

DIVERSITY REPORTAGE IN METROPOLITAN OCEANIA: THE MANTRA AND THE REALITY

Abstract

Aotearoa/New Zealand has the largest Polynesian population in Oceania. Three Pacific microstates now have more than 70 per cent of their population living in New Zealand. Projected demographics by Statistics New Zealand indicate that the Pacific and indigenous Māori populations could grow by 59 and 29 per cent respectively by 2026. The Asian population will increase even more dramatically over that period, by almost doubling. Māori, Pasifika and ethnic media in New Zealand are also steadily expanding, with major implications for the ‘mainstream’ media industry and journalism educators. For more than two decades, diversity has been a growing mantra for the Aotearoa/New Zealand media. Initially, the concept of biculturalism — partnership with the indigenous tangata whenua—was pre-eminent in the debate but, as the nation’s Māori, Pasifika and ethnic media have flourished and matured, and demographics have rapidly changed, multiculturalism and multicultural media strategies have become increasingly important. This paper examines the regional trends in Oceania, the growth of the indigenous and ethnic media, and their impact on the mainstream in New Zealand as an outpost of globalised media. It also looks at the evolving initiatives to address the challenges.

Introduction

Simplistic notions and prejudices about the Asia-Pacific region pose challenges for journalists in Oceania attempting to report with depth, context and analytical skill. Pressures and dilemmas for the news media continue to gain momentum in the South Pacific, often from a cultural as well as socio-political dimension. For more than two decades, *diversity* has been a growing mantra for the Aotearoa/New Zealand media. Initially, the concept of *biculturalism*—partnership with the indigenous *tangata whenua*¹—was pre-eminent in the diversity debate, but as the nation’s demographics have rapidly changed and Pasifika and ethnic media have flourished and matured, *multiculturalism* has become increasingly challenging and important. The emergence of biculturalism has crystallised into one of the most important social and political developments in New Zealand over the past 50 years (Archie, 2007: 3; Belich, 1996). The notion of a partnership between the indigenous Māori peoples and the Pākehā (descendants of European colonists, mostly Anglo-Saxon, and more recent migrants) was enshrined in Te Tiriti — the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, regarded as the nation’s ‘Magna Carta’. This founding document of nationhood has underpinned a revival of civil rights and Māori culture

since the 1960s. *Te reo Māori* is one of New Zealand's three official languages (along with English and Sign Language).

However, since the turn of this century, the principles of bicultural development have increasingly become contested by notions of multiculturalism. New Zealand is a country with one of the highest global per capita migration rates (Singham, 2006: 33). The 2001 Census indicated that 10 per cent of the people comprised ethnic migrant communities other than Māori and Pasifika. Projected demographics by Statistics New Zealand (2008) indicate that the country's Asian population could almost double by 2026. The Pacific and Māori populations will also experience increases of 59 and 29 per cent respectively. A strategic approach to multicultural diversity is increasingly apparent and essential.

Recognition of cultural diversity and celebration of migrant communities present mounting challenges for media as a counterpoint to globalisation (Deuze, 2004; Morgan, 2006). The 'mainstream' New Zealand media have been slow to adapt to the changes heralded by biculturalism, and are now also confronted with having to reflect and respond to a rapidly changing and increasingly complex multicultural society. Major cutbacks in New Zealand news organisations, particularly the two major newspaper chains, APN News and Media and Fairfax Media — both Australian owned — in recent years have meant an increasing reliance on reporting the region through a globalised prism, especially as seen from Canberra, even though this often does not match a New Zealand perspective of the Asia-Pacific region (James, 2006; Robie, 2004, 2007). The regional media relationship in the context of contested notions such as the 'arc of instability', and the impact on journalists of coups and crises in countries such as Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands has become critical (see Field, 2005; Robie, 2004, 2008; Tully, 2005). While the media in some countries are refreshingly outspoken and courageous, in others there is a trend towards self-censorship. There is a growing need to challenge images of the region beyond 'coups, conflicts and contraband' (Helu Thaman, 2001). This paper examines the regional trends and their impact on the future for mainstream media and journalism education in a globalised context, and looks at how some new initiatives are addressing the challenges of demographic change.

Media and the Asia-Pacific region

Four companies — all foreign owned — dominate the New Zealand news media industry, including a 'near duopoly' in two of the three main media — print and radio (Rosenberg, 2008: 176). In television, there is a monopoly in the pay arena (News Corporation-owned Sky TV), and only three significant competitors in free-to-air television, including the state-owned Television New Zealand's two channels. Australian-owned Fairfax Media controls almost half of the country's newspapers (more than 48 per cent), including *The Dominion Post* in the capital of Wellington, while the rival APN News and Media (ANM) group — also Australian-owned — controls the largest circulation daily, the *New Zealand Herald*, and almost 43 per cent of the daily newspaper circulation. The main media union,

the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU), has described the New Zealand media as the ‘most concentrated and foreign-dominated’ in the world (Rankine et al., 2007). During 2007, APN ‘outsourced’ the bulk of the subediting of its titles to the Australian-owned Pagemasters company. In mid-2008, the national news agency, NZ Press Association, downsized and retrenched seven staff while Fairfax Media announced plans to shed 40 editorial jobs and centralise subediting and some specialist news writing into selected centralised nodes for its newspaper chain in a controversial new era of cloned ‘hubeditors’ (*Mediawatch*, 6 July 2008). The media industry has frequently declared that it wants to adopt newsroom and staffing strategies geared towards greater diversity, but the reality has been slowness to change (Tucker, 2007a). Pressures resulting from media convergence, staff layoffs and cost-cutting also impact on efforts to diversify in the newsroom. The largest daily newspaper has less than five ‘diversity’ journalists in an editorial staff of 140 — barely 4.6 per cent of the newsroom. This situation has contributed to an apparent decline in the quantity and quality of Asia-Pacific coverage in New Zealand media.

Journalists committed to covering the Pacific region frequently find it frustrating while working with news media that do not employ sufficient resources, or misread or interpret events simplistically and without sufficient depth. According to Louw, misreadings often occur because journalists work in ‘closed shop’ reporting environments, carry their cultural biases with them into an assignment, and assume their own news and social values to be ‘universally valid truths and uncontestable, partly because the new world order is a de facto Anglo hegemony’ (Louw, 2004: 154). Vanuatu-based photojournalist Ben Bohane, for example, is an example of several journalists who have brought an independent and critical perspective to the region’s coverage in the media. A curator’s commentary for a Sydney exhibition of his work in 2006 concluded: ‘The media maxim ‘If it bleeds, it leads’ may account for our tendency to focus on eruptions in a perceived status quo rather than monitoring the sequence of events that precede or influence them’ (Dean, 2006: 157).

Such tendencies apply equally to the New Zealand media. However, at a policy level, New Zealand has a self-perception of being *from* the Pacific rather than *in* the Pacific, as is the case with Australia. This is partially influenced by the relatively large population of Pacific Islanders living in New Zealand (almost 266,000 in a total population of more than 4 million at the 2006 Census). Former Agence France-Presse reporter Michael Field, who now works for Fairfax Media in New Zealand, has complained frequently about the lack of quality of New Zealand coverage of the region: ‘There’s a lack of respect in every aspect of how New Zealand covers its own Pacific Island people and how we cover the Pacific.’ (*Mediawatch*, 2001) According to Jim Tully, New Zealand coverage of Pacific affairs has been eroded by relatively few resources devoted to foreign news and many reporters failing to go beyond a ‘goodies and baddies’ view of events (Tully, 2005: 296).

While the development of Māori and *iwi* media — notably Māori Television since its establishment in 2004 — and their integration with the indigenous community have been reported on and analysed by several researchers and writers (Archie, 2007; Stuart, 1996, 2002; Taira, 2006), there has been little analysis of the Pacific media and community. Taira's perspectives on Māori media also apply to Pasifika media:

Self-determination for many Māori requires Māori control. In practice, this means not imposing a media model or a niche slot on Māori, but providing instead the resources necessary to determine their own media models and forms of media ... only when this happens will Māori be effectively participating in the mainstream media. (Taira, 2006: 277)

Demographic projections indicate growing diversity

New Zealand used to be an overwhelmingly 'European' country. In 1956, almost 93 per cent of the population identified as European, 6.3 per cent as Māori and 0.4 per cent as Pacific Islander. Fifty years later, the demographic breakdown had become 67.6 per cent European/Pākehā, 14.6 per cent Māori and 6.9 per cent Pasifika, with 9.2 per cent Asian and 0.9 per cent from the Middle East.

Religious affiliation has also changed significantly in recent years. While New Zealand has traditionally been predominantly a Christian country since colonisation, this defining characteristic has eroded quite sharply since the turn of the century. In the 2006 Census, barely more than two million people, or 55.6 per cent of those answering a religious affiliation question, identified with a Christian religion (including Māori Christian, such as the Ratana faith). In the previous 2001 Census, 60.6 per cent of surveyed people affiliated with a Christian religion. In contrast, between 2001 and 2006 there was an increase of people affiliated with non-Christian religions. The number of Sikhs, for example, grew from 5,196 to 9,507 (an increase of 83 per cent), while people affiliated with Hinduism (a rise from 39,798 to 64,392) or Islam (up from 23,631 to 36,072) also grew by more than 50 per cent.

The proportion of people who identified as Pacific Islanders in New Zealand grew by 14.7 per cent to 265,974 in the 2006 Census. Overall, Pacific people comprise almost 7 per cent of the total New Zealand population of 4,027,947 (Statistics NZ, 2006). Pacific communities have grown rapidly in recent years (see Figure 1), with at least three countries and territories — the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau — having more than two-thirds of their population living in New Zealand. The number of Pacific Islanders living in New Zealand would make it the fourth largest 'Pacific' country by population — after Papua New Guinea, Fiji and the Solomon Islands — and the city of Auckland is often described as the 'Polynesian capital of the world'. Both the Māori and Pacific media have expanded and transformed along with the demographic changes, and played a critical role in self-determination. Ethnic media are in their infancy but also rapidly evolving.

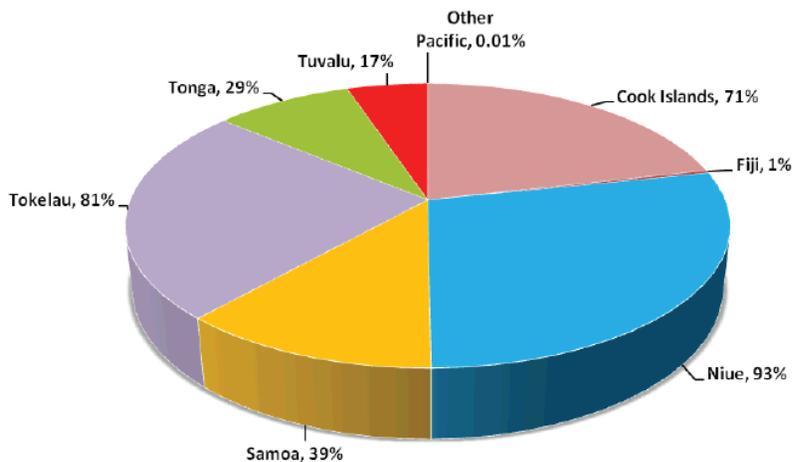


Figure 1: People from Pacific countries living in Aotearoa/New Zealand, 2001 Census; the pattern continued in the 2006 Census

Source: Graph adapted from McCarthy (2005: 43).

The Māori media renaissance

A characteristic of the print record in New Zealand has been a strong presence of Māori voices, expressed in both English and *te reo Māori*. According to Taira (2006), Māori has been ‘an essential printed and spoken element of New Zealand culture’ from the earliest missionary presses until the contemporary Huia Publishers, which celebrates indigenous writing. She identifies three critical periods in the development of indigenous print media: colonising journalism; *kaupapa Māori* journalism; and niche journalism.

A media revival accompanied a Māori cultural renaissance of the 1980s with the establishment of several newspapers and magazines, followed by the birth of *iwi*, or tribal-based, and urban Māori community radio stations; the first Māori cyber-navigators such as Ross Himona and the indigenous domain *maori.nz* in the mid-1990s; and an ill-fated Aotearoa Māori Television Network pilot project.

Finally, indigenous media in New Zealand were transformed with the establishment of Māori Television in March 2004, which seeks to be a world-class indigenous broadcaster with a mission ‘to provide an independent, secure and successful Māori television channel making and broadcasting programs that make a significant contribution to the revitalisation of *tikanga* and *te reo Māori*’ (cited by Taira, 2006: 257). It now broadcasts on free-to-air UHF terrestrial, Sky TV pay-view and Freeview digital satellite platforms. Māori Television came of age in March 2008 when it hosted the inaugural World Indigenous Television Broadcasting Conference (WITBC), attended by broadcasters from Australia (NITV), Canada (APTN), the Cook Islands, Fiji (Fiji TV), Ireland (TG4), Scotland (BBC Gaelic), South Africa (SABC), Taiwan (TITV and PTS) and Wales (S4C).

Tāhūhā Rangapā, or CEO, Jim Mather explained the station’s two-channel strategy (the new digital channel is 100 per cent *te reo Māori*) as a balancing act: ‘How do we fulfil our statutory obligations, while balancing commercial and cultural imperatives and, in the process, make a significant contribution to the revitalisation of the Māori language and culture?’ (Mather, 2008)

Te reo Māori language proficiency is 27 per cent, with a core audience of 166,000 proficient Māori speakers — 4 per cent of the total population (Mather, 2008). Two-thirds of the monthly average audience of 1.3 million individual viewers are non-Māori. Commissioned program funding is supported by Te Mangai Paho, a government-funded agency set up to support Māori broadcasting. The network caters for this core audience with a range of niche programs, a council of nine elders (*kaunihera kaumatua*) who provide cultural advice and support, a news and current affairs department of 32 staff and an in-house production team of 78 staff (see Figure 2).

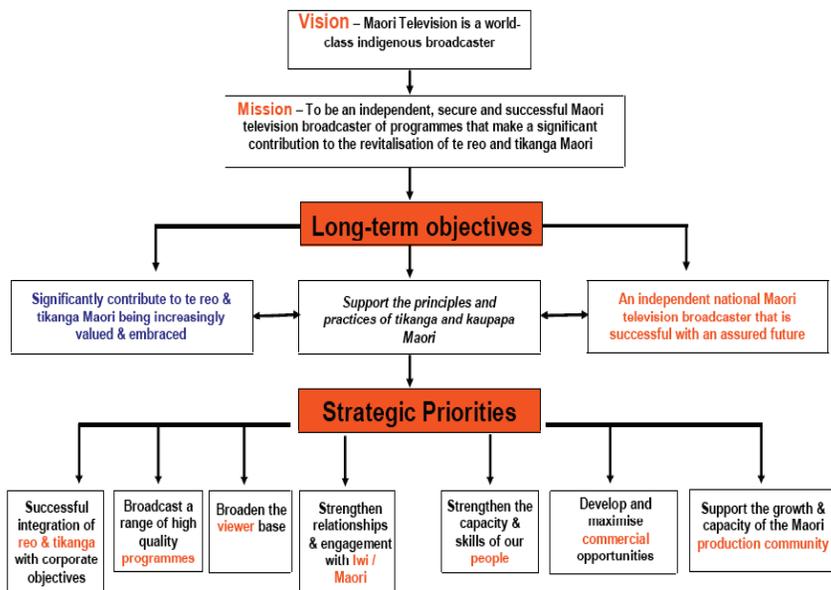


Figure 2: Māori Television’s strategy for success, 2008

Source: Mather (2008).

In February and March 2007, a report by the Kupu Taea media project (Rankine et al., 2007) related to the Treaty of Waitangi analysed a representative group of 740 newspaper articles and 118 television news items about Māori issues over a two-week period. Using discourse and content analysis methodology, the research team found average low levels of the use of *te reo Māori*, with ‘roughly half containing no Māori words for which there are English alternatives. *Te Kaea* [Māori Television news] and *Te Karere* [state broadcaster Television NZ’s Māori news bulletin] used *iwi* affiliations with the name of Māori speakers, but these

were very rarely provided by mass television news or newspapers.’ The researchers also found that many newspaper stories were written from a Pākehā perspective and represented Māori as a source of problems or conflict. The team criticised the widespread use of a ‘Māori privilege’ frame or theme, especially as this had been rejected as unfounded by the UN Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples, Rodolfo Stavenhagen, following a visit to New Zealand in 2005:

This enduring and self-serving Pākehā theme enabled Māori to be viewed as having privileges unfairly denied to Pākehā while also being depicted as poor, sick and a ‘drain on the taxpayer’. (Rankine et al., 2007: 9)

According to Stuart (1995, 2002), applying the Four Worlds news values model for development media (see Robie, 1995, 2005a) as a frame, Māori media tend to move across all four categories instead of being confined to First World ‘objectivity’ — within the Second World category lies a political agenda concerned with *tinu rangatiratanga* (sovereignty); in the Third World category, ‘culture-building’ substitutes for ‘nation-building’; and in the Fourth World category lies Māori media’s concern with cultural survival and language revitalisation. In a later article tracing cultural identity since the nineteenth century, Stuart (2003) argued that Māori media were contributing to the creation of a ‘Māori nation’ within New Zealand.

The Pasifika news media

Most Pacific Island communities in New Zealand are now well served by radio, newspapers, online media and, partially, television. Almost all of these media services are owned or run by Pacific Island businesses and organisations based either in New Zealand or in the Pacific (Utanga, 2007: 20). Notable success stories in recent years include the long-established *Tagata Pasifika* weekly current affairs magazine on Television New Zealand (and also rebroadcast on Māori Television) and the Auckland-based radio station NiuFM, established and managed under the umbrella of the National Pacific Radio Trust (NPRT) and Auckland-based *Spasifik* magazine, which now has a strong pan-Pacific readership. NiuFM and pioneering Auckland Pacific community radio station 531pi merged in 2006 and have established Pacific Radio News, which provided, for example, strong and independent coverage of Fiji’s fourth coup and the 2006 Tongan riots and reconciliation. However, the community trust operator of NiuFM and 531pi, Pacific Media Network, recently became embroiled in a controversy over the independence of its news service in New Zealand’s election year of 2008. The future of its more than \$12.3 million government subsidy has been questioned. At the time of writing, it was feared by some Pacific broadcasters that if the opposition National Party gained power in the general election in October 2008 (which has in fact happened), funding could cease or be dramatically curtailed and the future of the station would be at risk (Brown, 2008; Dreaver, 2008).

Pacific communities are not well served by the mainstream media. However, some mainstream media organisations have tried in recent years to strengthen

their regional coverage. Several leading journalists cover Pacific Island affairs for mainstream broadcast media. Television New Zealand, for example, formed a Pacific reporting unit after the George Speight coup of May 2000 (Gounder, 2007; Mason, 2007). Barbara Dreaver, of part i-Kiribati ethnicity, was one of the establishment team of two members. But this team was later cut back to one person and Dreaver is now TVNZ's only full-time Pacific reporter. Cook Islander Richard Pamatatau reports for Radio New Zealand National while a young Samoan graduate of AUT University, Leilani Momoisea, is gaining prominence as a general news reporter with RNZ.

Radio NZ International's team covering the region includes specialist Pacific Island reporters. RNZI won the 2007 Global Radio Station of the Year award run by the Association of International Broadcasting (AIB) of the BBC, for example, because of its Pacific coverage ('Radio NZ International Wins Global Awards', 2007). It also won a special Media Peace Prize for its Pacific coverage. However, no New Zealand daily newspaper has a specialised Pacific issues reporter on the staff who is actually a Pacific Islander. These news organisations employ non-Pacific reporters to cover the region, and their lack of cultural knowledge, history and background is often embarrassingly obvious.

Gary Wilson, who pioneered Maori and Pacific Islands journalism training with the then New Zealand Journalists Training Board (now Journalists Training Organisation, or JTO) in the 1980s and then helped run the *Mana* news service and publish the bimonthly magazine *Mana* from 1990 to 2004, has been an established critic of mainstream media's diversity failings. In a commissioned paper for the JTO, he wrote:

I see the initial problem in the media as a failing to reflect Māori lives and interests as fairly and generously as they should be. The failing to reflect the news and views of Samoan, Tongan and Cook Island New Zealanders and other Polynesian Kiwis from the Pacific is a parallel problem. (Wilson, 2006: 3)

Melanesian and Micronesian contributions to New Zealand life are even more invisible, and this reflects the mainstream media's neglect of both these sub-regions in the Pacific. Papua New Guinea, the most populous nation and largest economy among Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) member countries, is rarely covered by New Zealand media and few journalists have a sound working knowledge of the country. Vanuatu and the French-speaking territories, French Polynesia, New Caledonia/Kanaky and Wallis and Futuna, are also seriously under-reported by New Zealand media, with RNZI being the only exception.

According to Wilson, Pacific Island leaders in New Zealand have been slow to recognise the part media plays in influencing Pasifika developments (2006: 3). They have also been reluctant to push their agenda, remaining content to defer to the *tangata whenua*. In this campaign for a better deal in the media, Pacific Islanders have been 'playing a subdued, secondary role'.

John Utanga, co-founder and former chairman of the Pacific Islands Media Association (PIMA), has a rather more optimistic view (2007). He notes that coverage has often been restricted to ‘headline grabbing’ events — such as overstayers, crime, coups and conflict. Important stories about immigration issues, achievements and human endeavour have often been left to Pacific Islands media to provide coverage. But he notes there has been a slightly more positive shift in recent times (Utanga, 2007: 25).

The Asian and ethnic media

The Asian and other ethnic minority communities in New Zealand also feel short-changed by the mainstream media, and regard themselves as marginalised or ignored by reporters and editors. Even experienced journalists and editors from abroad feel marginalised by the New Zealand media, often overlooked for jobs because they lack ‘New Zealand experience’ (‘Asian People Excluded from Media, Says TV Producer’, 2008). Lincoln Tan, a former journalist from Singapore Press Holdings, responded to the challenge by launching an English-language newspaper with an Asian focus — *iBall* — in 2003. He became a regular columnist for the *New Zealand Herald* and now reports regular news for the *Herald*. Ironically, he was rather critical of that newspaper, which has the country’s largest circulation (200,309), when he first arrived in New Zealand in 1997. He regarded it as typical of a lack of mainstream media interest in the Asian communities (Tan, 2006: 1).

Currently, 71 ethnic minority newspapers or magazines are being published in New Zealand along with seven ethnic radio stations (excluding the access radio networks), three television programs and two major web-based news services (Wong, 2006). The publications surveyed by the Ethnic Media Bureau (see Table 1) include 15 Chinese newspapers in Auckland, ranging from *iBall* (renamed *AsianToday*) to *The Epoch Times* (published by Falun Gong), two Chinese papers in Hamilton and three Chinese papers in Wellington. Twelve Korean newspapers are published in Auckland alone. Nine Indian newspapers are published: three Filipino, five Samoan and four Tongan.

Low points in mainstream media coverage of ethnic issues have included the so-called ‘Asian Angst’ affair, concerning a xenophobic article about Asian immigration and crime published by one of the country’s leading current affairs glossy magazines, *North & South*, owned by APC magazines. Titled ‘Asian Angst: Is It Time to Send Some Back?’, the article — written by former Member of Parliament and journalist Deborah Coddington (2006) — was alleged to have distorted use of statistics and made liberal use of emotive terms such as ‘the gathering crime tide’ and the ‘Asian menace’. The controversial article provoked a series of complaints, including from the Asia New Zealand Foundation, journalists and a journalism educator to the New Zealand Press Council, which ruled that the article breached principles governing accuracy and discrimination (Oliver, 2007).

Table 1: Indigenous, Pasifika and ethnic media in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Maori (*tangata whenua*) press

Mana magazine (bimonthly)
Tu Mai (bimonthly)
Pu Kaea (weekly)

Pacific media

Spasifik magazine (bimonthly)
NiuFM
Radio 531pi

Fiji

Fiji Observer (infrequent)

Samoa

Samoa International
Samoa Observer (daily)
Le Samoa Post (weekly)
Samoana (weekly)
Samoa Times (weekly)

Tongan press

Taimi 'o Tonga (biweekly)
Tongan Independent (weekly)
Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga

Chinese press**Auckland**

Asian Voice (weekly)
Auto Market (weekly)
Chinese Express (weekly)
Chinese Herald (weekly)
Chinese Times (weekly)
iBall (now *AsianToday*) (weekly)
Mandarin Times (weekly)
New Times (weekly)
NZ Chinese Bizlink (weekly)
NZ Life Weekly (weekly)
NZ Mirror (weekly)
Oriental Times (weekly)
Property Overview (weekly)
The Epoch Times (weekly)
WTV Magazine (weekly)

Hamilton

Waikato Weekly (weekly)
Waikato Chinese Times (weekly)

Wellington

Capital Chinese Times (weekly)
Home Voice Chinese Weekly News
NZ Chinese Times

Christchurch

The Messenger (weekly)
The Sun (weekly)

Filipino press

Diario Filipino (weekly)
Filipino Herald (weekly)

Korean press**Auckland**

Christian Life
Gooday New Zealand
Korea Times (weekly)
Korea Town (weekly)
Newstoon (weekly)
NZ Information for International Students
NZ Sunday Times (weekly)
NZ Times (weekly)
Property Journal (weekly)
Sunday Seoul (weekly)
The New Korea Herald (weekly)

Christchurch

Korea Review
The Christchurch Times

Japanese press

E Cube (weekly)
Gekkan NZ
MJ
Quarter

Indian press

Auckland Times
Awaz Punjabi News
Hum
India Newslink (weekly)
Indian Tribune (weekly)
Indo Times (weekly)
Kuk Punjabi Samachar
Merge Magazine
Kiwi India Directory

Other ethnic media

Al Mujaddid
Bangkok News
Thai NZ News
NZ Jewish Chronicle (weekly)
Migrant News
Neuseeland News
Our Hobour (Russian)

Radio

Chinese Radio 90.6FM
Chinese Radio 936
K88.3/FM96.1 (Korean)

Television

World TV (Chinese, Korean)
Golden Raindrop TV (Chinese)
Indianz TV

Web media

Skykiwi (Chinese)
The Global Indian

Source: Adapted from an Ethnic Media Bureau survey (Wong, 2006).

Note: This list does not include Māori Television, or ethnic franchise programs such as *Asia Down Under* broadcast on Television NZ or on community access-style radio or television programs.

Following the Danish cartoons affair over the depiction of images of the Prophet Mohammed — several of which linked the Prophet and Islam with terrorism — by a group of cartoonists and published in Denmark's *Jyllands-Posten* newspaper on 30 September 2005, a wave of violent protests and unrest happened in several countries. Three leading New Zealand newspapers also published the cartoons. *The Dominion Post*, *Christchurch Press* and *Nelson Mail* ran the cartoons, arguing solidarity with the principles of a free press. The country's largest daily newspaper, the *New Zealand Herald*, refused to run the cartoons, invoking principles of editorial responsibility. TV One and TV3 news bulletins broadcast images in the context of local reaction, which was highly critical but peaceful. New Zealand Muslim communities and many other groups, including Christians, filed formal complaints with the Human Rights Commission. Although the complaints fell outside the jurisdiction of the *Human Rights Act*, the Race Relations Commissioner invoked the Commission's wider mandate and met Muslim community leaders and newspaper editors. A draft code of conduct was developed, which encouraged greater sensitivity to ethnic, religious and cultural issues by newspapers when making editorial judgments ('10 Human Rights Cases that Made a Difference', 2006).

The genesis of diversity journalism education

Almost three decades ago, the then Department of Māori and Pacific Island Affairs and the Journalists Training Board linked up to run a series of five-day introductory journalism courses for Māori and Pasifika students (Wilson, 2005). This program, continued for much of the 1980s, had been a response to a national survey of journalists which then indicated that just under 2 per cent of New Zealand's journalists were Māori or Pacific Islander (Lealand, 1988). This initiative was followed in 1985 with the establishment of a full-time journalism course primarily for Māori students at Waiariki Polytechnic. (After weathering uncertain times over several years, the course has been strengthened and a major new strategy was introduced in 2008 with the introduction of a Diploma in Bicultural Journalism.) In 1986, the Manukau Polytechnic introduced a similar course for Pasifika students, which attracted journalists from the South Pacific region with Ministry of Foreign Affairs funding. But although this latter course gave up to a dozen Pasifika journalists a year a 'vital leg-up into the industry', as Utanga described it (2007: 27), the course was closed in 1994 after the ministry grant had been phased out.

Many leading Māori and Pasifika journalists working in the media industry today are products of this training and education period (Wilson, 2006), including Barbara Dreaver, Sandra Kailahi, Jodi Ihaka, Nevak Ilohahia, Joe Lose, Mike McRoberts, Tapu Misa, Te Anga Nathan, Gideon Porter, Niva Retimanu, Lois Turei, John Utanga and Lito Vilisoni. Today, there is an increasing call for journalism education and training to help Pasifika journalists 'tell our stories and provide our side of the debate' (Utanga, 2007: 28), and for ethnic minority journalists to report the news from their own perspective (Tan, 2006: 1).

The pressure for change has also led to the first *te reo Māori* media course at Manukau Institute of Technology (2007), a revamped Diploma in Multimedia Journalism at Whitireia Community Polytechnic for 2008 aimed at ‘ethnic minorities’ and a relocation of the journalism school to Wellington (‘Whitireia Journalism Diploma Goes Mid-year’, 2007), as well as a proposal for a new Māori Media and Communication degree major at the University of Waikato with innovative new papers such as ‘From Whaikōrero to Bebo: Evolution of Māori Media and Communication’ (2009). AUT University also won government approval for a new Graduate Diploma in Pacific Journalism, due to start in 2010 as an addition to the country’s largest Communication Studies program (‘Wanted: PI Journalism School’, 2005). The university also boosted its diversity initiative by establishing the Pacific Media Centre with a brief to stimulate research into Māori, Pasifika and ethnic media and to provide an umbrella for a variety of communications initiatives and publications. The university already offered the largest number of Pasifika scholarships to media students.

Demographics and journalism education

According to the most recent national journalism survey conducted by the industry (Journalists Training Organisation, 2007), four out of five journalists (83 per cent) were European/Pākehā-European, with another 8.5 per cent recording themselves as Māori (3 per cent) or Māori-Pākehā (5.5 per cent). The only other groups to register above 1 per cent were Chinese (1.2 per cent) and ‘Australians’ (1.2 per cent), while 6 per cent said their ethnicity was something other than the options listed in the question. This means that Pasifika journalists dropped below the radar at less than 1 per cent, even though there is a rapidly growing Pacific media and not enough trained Pasifika journalists. An independent national survey (Hollings et al., 2007: 179) produced even more dismal findings: 86 per cent European, with 4.6 per cent Māori, 0.6 per cent Pasifika and 0.6 per cent Asian.

These statistics reflect just how out of touch mainstream journalism schools are with the demographic reality in the community. According to Census 2006, ‘European’ only comprise 68 per cent of the population. Yet, while 72 per cent of newsroom staff are European, according to the 2007 journalism industry ‘diversity’ survey (Journalism Training Organisation, 2007), the composition of journalism students at journalism schools is an overwhelming 85 per cent European. Māori comprise 15 per cent of the population but only 13 per cent of the journalism student body (most of these at just two journalism schools — Waiariki and Waikato Institute of Technology). While the Asian community makes up almost 9 per cent of the population, the number of Asian journalism students was less than 2 per cent. This survey appeared to be at odds with a later informal survey of New Zealand’s journalism schools by the JTO, which showed 16 per cent Māori (without Waiariki, 9.3 per cent), 4.5 per cent Pasifika and 2 per cent Asian (including Indian). No other ethnic — or religious, for example Muslim — minorities were indicated.

As discussed earlier in this paper, the demographic projections are for even more dramatic changes in New Zealand by 2021 and 2026. According to the independent 2007 research report profiling New Zealand journalists in comparison with the 2006 Census (Hollings, 2007: 189):

When it comes to diversity, the profession still does not reflect the rainbow of New Zealand's ethnic mix, though possibly more so than a decade ago. The overwhelming majority of journalists are still European, with Māori, Asians and Pasifika under-represented, particularly as reporters.

This view was shared by former newspaper editor and communication studies professor Judy McGregor, now Equal Opportunities Commissioner, when she addressed a Journalism Matters conference in Wellington in August 2007, organised to confront pressing issues facing the future of the media in New Zealand as an independent Fourth Estate. She said: 'The proportion of Māori, Pacific Island and Asian [journalists] in newsrooms is pitifully low and this has been a structural, systemic problem for decades.' (McGregor, 2007: 4). But McGregor praised Fairfax Media for the composition of its first journalism intern scheme, with five Māori, one Chinese and one Pacific Islander in the first intake of 17 from 230 applicants.

Conclusion

While research about diversity and the media in New Zealand — particularly Pasifika and Asian — remains limited, it is clear that there is a growing need for both more diversity journalist representation in the mainstream media and better education in cross-cultural reporting and coverage of diversity issues. The demographic indicators underscore the urgency for both the mainstream media and journalism schools to be proactive about changes. Based on key points in this paper and on JTO, PIMA and other diversity fora in the past five years, the following 10-point priority strategic plan has emerged:

- 1 Media employers and journalism schools must commit to recruiting indigenous and ethnic minorities and to make a clear and urgent signal for change.
- 2 Cross-cultural dialogue can only be achieved with diversity in the newsroom and all journalists being appropriately educated and trained (i.e. *te reo Māori* language skills).
- 3 Everybody in the newsroom is responsible for reporting diversity, not just people with ethnic minority backgrounds.
- 4 Profiles should be developed about recruiting minorities to identify needs — such as bilingual, multilingual, good English skills and strong diversity community links.
- 5 Industry role models should be used to identify and promote journalism as a positive and attractive career for minority communities.
- 6 More systematic use of talent identification should be made in schools and in support of potential diversity journalists.

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- 7 More workplace internships/exchanges should be provided for cross-cultural reporting — such as providing opportunities for mainstream journalists to work in minority media environments, and vice versa.
 - 8 Tailored diversity programs need to be provided to ensure graduate journalists have recognition for cross-cultural reporting skills (i.e. *te reo* and Pacific languages).
 - 9 It is important to provide more diversity scholarships and incentives for diversity journalism. Models such as the Fairfax Media internship scheme and AUT University's diversity and Pasifika scholarships are examples of good practice, and ought to be adopted elsewhere in the industry and journalism schools.
 - 10 Journalism school intake criteria need to be modified to ensure diversity candidates have a fair and equitable chance of being selected. Many journalism schools use outdated criteria that are unfairly weighted against diversity prospects.

Finally, journalism schools can provide a lead. At present, they need to contest the media industry's globalised imperative and keep pace with the demographic and cultural transformation. Journalism schools ought to revisit their selection criteria and use lateral thinking in finding more creative ways to boost their diversity intake. They should also target their in-house training publications to encompass better diversity reportage with a commitment to coverage that better represents diversity in the community in New Zealand, *tangata whenua* social development and the wider Pacific region. Their challenge now is to make the diversity mantra a reality.

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Note

- 1 *Tangata whenua* (people of the land) is the term for the indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand, whose ancestors migrated to the country by celestial navigation from mythical Haiwaiki in Polynesia more than 1000 years ago. Descendants of the canoe-based *iwi*, or tribes, collectively became Te Māori, an ethnicity distinct from other Polynesian cultures.

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