tasks limited to reading information and writing words to demonstrate my understanding. The arrival of technology in my education changed this for me. I suddenly had access to tools and resources that presented information in visually engaging ways, influencing me to show more interest in my learning. However, the emergence of this technology was new and unexplored. As a child amongst the first generation to utilise this type of technology, there needed to be more guidance on how to use it. More specifically, I needed skills to decipher what was factual and what was misinformation. No one in my everyday life could teach me the skills and knowledge of how to navigate the information. At that stage, everyone around me was learning how to use this modern technology, and as a result, I missed opportunities to learn how I could critically analyse information.

### **The decision to become a teacher**

With three years of secondary school left, I had already decided I wanted to be a primary teacher. There were multiple reasons I was confident in my decision. However, the most prominent one was due to the positive and negative effects the teachers throughout my education had on me as a learner. At various

stages in my education, I had teachers who were intentional with their practice and compassionate in their approach. They cared about my learning progress, valued my contributions to the classroom environment, and were proactive in supporting me in the areas of my learning that were more difficult. However, there were also teachers whose practice contrasted with this, and I was therefore left feeling as though I was unteachable and less capable of improving in comparison to my peers. This isn't to say that these teachers didn't teach well, but their teaching style wasn't beneficial to me as a learner. While these negative experiences at the time were harmful to my self-efficacy and self-esteem, they ignited a spark in my desire to be a teacher.

The older I became, the more reflective I was about how influential my teachers were in shaping who I became as a learner. If I continued to feel unteachable and excluded from my learning, it was likely that I would gradually pull away from wanting to learn. While I was fortunate that I found a greater desire to learn, some learners do continue to feel discouraged in their learning. When I think about why I wanted to become a teacher, it was so that I could help more learners feel supported, seen and heard. I want to be a teacher because those who have diverse learning needs should feel included in their classroom (Clark-Howard, 2019). The technology we have today allows for this. However, it's a matter of how learners understand how to use technology that is most important to recognise (Ministry of Education, 2017).

### **Educating learners on misinformation**

To ensure that my future learners feel a sense of inclusivity within my classroom, I aim to teach learners how to use the benefits of information online to enhance their lives without harming other people in the process. As learners progress through their education, they gain more independence and responsibility. When considering technology, they can gradually explore more information and understand various perceptions of particular topics. Learners need skills in navigating the vast amount of information online to ensure that they can find reliable sources and avoid misinformation. Mis- and disinformation can heavily influence how learners communicate with others as it shapes how they articulate their ideas (Anderson & Rainie, 2017). In some contexts, this could be harmful to specific people. Integrating critical literacy and critical digital skills (Bolstad, 2017; Gibbs, White & McDowall, 2021) are two areas I will educate my future learners on, including how to analyse the information they discover, and avoid mis- and disinformation.

I aim to build critical literacy and critical digital skills (Gibbs, White & McDowall, 2021; Education Review Office, 2020) in my teaching practice when teaching lessons across various curriculum areas. When working alongside learners who use technology to discover information, I will create opportunities for learners to understand and practise critical literacy. This may involve exploring texts in literacy where they must analyse and evaluate the information they are reading (Luke, 2017). I will scaffold their learning by prompting them to question the biases and assumptions that they come across. Critical digital skills (Digital Skills Forum, 2021) might entail learners participating, for example, in a social sciences unit where they learn to compare and contrast different sources of information to verify that what they find is reliable and relevant (Abbiss, 2016). I can model these skills to my future learners by

showing them how to check for citations, cross-check different resources that explore the same information and investigate the expertise of the person or organisation who compiled the resource.

### **Navigating the world of the future**

As technology advances, learners will gradually have greater access to more information. They need to know how to navigate the information they see and read online as it prepares them to become responsible citizens in our society (Abbiss, 2016). When learners come across information online, how the curators of these resources present ideas can have varying degrees of influence on that learner. It informs their perspectives on topics and contributes to how they communicate with others. If learners have yet to gain experience developing skills to avoid mis- and disinformation, they may impart knowledge about specific people that could be harmful towards them (UNESCO,). However, if learners are provided opportunities to evaluate and question the information they come across, they are introduced to multiple ways of perceiving this information and can, therefore, make informed decisions (Gibbs, White & McDowall, 2021).

For learners in Aotearoa New Zealand, the extent of cultural diversity is rapidly increasing (Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2016), and we are now adapting our national curriculum to ensure a sense of inclusivity for every learner (Gibbs, White & McDowall, 2021). Educating learners on analysing mis- and disinformation is more critical now than before. If learners are provided with the tools and skills to avoid mis- and disinformation, they are more likely to steer clear of contributing to the stereotyping and discrimination that mis- and disinformation do to minority groups. As a teacher, when considering my future learners, I want to encourage them to be capable of understanding digital etiquette (Ribble, 2021) when exploring information and protecting their privacy so that they feel empowered to make safe and responsible decisions online. I hope that my future learners grow to become citizens in our community who can uplift those in minority groups and understand the harm that misinformation can do to them.

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## The Power of Stories and Being a Storyteller

*In her closing piece, Kate Hannah takes umbrage at researchers who decry narrative as not being real research – and, using the stories that the four youth writers have shared, highlights the power of storytelling in the freshness, nuance and hope that they bring to this discussion of technology, identity and freedom of expression.*

*Ko Yns Môn te motu*

*Ko Mynnyd Twr te maunga*

*Ko Wera, Kotiana, Gloucestershire ahau.*

*Ko Hughes, MacKenzie, Apperley, Edmonds taku ingoa tīpuna*

*Ko Kate Hannah ahau.*

I'm going to start with a story – because stories are data. You might even have watched Brene Brown's Ted talk, *The Power of Vulnerability*, when she refers to her initial discomfort at being described not as a researcher, but as a "storyteller".

"I'm a qualitative researcher. I collect stories; that's what I do. And maybe stories are just data with a soul..."

South African feminist theologian, Sarojini Nadar, then takes Brown's assertion (and thus plays with the sense that Brown – and other qualitative researchers, myself included, are just "storytellers", a trope made more powerful by Brown's social role as public intellectual lite) and places it within the specifically black, in fact, specifically African feminist epistemology of 'narrative knowing,' describing how story works in research:

Suspicion of master narratives of knowledge

Tools of knowledge gathering AND dissemination

Objection to objectivity

Reflexivity of the positioning of researchers; and

Yearning for and working for transformation and change.<sup>5</sup>

What stories are at work in this place, where we are engaging with the ideas of freedom of expression and freedom of responsible expression?

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<sup>5</sup> Nadar, S. (2014). "Stories are data with Soul" – lessons from black feminist epistemology, *Agenda*, 28(1) 18-28.

It feels for many of us that we are teetering on the edge of a precipice, and for some that the ground – the earth – is pulling away from underneath our feet. The democratization of information offered by the connectedness of the Internet has enabled access to data, information, and each other at never-before-experienced scale – and in that connectedness, that vast sweep of knowledge, wisdom, insight, thought, critique, and opinion, there has been much gained. But there is also a counterpoint to the significant social, emotional, cultural, economic, and human benefits of the Internet.

The earth turns, and we are steady on it, its permeations imperceptible as we move through time and space, living and working on shifting ground. We garner a sense of this shift standing at the tidal zone, at the edge of sand and sea – the tide pulls back, and the sand draws away under our feet. I encourage this sensation, the giddy sense of connection to enormous and fundamental forces, and an embrace of the sense of a loss of control when reflecting on the four essays by rangatahi presented here. This collection of voices of young people and their reflections on responsible expression in the age of the Internet holds us out here on the edge – between what is fixed, static, and what is moving and dynamic.

UNESCO's commitment to responsible expression takes place within historic and contemporary contexts which are both static and dynamic. The United Nations, and UNESCO, bear witness in their formation to the development of the post-World War Two order, which included significant efforts to prevent genocide, crimes against humanity, and to promote and shore up universal human rights. Today, the post-war order is critically assessed by many across the Global South, and is rejected almost entirely by populist strong-man politicians and leaders.

These historic and contemporary contexts shape the information landscape in ways that reflect how colonization, empire, and capitalism have shaped natural landscapes, and human development. Some of the shifts – the moving ground – that people feel discomfited by are manifestations of communities reclaiming space that was taken or reformed. There is an expression repeated on social media: 'when you are accustomed to privilege, equality feels like oppression' – and in many ways this is the fundamental pull – a sense of displacement which is then captured by stories which seek to drive division.

What is characteristic of these stories is their simplicity. Disinformation – false and/ or misleading information shared or created to cause harm – and conspiratorial narratives are grounded in simplistic elisions of complex and hard-to-process facts. Details given provide a false sense of authenticity, but it is what is left out that matters.

In the divisive language of the so-called 'culture wars' we are told that 'facts don't care about your feelings.' But some of the shifting ground we're experiencing is powerful scholarship and activism

which challenges a reliance on archives and printed sources as evidence; “the epistemological question of what can be known and demonstrated by historical evidence” (Hunter, 2017).<sup>6</sup>

Indigenous philosopher Linda Tuhiwai Smith, in her paradigm-shifting 1999 text, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, explains the ambivalent swirl which surrounds codified knowledge:

The word ‘research’ is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world’s vocabulary. When it is mentioned in many indigenous contexts, it stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful (Smith, 1999).<sup>7</sup>

When I consider disinformation and its interplay with responsible expression, I lean into the work of Moana Jackson, who describes a deliberate misremembering at the heart of national narratives of encounter and exchange which have dominated New Zealanders understanding of Te Tiriti and the colonisation of Aotearoa. The commemorations of 250 years of James Cook’s expedition, held in 2019, were presented to the public as stories of encounter between two great voyaging nations, Polynesian and European, which led to the formation of a new nation. This successfully created a discourse of equality – exchange, agency – which generalizes to Polynesian and European so as to elide the specific – of Māori, of the British, of the existing state that was destroyed by this set of imperial actions.

In this set of reflections, young people tell us a set of complex, dynamic, ground-shift stories about identity, belonging, life online and life offline, and the ways in which language, imagery, and simplistic stories affect them and their fellow-travellers. They express subjectivities which are nuanced, considered, direct, and kind, in a manner which I have come to expect from rangatahi, who are at home on the edge between sand and sea, able to steady their footing as the tide pulls.

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<sup>6</sup> Hunter, K. M. (2017). Silence in Noisy Archives: Reflections on Judith Allen’s ‘Evidence and Silence - Feminism and the Limits of History’(1986) in the Era of Mass Digitisation, *Australian Feminist Studies*, 32 (91-92), 210.

<sup>7</sup> Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonising methodologies: Research and Indigenous people*. New York: Zed Books.