Nationhood by Design?
The Discursive Construction of a "New" New Zealand in the Flag Consideration Project

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MCS

2016

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in the Flag Consideration Project

A thesis submitted to Auckland University of Technology
in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Communication
Studies (MCS)

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2016

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my primary supervisor Dr Angelique Nairn for all of her support, advice and encouragement. I am so appreciative of your commitment and dedication to all that you do, and have learned so much from this experience. Thank you for the insight and challenge you brought to my work, and for always asking me "why is this significant?" I would have never have thought I would embark on a project like this and am glad that I got to go on this journey with you.

To my secondary supervisor Dr Frances Nelson, thank you for also encouraging me to pursue postgraduate study and for generously offering your knowledge and advice to me during this process. It has been invaluable to be able to talk ideas through with you, and to hear your perspective.

I would also like to thank my mum, dad and sister, Kendra, for their support throughout my university life and particularly during thesis writing. Thank you for all of your encouragement and belief in me, and for reading and listening to things that you may not have understood.

Finally, I wish to thank the people who I do life with. To the other level 10 students, being surrounded by other people also reading, researching and writing added to the experience and I loved being part of a community. To Ximena, I am so pumped that we met and got to do this together. Thank for getting excited over the small things that I discovered, and for eating lunch with me. To my gang of friends who have offered me so much love and support throughout this process, thank you for putting things into perspective, asking about my progress and making my life so much fun.

I feel incredibly blessed that I could engage in learning and research for an extended period of time, and that I was so supported throughout.

Abstract

In 2015/2016, the Flag Consideration Project provided an opportunity for New Zealanders to change the national flag, and while the change of flag did not come into effect, the texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel are worthy of examination because they provide insight into the contemporary conceptualisation of New Zealand's national identity. The purpose of the research was to examine the construction of national identity in Aotearoa - New Zealand in two texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel before the binding referenda. A national flag is a symbol of identity used by citizens to remind them of their origins (Billig, 1995; Schatz & Lavine, 2007) and reinforce boundaries of belonging (Cerulo, 1993; Weitman, 1973). Accordingly, because it functions as a construction of the nation, changing the national flag could enhance or limit citizens' ability to identify with the country (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Hobsbawm, 1992; A. D. Smith, 2007; W. Smith, 2001), as well as influence perceptions of the nation internationally, based on the embedded meaning and symbolism of the design (Elgenius, 2004, 2007; Firth, 1973). Following this the research unpacks how national identity is constructed in official texts guided by the question: how has the Flag Consideration Panel conceptualised New Zealand's national identity?

Two texts were analysed following Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model for critical discourse analysis to provide insight into how New Zealand's national identity was discursively constructed. The first text titled *5 Alternatives*, provided information about the five alternative designs that were part of the first referendum, with official and designer's descriptions as well as illustrations of the designs in context. The second text, *Our nation. Your choice.*, offered a comparison between the preferred alternative flag, the Silver Fern flag, and the current New Zealand flag. This method of analysis allowed for a consideration of the way power relations, hegemony and ideology are hidden and embedded within discourse (Fairclough, 1992), which was significant because national identity is considered "a battle for hegemony" (Billig, 1995, p. 27).

Despite the Panel's intention to inform (Burrows, 2015c), the analysis revealed instances of persuasion where the silver fern flag was constructed in a more favourable light and New Zealanders were encouraged to accept the Panel's construction of national identity. There were asymmetrical power relationships between the Panel and New Zealanders through the Panel categorically asserting a particular version of national identity and providing a dominant reading of the flags, which privileged their voice over New Zealanders individual interpretation. This undermined the democratic potential of the texts to contribute to the discussion about the national flag and national identity in the public sphere. Although the flag did not change as a

result of the referenda, the two texts examined reveal the Panel has constructed for New Zealand an identity that emphasises inclusiveness, independence and distinctiveness and therefore implies that the current New Zealand flag is inadequate in representing contemporary New Zealand.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the research

A national flag is a symbol of identity used by citizens to remind them of their origins (Billig, 1995; Schatz & Lavine, 2007) and reinforce boundaries of belonging (Cerulo, 1993; Weitman, 1973). Accordingly, because it functions as a construction of the nation, changing the national flag could enhance or limit citizens' ability to identify with the country (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Hobsbawm, 1992; A. D. Smith, 2007; W. Smith, 2001), as well as influence perceptions of the nation internationally, based on the embedded meaning and symbolism of the design (Elgenius, 2004, 2007; Firth, 1973). In 2015/2016, the changing of the national flag was considered in Aotearoa - New Zealand, and while the change of flag did not come into effect, the texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel are worthy of examination because they provide insight into the contemporary conceptualisation of New Zealand's national identity. The purpose of this research, then, is to examine constructions of national identity in Aotearoa - New Zealand in two texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel before the binding referenda.

1.2 Overview of the Flag Consideration Project

The Flag Consideration Project is the formal process where the New Zealand public considered changing the New Zealand flag. It was held between May 2015 and 30 March 2016 (see Appendix A for a timeline of the process). New Zealanders who participated in the two binding referenda made the decision over whether the official flag should be changed. This course of action was preferred to a majority vote in parliament (Key, 2014a). The first referendum asked participants to rank the five flag alternatives. According to the Flag Consideration Panel, the designs "tell different stories and have different symbolism" even though the two Kyle Lockwood designs are very similar (Burrows, 2015a, para. 14). After the public release of the four designs selected by the Flag Consideration Panel, public support and a social media campaign led to a change in legislation to include a fifth flag option titled Red Peak. During the first referendum the black Lockwood silver fern flag was selected as the preferred alternative design. The second referendum asked participants to choose between the current flag and the preferred alternative design. Voters chose to retain the current New Zealand flag as the official flag over the silver fern flag (Electoral Commission, 2015a).

The Flag Consideration Panel (Panel) comprised 12 New Zealanders nominated by a cross-party group of members of parliament and selected by the Responsible Minister, Deputy Prime Minister Bill English. The role of the Panel was to ensure the flag referendum process was independent, inclusive, informed, legitimate and community-driven. The Panel was "appointed to help facilitate this national conversation about the flag" (Crown, 2016b, para. 1) by overseeing public engagement with the process and selecting four alternative designs for the first referendum. According to the Panel's final report, they maintained their "role as a neutral participant in the process" (Burrows, 2016a, para. 16). The Flag Consideration Project was established to draw upon democratic ideals to provide an opportunity for New Zealanders to engage as citizens beyond voting in the referenda. Mulholland (2016) describes the project as involving "extensive public engagement" (p. 19) because the New Zealand public had the opportunity to contribute flag designs and vote on the selected flag alternatives. Public input was also sought in terms of understanding New Zealand's national identity through the 'stand for' campaign, in which individuals were encouraged to submit and share common values. According to the Panel, the insight gained from these contributions guided the selection of alternative flags.

1.3 Justification for the research

As suggested by the purpose of the research, my interest in the Flag Consideration Project stems from its connection to New Zealand's national identity. My decision to examine national identity construction in the texts distributed by the Panel was motivated by several factors. On a personal level, I was interested in both the content of the project and the way it was conducted. Although I proudly identify as a New Zealander and consider the nation to be unique within a global context, I struggle to articulate what 'kiwi-ness' is. During high school I was introduced to the complexity of New Zealand's conception as a modern nation and the notion that race relations were not as harmonious as mythologised. Therefore, this research enables me to investigate how New Zealanders wrestle with a colonial history and the changing composition of society. Unlike mainstream media coverage and some friends who critique the process as a waste of money, I view the public debate on the change of flag as a unique opportunity for New Zealanders to engage in a discussion about national identity. For me, the flag debate is about more than colours or design, but how we understand our nation. This is not to say I buy into the construction and accept the communication crafted by the Panel and government, more that I have an interest in how others construct and understand what it means to be a New Zealander.

By exploring the Flag Consideration Project's discussion about national values and ideas, this research contributes to literature on social identity formation. National identity is a type of social identity, which is formed through a perception of belonging to a social group. The nation,

then, can be used by individuals as a means for developing and evaluating relevant in-groups and out-groups, with those identifying positively with the nation experiencing feelings of attachment and positive distinctiveness (Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In other words, national identity is important to individuals because as a form of social identity, it may contribute to an individual's sense of self (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Parekh, 2009; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) consequently fostering a sense of belonging, increasing self-esteem and bringing meaning to an individual's life (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Parekh, 2009). Such identification with the nation can manifest as national pride and can inspire sacrifice (Anderson, 2001; Renan, 1882/1994; A. D. Smith, 1995). The sense of community and emotional connection may cause some individuals to behave according to the best interests of the nation (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Parekh, 2009). As a result, the way national identity is constructed in contemporary society is significant for the individual and the nation.

Another reason for examining national identity through this project is it provides an opportunity to understand how the national flag functions within the identification process. The nation is a social construct and "imagined political community" where citizens believe in commonality and shared bonds (Anderson, 1991, p. 6). Consequently, they rely upon national symbols as part of the assumed shared connection and bond (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm 1992; A. D. Smith, 1995). National symbols remind the individual of their national identity and are part of the everyday, banal reproductions of the nation (Billig, 1995). The nation relies upon symbols and specifically the flag to trigger identification. As a result, the colours, shapes and devices of the national flag are embedded with values and meanings about the nation (Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Kølsto, 2006; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; W. Smith, 2001), which teaches and reminds individuals of their unique, distinctive collective identity. For the social identity to be valuable it must be evaluated as distinct and unique (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and the Flag Consideration Project raises the question of whether the current New Zealand flag is able to do this.

Another reason for undertaking this research is because defining New Zealand's national identity is difficult (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Ward & Lin, 2005), suggesting that the texts analysed might provide insights into perceived commonalities shared by New Zealanders. New Zealand has undergone significant shifts in the way national identity has been conceptualised. For instance, Māori culture was revitalised with the legal recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi (A. Bell, 2009; King, 1985; Spoonley, 2015; Walker, 2004). A bicultural conceptualisation of national identity arose from these political and cultural changes where Māori and Pākehā were considered to be equally significant (A. Bell, 2009; Fox, 2011; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2007; Pearson, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2004). This shifted from the monocultural

construction of New Zealand where Pākehā ideas and values dominated over Māori, projecting a myth of harmonious race relations (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2004; Liu, McCreanor, McIntosh & Teaiwa, 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; O'Sullivan, 2007). It is likely that the communication produced by the Panel will provide at least one interpretation of New Zealand identity and the tensions and constructions embedded in its formation and negotiation. In other words, the changing of the flag could mark the beginning of a new symbolic era for New Zealand's national identity (Elgenius, 2005).

Finally, the Flag Consideration Project draws upon democratic ideals because the citizens determine the outcome, and the public is actively encouraged to participate (Dahl, 1998; Held, 2006). However, the Flag Consideration Project can be critically examined in terms of how the construction of national identity could reinforce ideology and power relations within New Zealand society. The public sphere is weakened by intervention by the state, which could occur in this project through the influence of the government and the involvement of the Secretariat who are government officials that assist the Panel. The Panel may also attempt to manage and stage public opinion because the outcome does not emerge from debate rather from voting (Habermas, 1962/1989). In addition, the Panel contributes information to the public sphere to allow citizens to participate in a democratic process and be involved in determining the symbolic construction of the nation. Billig (1995) argues "the battle for nationhood is a battle for hegemony, by which a part claims to speak for the whole nation and to represent the national essence" (p. 27). Therefore, applying critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992) to texts distributed by the Panel, may potentially provide insights into the motivations and power dynamics guiding the overall Flag Consideration Project.

1.4 Background to New Zealand's national flags

The Flag Consideration Project exists within the context of New Zealand's three official national flags, the recognition of a national Māori flag and the legislation protecting the current New Zealand flag, which reflect a complex relationship between New Zealanders and their national flag. The critique of the Flag Consideration Project as a distraction from larger political issues (Emmerson, 2015; Gulliver, 2014; Kenny, 2016) suggests the national flag is of no or minor importance in the New Zealand context. Certainly unlike the United States, the New Zealand flag is not commonly observed flying outside homes or displayed in the classroom (Sibley, Hoverd & Duckitt, 2011a). Nevertheless, it is significant within the New Zealand context and for identification. This is indicated by the results of Sibley, Hoverd and Liu's (2011b) analysis of prototypical features of New Zealand's national identity, because the recognition of the New Zealand flag was considered more significant than having New Zealand citizenship, a Kiwi accent or a parent born in New Zealand. Therefore, my research will

contribute to the limited literature that focuses specifically upon the role of the New Zealand flag within New Zealand, and the flag's relationship to national identity.

Although there is limited literature exploring the relationship between the New Zealand flag and national identity, Elgenius (2005, 2007) and W. Smith (2001) argue that the national flag offers a subjective version of history because the flag tells stories about origins or events that define the nation. The circumstances surrounding the adoption of a new official flag reflect the way the national flag is part of the reflection and construction of national identity. The first of New Zealand's three official flags, *The United Tribes of New Zealand Flag*, was adopted in March 1834 because New Zealand required a national flag to identify trading ships and allow international trading (Ministry for Culture & Heritage [MCH], 2015). This flag was used to represent the Church Missionary Society and was selected by 25 northern Māori chiefs from three options presented by James Busby (King, 2003; Mulholland, 2016). Māori played a role in the selection of the national flag but not the design, which could be considered indicative of the power dynamics between the two groups that would follow. The United Tribes of New Zealand Flag was replaced by the *Union Jack* following the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi on 6 February 1840, to represent New Zealand as a colony of the British Empire. This reflects how a change in political governance affects the construction of the nation and leads to a change in national symbol (Elgenius, 2005, 2011; Firth, 1973). The significance of the flag as an official, national symbol of New Zealand is indicated through the flagpole in Kororāreka being chopped down four times between 1844 and 1845. The Union Jack was symbolic of British power over Māori and for Ngā Puhi chief, Hōne Heke, the unequal status Māori occupied in relation to the Crown (Mulholland, 2016). The flagpole incidents were a catalyst for war in the area because British colonial forces interpreted Heke's action as a threat to British authority (Mulholland, 2016).

The third official and current flag of New Zealand is a defaced British Blue Ensign with the Southern Cross. This flag was adopted because the United Kingdom's Colonial Naval Defence Act of 1865 stated colonial ships needed to fly the Blue Ensign with the badge of the colony (Mulholland, 2016). The letters 'NZ' were used in 1867 and replaced with four stars to signify the Southern Cross constellation in 1869. The flag was established officially through the New Zealand Ensign Bill in 1902. A new design was not selected, according to Mulholland (2016), because events at the turn of the twentieth century solidified New Zealand allegiance to the British Empire. According to the MCH (2016), the royal blue background reflects the blue sea and sky surrounding the islands and the Southern Cross stars located New Zealand in the South Pacific Ocean. The Union Flag reflects New Zealand's history as a British colony and dominion.

Another flag that has come to reflect New Zealand identity, but which has not held official status, is the national Māori flag (Mullholland, 2016). *Tino Rangatiratanga* was recorded in the Cabinet minutes on 14 December 2009 as the national Māori flag. According to the MCH (2015), it is flown alongside the official New Zealand flag to enhance the Crown-Māori relationship, especially on Waitangi Day. The flag came out of national consultation, with 21 public hui between July and August 2009. The Tino Rangatiratanga flag was selected as the preferred Māori national flag by 80.1% of the 1220 oral and written submissions (Morris, 2010). The flag was designed by Te Kawariki members, Linda Munn, Hiraina Marsden and Jan Dobson-Smith as part of a competition to design a Māori flag that would not rely on colonial symbolism (Morris, 2010). The fern represents new life, hope in the future and renewal, the black is Te Korekore (potential being), the red is Te Whai Ao (coming into being) and the white is Te Ao Mārama (the realm of being and light) (MCH, 2015). It became known as the *Tino Rangatiratanga* flag because it symbolised self-government and sovereignty connected to the Treaty of Waitangi (Morris, 2010).

Although there have been varying iterations of the New Zealand flag, it has continued to hold significance with legislation developed to ensure the flag is treated with respect as a national symbol. The Flags, Emblems, and Names Protection Act 1981 stipulates that it is offensive to alter the flag through any letter, emblem or representation, and it is unlawful to use or display the New Zealand flag in a dishonourable way, and destroy or damage it. The Ministry for Culture and Heritage (2016), as part of its role to support culture and preserve heritage, outline that the flag is to be flown every weekday on government buildings, daily at diplomatic posts and during official circumstances[1]. They also encourage the flying of the flag, especially on 10 days of national commemoration[2] and for it to be lowered to half-mast during times of mourning[3]. According to Weitman (1973), codes and rituals surrounding the use and presentation of the flag are necessary to project a preferred image of the flag and nation to society, creating for the flag a 'sacred' status. Therefore, research exploring the potential change of New Zealand's flag is worthwhile given it is not a straightforward process and the national symbol is an entity approached with a degree of reverence.

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[1] When parliament is opened, the Governor-General is sworn in or farewelled, a member of the royal family, heads of state or government visit, and other significant occasions mandated by the Governor-General or Prime Minister.
[2] 6 February - Waitangi Day, 2nd Monday of March - Commonwealth Day, 21 March - Queen's actual birthday, 25 March - Anzac Day, 1st Monday of June - Official Queen's birthday, 2 June - Coronation Day, 10 June - Birthday of Duke of Edinburgh, 24 October - United Nations Day, 4th Monday in October - Labour Day, 14 November - Birthday of Prince of Wales
[3] Following the death of sovereign, current and past Governors-General and Prime Ministers, for other significant public figures, on days of significant disasters such as after the 2010 Pike River mine explosion and the February 2011 Christchurch earthquake.

1.5 Changing the New Zealand flag

The Flag Consideration Project can also be located within the ongoing concern over the current New Zealand flag. Mulholland (2016) argues there has been debate over changing the flag since its implementation as the official flag of New Zealand. However, voices for change have steadily increased since 1940. Debate about the need for a new flag re-emerged during 1940 with the centenary anniversary of the Treaty of Waitangi (Mulholland, 2011). In the 1970s and 1980s, debate for change gained traction amongst politicians. For instance, the Labour Party voted on a proposal to change the flag at their annual conferences in 1973 and 1989 (Mulholland, 2016), but polls consistently indicated the majority of citizens were opposed to change (MCH, 2015; Mulholland, 2016). Other notable contributions to the flag change debate included *The New Zealand Listener* running a competition in 1989 to design a flag as part of the 150 year Waitangi Day commemorations. There were almost 600 entries with the current New Zealand flag receiving 45.6% of votes. In 2004, businessman Lloyd Morrison formed the trust, nzflag.com to campaign for a change to the New Zealand flag. In 2005 the trust created a petition with 10,000 signatures that was unsuccessful in triggering a referendum (Mulholland, 2011). The way the discussion continues to enter the public sphere may indicate there is public concern about how the national flag constructs and represents the nation in the New Zealand context.

The Ministry of Justice (2014) in their Regulatory Impact Statement outline the main arguments for changing the flag. First, the current flag reflects only New Zealand's British heritage but not the heritage of other people within the nation, such as Māori and Pacific peoples. As Mulholland (2010, 2011, 2013) puts it, the national symbols of New Zealand need to be revisited because they do not reflect the Treaty of Waitangi and instead, continue to symbolise colonisation, which is no longer aligned with the values that reflect the nation (Mulholland, 2013). Sibley et al. (2011a) also state that the flag does not acknowledge Māori culture and suggest incorporating the silver fern may be more desirable. Additionally, the Southern Cross is considered an inadequate representation of New Zealand because it is sometimes confused with the flag of Australia (Ministry of Justice, 2014) and Mulholland (2011) adds that the design of the flag is unable to be inclusive of New Zealand as a whole. Despite these criticisms of the current New Zealand flag, groups continually justify its retention because the flag is part of history and reflects New Zealand's historical connection to the United Kingdom and history as part of the British Empire (Ministry of Justice, 2014). In addition, the current New Zealand flag was the national symbol that New Zealanders fought and died under. Given diverging opinion on whether there is a need to change the New Zealand flag, it will be interesting to explore how the Panel has traversed this ground and conceptualised New Zealand in the compilation of their informative texts.

1.6 Research question

The research will be framed by the question: how has the Flag Consideration Panel conceptualised New Zealand's national identity? Texts produced by the Panel will be analysed because as the officially appointed organisation, they hold power in the Flag Consideration Project and were tasked with facilitating public discussion and selecting alternative flags. Part of their role entailed producing communications to assist New Zealanders in the decision-making. The construction of national identity within these texts is significant because of their proposed impartiality and because it is framed from their official position. However, it cannot be assumed that their perspectives and constructions align with New Zealanders view of their collective identity because social identity is based on the individual's evaluation of the social group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

The construction of New Zealand identity will be analysed through two texts. Discourse will be the subject of analysis because it contributes and reflects a construction of New Zealand's national identity, and is embedded with ideology and power relations (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Furthermore, using discourse analysis to examine the texts is advantageous because aspects of national identity are constructed, reproduced, transformed and dismantled through discourse (de Cillia, Reisigl & Wodak, 1999), making discourse "a central part both in the formation and in the expression of national identity" (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl & Liebhart, 2009, pp. 29-30). Thus, critically examining the texts can provide insight into the linguistic construction of national identity and particularly instances of persuasion and expressions of power.

To achieve my purpose and answer my research question, I will critically analyse the discourses within two texts produced by the Flag Consideration Panel prior to the two referenda. The first text titled *5 Alternatives*, provides information about the five alternative designs that were part of the first referendum, with official and designer's descriptions as well as illustrations of the designs in context. The second text, *Our nation. Your choice.*, offers a comparison between the preferred alternative flag, the Silver Fern flag, and the current New Zealand flag. Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional framework for critical discourse analysis will be used because it valuably addresses the text and its discursive practice within the social context, to enable a rich, critical analysis.

1.7 Organisation of the thesis

To situate the Flag Consideration Project into a wider social context, the content of chapter two reviews literature on the ideal functioning of democracy in society and Habermas' (1962/1989) public sphere concept. Additionally, the chapter also explores social identity theory to address the process of identification with the nation before shifting focus to how nations are constructed.

To understand the process of national identity formation, a brief account of theories of national symbols is included, before the chapter addresses scholarly positions on the value and place of a national flag within society and the flag's symbolic function. To further develop the social context of this research, a discussion of New Zealand's national identity and issues of colonisation, biculturalism and multiculturalism as well as New Zealand's national symbols and critiques of their current representation are integrated throughout the chapter.

Chapter three addresses the methodology and method of the research. It opens with an account of critical research and qualitative analysis before acknowledging the value of discourse analysis. Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional model is also detailed, accompanied by an explanation of how the two texts were selected. The chapter closes with the research method.

Chapter four addresses the social context the texts exist within. Firstly the social practice in terms of the orders of discourse, hegemony and ideology are discussed to consider external influences on the text. Secondly the specific processes of production, distribution and consumption as part of the discursive practice are examined. The chapter closes with a consideration of the terms "Flag Consideration Project" and "Flag Consideration Panel" to understand how the process and group are framed.

Chapter five and six consist of the critical discourse analysis of the two texts. Each chapter closely examines the discourses within the respective texts by drawing on Fairclough's (1992) textual analysis framework. Accordingly, focus is placed on the text structure, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary of the texts. The data chapters explore how national identity is constructed within each text and identify any relations of power.

The final chapter of thesis draws conclusions from this analysis and involves a discussion of the findings in relation to New Zealand's national identity and the project. It also considers the limitations of the research and future directions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

To contextualise the research this chapter provides an overview of key areas of the literature. It opens with a discussion of the ideal function of a democratic society by referring to Habermas' concept of the public sphere. The focus then shifts to an examination of social identification theory and the related concepts of national identification and construction. The chapter goes on to explore the role of national symbols and particularly national flags, and how these symbols reflect the nation and national identity. Finally, this chapter addresses the changing of national flags. Integrated in the review of the literature is a discussion of the constructions of New Zealand's national identity, New Zealand's national symbols and the current flag. This chapter brings together several fields of inquiry, which leads to a degree of overlap.

2.1 Democratic society & the public sphere

The Flag Consideration Project is presented by the government and Flag Consideration Panel as democratic because the decision to change the flag is determined by the votes of the New Zealand public (New Zealand Flag Referendums Act 2015). In addition, the Panel presents public engagement and the facilitation of public discussion as underpinning the Flag Consideration Project. The following section contextualises the project within an academic understanding of democracy and Habermas' (1962/1989) concept of the public sphere.

Democracy is derived from the Greek demos (people) and kratos (rule) (Held, 2006) and is defined by Sorensen (1998) as a "form of government in which the people rule" (p. 3). According to Sorenson (1998), democracy is often associated with choosing political leadership by citizens voting in elections. Following this understanding, the Flag Consideration Project is considered democratic because instead of opting to change the flag through a majority vote of Parliament the outcome of the flag change is determined by citizens voting in binding referenda (Key, 2014a). Voting is open to individuals over 18 years of age who are New Zealand citizens and permanent residents, and have lived in New Zealand continuously for over a year (Electoral Commission, 2015b). These low barriers to participation fulfil the democratic requirements for voter equality (Dahl, 1998). However, referendum voting is a limited expression of democracy because New Zealanders are confined to the flag choices of the Panel and the questions asked

by government. For Held (2006), 'true' democracy exists when "there are fair and just ways of deliberating over and negotiating values and value disputes" (p. 261). This goes beyond casual voting and emphasises participation and involvement in politics and public life and instead points to how democracy requires citizens to have the opportunity to voice their views, learn about relevant alternative policies and their consequences, and to influence the political agenda (Dahl, 1998). The Flag Consideration Project attempts to fulfil these ideals through seeking public input beyond referendum voting. For example, a crowdsourcing process was used to allow the alternative flags in the first referendum to come from the pool of 10,292 public submissions. Crowdsourcing is a process where a task that would be completed by employees is outsourced to a large network of individuals through an open call by an individual, company or institution (Howe, 2006). In terms of the Flag Consideration Project, it could allow a new official flag to be designed by an ordinary New Zealander rather than privileging designers as experts.

A central part of democracy is the ability for citizens to participate in open debate, deliberation and resolution around significant issues (Held, 2006) and contributes to what Jürgen Habermas refers to as a public social space that allows for critical discussion among citizens over matters of concern and general interest (Habermas, 1962/1989). Because the public sphere is to be independent and free of the influences of state and the markets, it provides space for private citizens to gather and express their views about issues related to the governing and functioning of society (Habermas, 1962/1989; Dahlberg, 2001). The expectation is that a democratic society and ideal public sphere will afford critical-rational discussion and debate that produces consensus and public opinion, which can be influential over the state (Habermas, 1962/1989). For example, the late inclusion of the Red Peak flag in the first referendum is evidence of public sphere and democratic principles in action. Although not originally chosen by the Panel, the success of the social media campaign and a 50,000 signature petition led parliament to change legislation. Therefore, the construction of national identity and the extent to which the national flag adequately symbolises the nation can be considered issues for discussion within a public sphere and in an ideal situation, consensus regarding the status of the New Zealand flag would be reached through the public opinions presented and debated amongst citizens.

An ideal public sphere is an inclusive sphere open to all citizens. It relies upon guaranteed political rights of freedom of speech, freedom of association and assembly and freedom to publish opinion for all citizens (Habermas, 1962/1989). In addition, the ability to communicate about matters of general interest requires media coverage (Habermas, 1964/1974). The media coverage of the Flag Consideration Project may have informed citizens about the process and could have contributed to citizens developing what Dahl (1998) refers to as enlightened understanding. Enlightened understanding requires that citizens in a democratic society have

opportunities to learn and understand information surrounding issues, which explains the efforts of the Panel to release information about the process, existing flags and flag alternatives.

There are limitations of Habermas' (1962/1989) conceptualisation of the public sphere. Habermas proposes a bourgeois public sphere emerged in Western Europe in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which, for the first time, allowed public opinion to influence society politically. Despite the appearance of a healthy functioning public sphere there were conditions to participation. The bourgeois public sphere was limited to white male property owners and there was an implicit requirement of literacy (Dahlgren, 1991; Kellner, 2014). Ideally, a public sphere should allow for all citizens to participate in discussion regardless of status or position in society. Habermas' (1962/1989) conceptualisation of the bourgeois public sphere also did not acknowledge alternative, informal or oppositional public spheres that existed at the time (Dahlgren, 1991; Kellner, 2014). The plurality of public spheres allows social groups to discuss alternative discourses and develop oppositional interpretations of, in my case, identities and interests (N. Fraser, 1990). My research will focus on communication by the official governing organisation, and their construction of national identity, which may reflect ideas from the dominant public sphere, but which will unlikely consider the discursive practices emerging in alternative spaces. It is outside the scope of the research to consider the discourse within alternative public spheres that emerged during the Flag Consideration Project. Kellner (2014) also suggests Habermas may have overstated the extent to which public opinion was able to influence politics because governments may not always cede to the requests of citizens.

Habermas (1962/1989) also addresses how the ideal of the public sphere is not evident in society, arguing the public sphere has been weakened and transformed due to refeudalisation beginning in the late nineteenth century. The public sphere is limited by the intrusion of market and state interests in a space for rational-critical discussion among private, autonomous citizens. The state is the executor of the public sphere and accordingly, public opinion should influence government and law making not the other way around (Habermas, 2006). There had only been minor discussion surrounding a change of flag prior to the Flag Consideration Project (MCH, 2016; Mulholland, 2011, 2016), so the project was ultimately instigated by the Prime Minister, John Key (Key, 2014a), and thus emerged from the state rather than the citizens. The state is further involved in the process because the Panel was appointed by and is accountable to, the government. The communications released by the Panel passes through government officials, including the Secretariat team.

The public sphere is also weakened when public opinion does not emerge from political discussion and consensus about issues of common interest but from the staged display by political, economic and media elites who seek to manage public opinion (Habermas,

1962/1989). The Panel encouraged discussion about the flag and national identity, which indicates their attempt to manufacture public opinion. Dahlberg (2001) proposes that democratic communication in the public sphere requires more than just the assertion of opinion. Rather, there needs to be an exchange and critique of claims where participants reflect upon their own values, assumptions and interests, and engage in dialogue (Dahlberg, 2001). Public engagement in the Flag Consideration Project can be critiqued as potentially superficial because the activities do not necessary allow for authentic discussion. Despite opportunities for citizens to participate in the process, the Panel exerted power through selecting from the crowdsourced submissions and determining the extent to which public input contributed to the selection process.

Habermas (1962/1989) also points to the intrusion of private interest as part of the weakening of the public sphere. Commercial influence in the public sphere is evident through the development of websites by the designers of the alternative flag designs who were trying to promote their work. Kyle Lockwood, designer of the preferred alternative flag, and Aaron Dustin, designer of Red Peak, developed websites to sell the flags and related merchandise. The commercial imperative and market capitalism undermines the democratic process of the project (Dahl, 1998). It reflects an economisation of culture, because culture is becoming increasingly commercial and guided by market capitalism (Ellmeier, 2003). There is a shift in focus to selling New Zealand to New Zealanders. According to Habermas (1962/1989), the more the public sphere is used as "a vehicle for political and economic propaganda, the more it becomes unpolitical as a whole and pseudo-privatised" (p. 175). As such, the presence of political and economic messages about the flags impacts the ability for public opinion to be formed through the discussion of private citizens.

2.2 Identification with the nation

Having explored the how the Flag Consideration Project relates to democratic and public sphere principles, the following section sees the focus of the chapter shift to an exploration of social identity theory because social identity theory provides a "theoretical roadmap for scholarship on the nuanced ways" that national identity operates (Schildkraut, 2014, p. 443).

Social identity is defined by Tajfel and Turner (1986) as the "aspects of an individual's self-image they derive from the social categories to which he perceives himself as belonging" (p. 34) and consists of cognitive, evaluative and emotional dimensions. The cognitive dimension addresses how an individual must be aware of their membership of a social category or social group to identify with it (Tajfel, 1981). Following this, identification with the nation is based on a perception of belonging to the social group of the nation, and according to Theiss-Morse (2009), is an involuntary form of group membership. Group membership is a precursor to

identification but inclusion in the nation does not necessarily lead citizens to internalise into their self-concepts the values or prototypical characteristics of the nation (Huddy, 2003). If in-groups members do choose to identify and internalise the defining characteristics of the social category, it can become valuable because it "gives our lives meaning and depth" (Parekh, 2009, p. 276). Identifying with the nation, then, may bring structure and stability to individuals as they can alter their attitudes and behaviours to those accepted and advocated by fellow New Zealanders and in-group members.

Identification with a social group is based on evaluation (Tajfel, 1981) and requires people to compare their own social groups against perceived out-groups (Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In the case of my research, evaluation would entail citizens reflecting on the distinctive characteristics and values that typify New Zealand against those observed in other nations. For the social identity to having meaning for individuals, the in-group must be viewed as positively distinct and unique from relevant out-groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), because individuals are motivated to maintain or increase their self-esteem through group membership (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). In addition, social identification also relies on the emotional significance of belonging to the particular social group (Tajfel, 1981). In the case of the nation, collective identity is often associated with feelings of pride (Anderson, 1991; Renan, 1882/1994; A. D. Smith, 1995). Therefore, the positively assessed in-group (or nation in this case) provides citizens with a means to minimise uncertainty about where they belong and who they are (Hogg & Terry, 2000), and consequently can contribute to an individual's sense of self (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Parekh, 2009; Stets & Burke, 2000).

Social identification theory also addresses how an individual may disidentify with a social group. Disidentification refers to defining the self as not holding the same attributes that are perceived to be part of the social group and is considered a cognitive construction (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001). Individuals may disidentify with a social group to enhance or affirm a positive self-concept. This differs from non-identification, which is when an individual is apathetic towards the social group, and neither identifies nor misidentifies (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001). The way national identity is constructed in the Flag Consideration Project could lead to disidentification amongst citizens opposed to the Panel's conceptualisation of New Zealand. If a social identity is not satisfactory, the individual may leave the social group, join another more positively distinct group, or seek to improve the distinctiveness of the group they belong to (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). This is harder in the case of national identity because of its connection to the institutional and legal authority of the government who establish boundaries of membership (Schildkraut, 2014). Nevertheless, it highlights the need for the individual to perceive the national identity as valuable for them to continue to identify with it.

Social identity theory is valuable because it addresses evaluation and emotional dimensions of identification, why individuals value belonging to collective groups, and how this can potentially influence action. However, it is based on the activation of identity by the individual, which does not account for the way national identity is embedded in everyday practices and experiences (Billig, 1995). Billig (1995) argues that the individual is immersed within and continually reminded of the nation through daily reproductions of "a whole complex of beliefs, assumptions, habits, representations and practices" (p. 6), which occur in a banal way. As a result, national identity is more than an individual choosing to define their self-concept through the social group or an internal psychological state.

An understanding of identification with the social group of the nation can be enhanced through examining literature that addresses the nation specifically. The nation is considered as a social construct because it exists through the shared belief of commonality and connection among members (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992; A. D. Smith, 1995). Although it is not possible for all the members of the nation to know one another, there is the perception of a connection and shared identity (Anderson, 1991). This leads Anderson (1991) to describe the nation as "an imagined political community" (p. 6), and it is imagined because citizens perceive a connection with one another even if they have never met. The nation is imagined as a community because "regardless of any actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is conceived as deep, horizontal comradeship between citizens" (p. 7). This means that identification with the social group of the nation relies upon the perception of belonging to "an imagined political community" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6) and the positive evaluation of this constructed entity. Hobsbawm (1992) also draws attention to the way the nation as a social construct evolves. Individuals identify with meanings associated with the nation, which are reproduced and transformed (S. Hall, 1996b). The Flag Consideration Project addresses the constructed nature of national identity, and any changes to the construct could influence the way individuals perceive New Zealand.

2.3 New Zealand's national identity

The construction of national identity will now be examined in the New Zealand context. There is a struggle to articulate and define New Zealand's national identity because the notion of a typical New Zealander has changed (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Ward & Lin, 2005). New Zealand's colonial history and the enduring consequences of this process, the implementation of biculturalism, and growing cultural diversity, complicate the construction of national identity. The evaluative dimension of social identification and evolving nature of the nation as a social construct underpins the development of New Zealand's national identity and as a result will be unpacked in this section.

Pākehā identity has been used to construct New Zealand's national identity since colonisation. Colonisation enabled the construction of Māori and Pākehā cultures and identities (King, 2003) because the comparison cultivated an awareness of each group's distinctiveness. Pākehā became the in-group, not only because the English translation of the Treaty of Waitangi established New Zealand as a British colony, but also because British immigration meant that the number of Pākehā exceeded the population of Māori by 1860 (King, 2003). There was a belief in the superiority of European values and culture amongst Pākehā (A. Bell, 2004; Pearson, 2005; Spoonley, 2015) and coupled with the "structural relationship of Pākehā dominance and Māori subjection" (Walker, 2004, p.10), Māori culture and identity became marginalised through policies of assimilation and integration (King, 2003; Mikaere, 2011; Pearson, 2005; Walker, 2004). The 1960 Hunn Report stated New Zealand governments and New Zealanders believe integration is "ultimately and inevitably the only path that will lead to the development of a happy, harmonious, and progressive community" (Williams, 2001, p. 76). As a result, New Zealand policy has constructed a nation of 'one people' and a myth of harmonious race relations has been cultivated (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu et al., 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; O'Sullivan, 2007). The national identity of New Zealand, then, has reflected the Pākehā perspective on race relations rather than the reality facing Māori and incorporates the Pākehā values and practices as the defining characteristics of New Zealand (C. Bell, 1996; Clark, 2004; Mikaere, 2011; Pearson, 2005; King, 2003).

The identity forged for New Zealand is based in British values and lifestyles, because Britain was considered 'home' during the colonisation period (Belich, 1996; A. Bell, 2009; C. Bell, 1996; Capie & McGhie, 2005; Fairburn, 1989; King, 2003; McIntyre, 1992). According to Belich (1996) and Fairburn (1989), the intention of settlers coming to New Zealand was to create a better Britain in the South, but the reliance on British roots created complications for developing a unique identity outside of being displaced Europeans (C. Bell, 1996; Capie & McGhie, 2005). The migrant origins and uncertain, shallow roots continue to be a source of discomfort for some claiming national identity (A. Bell, 2009). The experiences of settlers, however, were used in trying to adopt a distinctive 'New Zealand' identity (C. Bell, 1996). The emphasis on masculinity in early settler life is reflected in the values of hard work, individualism, innovation, self-determination and pride associated with New Zealand being successful internationally despite its size (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; McCreanor, 2005; Sibley et al., 2011b). This also feeds into the construction of New Zealand as a sporting nation (C. Bell, 1996; Jackson, 2004; McCreanor, 2005; Sibley et al., 2011b) and the national sport of rugby has come to play a significant role in national identification (Bruce, 2013; Crawford, 1985; Deos, 2014; Jackson, 2004; Jackson & Hokowhitu, 2002; Sibley et al., 2011b). The myth of egalitarianism also emerged from the settler period when class differences were less rigid than their British 'home' and has developed through the introduction of universal suffrage,

development of the welfare state, protests against anti-egalitarian regimes and New Zealander's nuclear free stance (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Sibley & Liu, 2007). The value of egalitarianism continues to be central to national identity (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Rae, 2011; Sibley & Liu, 2007; Sibley et al., 2011b) because it constructs a positive distinctive identity and links to an understanding of New Zealanders as friendly and approachable (Sibley et al., 2011b).

New Zealand's national identity relies upon a connection to the natural environment and the image of New Zealand as 'clean, green, and beautiful' (C. Bell, 1996; Clark, 2004; King, 2003; Rae, 2011). This originates from the early conception of New Zealand as an 'arcadian' paradise (C. Bell, 1996; Dürr, 2008; Fairburn, 1989). Dürr (2008) describes how the relationship between Pākehā and the natural environment is central to how national identity was developed and allowed for the construction of frontier and colonial narratives about the value of the outdoors. According to Clark (2004, p. 9), the natural world "cannot be separated from the way we imagine ourselves to be a nation" and perhaps explains New Zealanders' pro-environmental values and appreciation of the outdoors as part of New Zealand's identity. The identification with the natural environment may be strengthened due to the development of the *100% Pure New Zealand* campaign as part of Brand New Zealand (S. Hall, 2010; Liu, 2005; Morgan, Pritchard & Piggott, 2002; Rae, 2011). The picturesque representation of New Zealand reflects and reinforces a Pākehā understanding of New Zealand (Dürr, 2008). Despite advances in New Zealand's independence from their status as a colony and a dominion of Britain, the settler origins continue to underpin aspects of identity. The Flag Consideration Project provides an opportunity to re-evaluate these settler conceptualisations of New Zealand in a contemporary society.

There was a shift in the conceptualisation of national identity due to Māori cultural renaissance during the second half of the twentieth century (A. Bell, 2009; King, 1985; Walker, 2004). The Treaty of Waitangi gained legal recognition through the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 and 1985 legislation, which addressed the injustices of the colonial past (A. Bell, 2009; Spoonley, 2015; Walker, 2004). As a result of these cultural and political changes, a bicultural framework was used to define New Zealand as a nation (A. Bell, 2009; Fox, 2011; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2007; Pearson, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2004). Biculturalism is defined as:

> the coexistence of two distinct cultures, Māori and Pākehā, within New Zealand society with values and traditions of both cultures reflected in society's customs, laws, practices, and institutional arrangements, and with both cultures sharing control over resources and decision making. (O'Reilly & Wood, 1991, p. 321)

Sibley et al. (2011b) unpacks bicultural awareness as part of New Zealand's identity in terms of knowledge about Māori culture, the Treaty of Waitangi, New Zealand's history, language recognition and ability to identify with Māori culture. The recognition of Māori alongside

Pākehā challenged the ideology of 'one people' and 'racial harmony' that had been used to construct New Zealand national identity (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu et al., 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; O'Sullivan, 2007). This exemplifies how a social construct is subject to change and based on perception. As S. Hall (1996b) argues, meanings in the nation are continually reproduced and transformed.

Māori culture allows for New Zealand national identity to be constructed as positively distinct (Harding, Sibley & Robertson, 2011; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; Sibley & Liu, 2004, 2007). Aspects of Māori culture are claimed by New Zealanders to avoid being a perceived as a colony of Britain (Sibley & Liu, 2007), and this reliance on the indigenous people to "secure" national identity is unusual (Liu, 2005) in comparison to "pro-white" attitudes in the United States of America and Australia (Harding et al., 2011). Although Māori culture is promoted in New Zealand, this does not mean it can be accepted as wholly positive. Biculturalism may be limited to symbolic representation rather than ideologically embedded (Harding et al., 2011) and as a result, New Zealanders support biculturalism in principle rather than resource-based biculturalism (Liu, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2004, 2007). O'Sullivan (2007) critiques biculturalism because it oversimplifies complex race relations and results in tokenism, and A. Bell (2004) also argues the integration of Māori culture reduces it to "national (read Pākehā) cultural property" (p. 131). Analysing the texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel, then, is worthwhile because they will offer insights into how the Panel has tackled the bicultural identity of New Zealand and whether Māori are given due consideration or are treated as token in the development of New Zealand identity.

New Zealand may be experiencing another shift in the way identity is constructed due to the increasing recognition of cultural diversity. Liu et al. (2005) consider there is now a "consciousness of 'ourselves' as a nation, of Māori and Pākehā, and of Pacific Nations people and Asians" (p. 12). According to the 2013 Census in New Zealand, 74% identified with at least one European ethnicity, 15% identified with Māori ethnicity, 12% identified with at least one Asian ethnicity, 7% identified with at least one Pacific ethnicity and 1% identified with at least one Middle-Eastern, Latin American or African ethnicity (Statistics New Zealand, 2013a). Ward and Lin (2005) consider New Zealand to have 'de facto multiculturalism' due to the diversity of the nation, although New Zealand has not officially endorsed multiculturalism (Bedford, Ho & Ligard, 2000; Pearson, 2005). Multicultural discourse emerged in the 1970s in New Zealand due to global trends, but was rejected in favour of the bicultural model (Pearson, 2000; Spoonley, 2015) and the term has become politically loaded (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). Multiculturalism expresses more than openness to cultural diversity because it is an approach to dealing with cultural diversity through a formal framework that allows for equal participation of minorities (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). For Ward and Lin (2005) the tension between the

concepts of biculturalism and multiculturalism are unnecessary and artificial. However, multiculturalism reduces the legitimacy of Māori as indigenous people because they hold the same status as an ethnic minority (Bromell, 2008; Marotta, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2007). This is used to avoid fulfilling obligations to Māori (Walker 2004). Framing New Zealand through multiculturalism could be seen as a new era of national identity for New Zealand (moving beyond the bicultural framework), which could serve to justify the reason for changing the national symbol. The Panel could draw on these existing constructions of New Zealand identity, and may address the complexity of defining New Zealand authentically.

2.4 National symbols

This section explores literature that addresses the role national symbols play within the nation and identification. The relationship between national identity and national symbols is at the heart of the Flag Consideration Project, which seeks to address whether the national flag assists individuals' identification with New Zealand and projects messages that reflect the values of the nation. National symbols are addressed collectively in the literature, and include national flags, anthems (Billig, 1995; Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005, 2011; Kølsto, 2006), coat of arms (Kølsto, 2006), ceremonies, heroes, statues, museums, sports teams and national days (Elgenius, 2011). As a social construct, the nation relies upon symbols as part of its reflection and construction (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Hobsbawm, 1992; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; A. D. Smith, 2007; W. Smith, 2001).

National symbols take on a significant role beyond simply being part of the construction of the nation. Schatz and Lavine (2007, p. 330) argue "expressions of national sentiment are directed toward national symbols rather than to the nation itself". This is reinforced by Cerulo (1995) who believes national symbols express and represent the nation to the extent that they "*become the nation*" (p. 4). The ability for symbols to activate national identity can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, national symbols allow the nation to become visible (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2011; Kølsto, 2006) because they provide a tangible image of the nation, which activates and accentuates awareness of national identity (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). When activated by national symbols, individuals' national identities become salient and can therefore influence the attitudes and behaviours of citizens in given contexts (Anderson, 1991; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992; A. D. Smith, 1995; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). For example, seeing the flag at rugby events can produce feelings of belonging and support for the nation. Secondly, national symbols promote social identification because they highlight the distinctive and unique aspects of the nation, which contributes to positive in-group distinction (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). Symbols are infused with unique and distinctive messages, values and beliefs and therefore hold psychological, emotional and political significance (Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Schatz & Lavine, 2007). By

recognising and learning the national symbols (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; Kølsto, 2006), the individual also learns what it means to belong to the nation and the unique qualities associated with it. Thirdly, national symbols allow the individual to be connected to the wider social group. The symbols not only remind the individual they belong to the nation but that they are part of a shared experience. Therefore, national symbols create bonds between members of the group and foster a sense of unity (Cerulo, 1995; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; W. Smith, 2001). The ability for national symbols to promote social identification and highlight the unique, distinctive characteristics of the nation is addressed in the literature in a positive way. There is a gap in the literature examining the way national symbols may lead to disidentification with the nation or have negative implications for the understanding and recognition of the nation.

In the New Zealand context, identification with the nation relies on Pākehā national symbols (C. Bell, 1996; Mulholland, 2010, 2011). This could be expected due to the dominance of the group in society, and the way Pākehā culture and values contribute to the construction of New Zealand's national identity as previously discussed. Elements of New Zealand popular culture, known as Kiwiana, are connected to Pākehā identity and can create a sense of belonging (C. Bell, 2012a). Kiwiana symbolises the New Zealand way of life and emerged as "natural or manufactured responses to life in our remote and far-flung islands" (Wolfe & Barnett, 2001, p. 7). Kiwiana includes the fern, sheep, pohutukawa, bungy jumping, no. 8 wire, kiwi and buzzy bee. In the 1990s these everyday artefacts became national symbols, but their value as representative of the nation is disputed by C. Bell (2012b) because she argues that they are underpinned by Pākehā myths and nostalgia. This could suggest these national symbols are unable to reflect the diversity and bicultural nature of New Zealand, which has implications for identification.

Mulholland (2010, 2011) also considers the official symbols of the flag, anthem and the name 'New Zealand', to be limited because of their Pākehā origins. The use of symbols that developed from New Zealand's colonial past means New Zealand's national identity continues to be constructed using Pākehā values. This does not accurately represent New Zealand (Fox, 2011; Mulholland, 2011) in terms of improved race relations, renewed recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi and the 'matured' New Zealand reality (Mulholland, 2011). Fox (2011) also argues the widespread use of Pākehā symbols in New Zealand results in the "virtual invisibility" of Māori" (p. 9). The reliance upon Pākehā symbols does not allow for identification by bicultural and multicultural citizens (Fox, 2011). This justifies the push for the Flag Consideration Project to reconsider symbols of national identity.

Cerulo (1993) highlights how symbols are the outcome of conscious and deliberate decision-making. This is reflected in the adoption of visual aspects of Māori culture to construct New

Zealand as bicultural (A. Bell, 2004; Harding et al., 2011; Liu, 2005; Pearson, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2007), which A. Bell (2004) argues Pākehā symbols are unable to do. Studies indicate the visibility of Maori symbols allowed New Zealand Europeans to positively identify with New Zealand as a bicultural nation (Harding et al., 2011; Sibley & Liu, 2007). National symbols express meaning about the dominant version of history (Elgenius, 2011, p. 3) because they are a deliberate construction of national identity (Cerulo, 1993). In the New Zealand context, using Māori patterns or inserting 'Māori-ness' into current symbols is considered by Mulholland (2011) and O'Sullivan (2007) as superficial and tokenistic. This relates to the earlier discussion of symbolic biculturalism in New Zealand, and reinforces how national symbols create meaning, which has implications for identification.

2.5 National flags

This section of the literature narrows the discussion of national symbols to national flags. The national flag is the "main image" the nation projects (Elgenius, 2007, p. 14), "the strongest, clearest statement of national identity" (Cerulo, 1993, p. 224), a "pillar of nationhood" (Eriksen, 2007, p. 2) and "one of the primary means by which political identities are signified" (Knowlton, 2012, p. 57). Despite this apparent significance, there is a lack of literature that looks at the role of national flags (Elgenius, 2011; Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982; Weitman, 1973) to the extent that the national flag is "overlooked" (Elgenius, 2011, p. 4) and "neglected" (Eriksen, 2007, p. 1).

The national flag is part of the identification process for individuals because it provides an object for individuals to direct identification toward (Schatz & Lavine, 2007; Weitman, 1973). It is the basis for identification among the large, diverse group of the nation (Eriksen, 2007) and can also activate identification because it stands for the nation and can evoke an emotional response (Eriksen, 2007; Knowlton, 2012). Political leaders deliberately use the flag to foster a sense of unity and bonds among citizens (Cerulo, 1993). Billig (1995) acknowledges individuals' learn to respond emotively to the flag, however considers "mindless" and "routine" flags as another way the national flag is part of the identification process. The national flag often goes unnoticed in public spaces and as a result, are part of banal nationalism and the daily reproduction of national identity and the nation. They "flag" the nation "unflaggingly" (Billig, 1995, p. 41).

The colour, devices and design of the national flag communicate specific messages and represent the attributes and values associated with the nation (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982; Weitman, 1973). Sibley et al. (2011a) found the current New Zealand flag triggered the value of egalitarianism for New Zealanders. Their study concluded there is a "deeply embedded cognitive association" between the subliminal and regular exposure

to the flag as a symbolic marker of New Zealand and the values engrained within national identity (Sibley et al., 2011a, p. 511). They focused on only one value, egalitarianism, which is significant in the construction of New Zealand identity (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Rae, 2011; Sibley & Liu, 2007; Sibley et al., 2011b). It would be expected that the flag was associated with this value because national flags are condensed symbols and symbolic containers, which hold rich symbolic, political, aesthetic and emotional connotations (Eriksen, 2007). Accordingly, the flag constructs and reflects the nation through the range of meanings that are embedded and compressed in the design. This literature assumes the flag is a stable part of the national landscape but does not address how individuals may disidentify with the construction of national identity in the flag and the negative implications this could have.

The unique messages projected by the flag about the nation assist individuals in understanding their place within the context of other nations (Weitman, 1973). The flag advertises the values of the nation to those who belong to the social group, but also needs to be recognised by members of other nations to function as an effective representation of the nation. Thus, the flag assists in the construction of social identity through solidifying the boundaries between individuals who belong and do not belong to the nation (Elgenius, 2011). The design may distance the nation from others in the same geographical location (Weitman, 1973), but in the case of New Zealand, the flag can confuse outsiders given its similarities to that of the Australian flag. The similarity between these two flags has been used as a reason to change the flag (Mulholland, 2011), particularly as the similarities can limits the ability for the nation to be viewed as distinct by individuals (Cerulo, 1993; Weitman, 1973) and the ability for individuals to activate their national identity (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). The design of the flag may also indicate affiliation with other nations, which situates the nation in the global context (Cerulo, 1995; Weitman, 1973). This is evident on the New Zealand flag through the Union Jack, which represents a relationship to Britain and a colonial system (Firth, 1973; Weitman, 1973).

The national flag is also addressed in vexillology, which is the study of the history, symbolism and use of flags as a way to understand the role of flags in the modern world (Flag Institute, 2016). The literature published from this field addresses national flags on a country-by-country basis in terms of the flag's history and symbolism (see Barraclough, 1969; Crampton, 1990; Elting & Folsom, 1967; W. Smith, 2001; Talocci, 1982 and publications The Flag Bulletin and Raven: A Journal of Vexillology). The New Zealand flag is addressed briefly by vexillologists in terms of its development as a defaced British Ensign (Barraclough, 1969; Crampton, 1990; Elting & Folsom, 1967; Knowlton, 2012; W. Smith, 2001; Talocci, 1982). As part of the British colonial system developed in the nineteenth century, British colonies adopted a defaced British Blue or Red Ensign (Barraclough, 1969; Crampton, 1990; Knowlton, 2012). The Union Jack was displayed in the first quarter and a device signifying the specific identity of the colony or

dominion was selected. For example, Australia and New Zealand used the Southern Cross constellations, Canada and South Africa used their respective Coat of Arms and India used the Star of India. The inclusion of the Union Jack is considered a reflection of New Zealand's historical foundation as a British colony (Crampton, 1990; Elting & Folsom, 1967; W. Smith, 2001; Talocci, 1982).

Although vexillologists define the symbolic elements of the design, Eriksen (2007), Kølsto (2006) and W. Smith (1982) state that the symbolism of the design is not considered inherent. The design and qualities of the flag itself do not guarantee its success or acceptance (Kølsto, 2006), because as Eriksen (2007) asserts, "in itself, a flag does nothing" (p. 4). Instead members of the nation are socialised and learn to interpret the emotional and symbolic meaning, and it is only then that a flag can function as a national symbol. The values and ideas are embedded in the flag over long usage or through official means (W. Smith, 1982). The Flag Consideration Project draws attention to whether the symbolism embedded in the flag still allows it to function appropriately for the nation. The way meaning is learned and acquired over time also has implications for alternative flags because this will be unknown and a new flag could impact identification with the nation.

The national flag symbolises the sociological realities of the nation not only through the unique meanings in the design, but also as a symbol of the nation. Weitman (1973) presents the physical and ritual characteristics of the flag as a way to solidify the nation as a natural and sovereign social group within society. For example, the national flag is flown above the ground, which requires an observer to look up to view it. Weitman (1973) proposes this reinforces the way the nation holds authority over groups and individuals within the geographic territory. The durability of the flag in terms of material is also extended to the nation to suggest "a sense of everlastingness, integrity and endurance" (Weitman, 1973, p. 337). However, Weitman's (1973) analysis of the physical and ritual properties of the flag present it as a stable expression of national identity with the assumption that the flag does not change because it is able to communicate these messages about the nation. This does not consider how changing the national flag could affect the way that these messages about the nation are communicated.

The national flag offers a visual representation and connection to the nation's past, which Elgenius (2011) argues provides a continued justification of the nation in the present. The endurance of the national symbol of the flag is a powerful form of symbolic continuity (Elgenius, 2005). This suggests changing the national flag could have implications for the way the nation is accepted as a natural social group. The national flag offers a subjective version of history because the period in which the flag was adopted marks the beginning of a "symbolic regime" (Elgenius, 2005, p. 72) and provides insight into origins or pivotal events in the nation

(Elgenius, 2005; W. Smith, 2001). The New Zealand flag is critiqued because of the way it constructs national identity from a Pākehā perspective and only tells the story of colonisation through the Union Jack (Mulholland, 2011). The Union Jack is a "trace of a past system of ordering the world" because it refers to colonisation (Brabazon, 2000, p. 14). Due to this, 43 nations that are part of the Commonwealth removed the Union Jack from their flags with 23 adopting new flags in the 1960s and nine in the 1970s to signify their independence. Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Tuvalu are the only nations that continue to feature the Union Jack (Brabazon, 2000; Crampton, 1990; Knowlton, 2012).

The national flag is changed or modified due to ideological changes in the political regime (Elgenius, 2005, 2011; Firth 1973). The social and political change is considered to be so significant that it is reinforced symbolically. Elgenius (2005) accounts for the adoption of new flags in Europe as symbols of warfare, revolution, independence or state reconstitution, and contextualises the changing of flags with political changes associated with communism, fascism and republicanism. The modification of the flag occurs because "the associations between the symbol of the nation, the flag, and nationhood are renegotiated" (Elgenius, 2005, p. 304) and marks an end of a symbolic regime. It suggests the national flag as a symbolic construction of the nation is reflecting a significant shift in the understanding of national identity. Following this, it would be expected that the Flag Consideration Project is grounded in a shift in New Zealand cultural, social or political environment to justify the need to have a discussion around changing the flag.

There is limited literature that addresses the changing of national flags and Weitman (1973) suggests future research should focus upon the specific cases of flag adoption to enhance an understanding of the way the flag functions within the society. Literature from South Africa and Canada about the circumstances leading to their change of national flags provides useful insights into this process. In Canada, the government received over four thousand design submissions and the committee selected the design, which was then voted upon (Elting & Folsom, 1967; Talocci, 1982). The selected design of the maple leaf was considered appropriate because it was Canadian rather than being associated with British or French Canadians (Crampton, 1990), which could allow it to fulfil its purpose as a flag of unity (Crampton, 1990; A. B. Fraser, 1994). The flag change was debated for six months, becoming the longest debate in Canadian Parliament history (Elting & Folsom, 1967). The debate was grounded in a wider discussion about the "two powerful but disparate cultural views of the nation", which impacted upon "one's personal symbolic sense of identity" (A. B. Fraser, 1994, p. 34). The construction and adoption of new national symbols "emerged as something to fill the supposed void left by the demise of Britishness in English-speaking Canada" (Mann, 2012, p. 485). Mann (2012) also interprets the adoption of the new flag as a reflection of Canada's shift to multiculturalism as

the new form of national identity. The Canadian case study shows how the flag change was underpinned by a reconceptualisation of identity and the power of changing the symbolic regime in altering perceptions. The construction of national identity in the Flag Consideration Project could use the discussion about the flag as a way to signify a shift, which could also potentially be toward multiculturalism.

South Africa adopted a new flag in April 1994 as part of the transition into a post-apartheid nation (Bornman, 2005, 2014; Ginty, 2001; W. Smith, 2001) and was symbolic of the peaceful revolution that occurred (W. Smith, 2001). The previous flag used colours that referenced the arrival of the Dutch and used symbols that represented the unification of four former British colonies to form the South African Union (Bornman, 2014; Elting & Folsom, 1967). The adoption of a new flag was part of a larger strategy of nation building, employed by the South African government to foster bonds and cohesion within the new nation (Bornman, 2005, 2014; Ginty, 2001). It could be expected that the adopting of a new flag by New Zealander's could also be for similar political purposes and the way the new symbol was able to signify unification against a backdrop of inequality in South Africa, could resonate with New Zealanders. The South African flag was considered to express diversity and unity through the colours red, blue, green, yellow, black and white, and the y-design, which suggests a convergence of diverse elements in South Africa for a united future (W. Smith, 2001). The embedded meanings in the flag are discussed in academic literature (Bornman, 2005, 2014; Ginty, 2001), but the government did not consider the new flag to hold any universal symbolism (W. Smith, 2001). Their intention was that the citizens could draw their own meaning about the flag, which also fulfils democratic ideals because it is not officially imposed. This also draws upon the notion that the flag is learned and takes on meaning over time based on its integration into everyday life (Eriksen, 2007; Kølsto, 2006; W. Smith, 1982).

According to Kølsto (2006), new national flag unifies or divides the members of the nation based on the values associated with the new symbol, the group associated with it, and the level of political exploitation. If the symbol belongs to one group more than others it will be difficult for it to be adopted by the larger collective (Kølsto, 2006). Although this literature specifically addresses newly formed nation-states and their adoption of national flags, it draws attention to potential barriers for identification associated with adopting a new flag, which could be observed in the New Zealand process.

Summary

The review of the literature began with contextualising the Flag Consideration Project in terms of democratic ideals and public sphere principles. The chapter also outlined the way an individual identifies with the nation through social identification theory as well as literature that

addresses the specific social construction of national identity. I have investigated the ways in which identification and disidentification may occur, which led to an exploration of national symbols and the role they play within the nation and identification. The focus then narrowed to considering the national flag. The examination of literature demonstrates the significant role that the national flag plays within the nation, and the circumstances in which it is changed or modified reinforce the unique opportunity that the Flag Consideration Project presents New Zealanders. In addition, the review highlights the evolving construction and complexity of national identity within the New Zealand context especially in relation to colonisation, biculturalism and cultural diversity, which suggests there is a need to explore attempts at changing the flag to better understand the contemporary conceptualisation of New Zealand.

Chapter 3

Methodology & Method

To address my research question, how has the Flag Consideration Panel conceptualised national identity, I will analyse the discourse in two texts released by this group. This chapter situates the analysis within the critical perspective and justifies the use of qualitative analysis to examine constructions of national identity. The chapter then outlines four different approaches to discourse analysis, before examining the selected approach of critical discourse analysis following Fairclough (1992). Following a framework that adopts a critical perspective allows discourse to be analysed in relation to power and ideology. In addition, it allows the two texts to be examined within the wider social context and the production, distribution and consumption of the text itself, which provides a deep understanding of how the discourse constructs national identity. In other words, critical discourse analysis allows for insight into the strategies and linguistic devices used to construct national identity (de Cillia et al., 1999; Wodak et al., 2009). This chapter addresses the two selected texts under examination situating them within the Flag Consideration Project and finishes with an explanation of my research method.

3.1 Research paradigm

Deetz (1996) presents a useful framework in which to situate research through its orientation to consensus or dissensus, and local / emergent or elite / a priori. He plots this on a grid to demonstrate how research can be located along the two respective continuums. Consensus oriented research works within the dominant social structures related to knowledge, social relations and identities, and there is an underlying acceptance of social order. The focus of dissensus oriented research is to disrupt and challenge existing social structures, assumptions, values and discourses. My research fits within the dissensus orientation because it aims to critically analyse the construction of national identity, rather than focusing on the way it fits within the hegemonic frame or can be accepted as impartial and unbiased.

In terms of the local / emergent and elite / a priori dimension, my research can be situated in the middle of the continuum because the dimensions are not "sealed off from each other" (Deetz, 1996, p. 199). My research is "heavily theory driven" and privileges the "particular language system of the researcher and the expertise of the research community" (p. 196) as would be

expected in the elite / a priori orientation. However, it does not seek to generalise beyond the texts analysed, and as a result, is in keeping with the way the local / emergent dimension produces contextually based insight rather than truth. As a result of locating my research in the middle of the continuum, I adopt a critical perspective (dissensus and elite/ a priori oriented), which aims to reveal domination, explore power relations in communication and show how social constructions can favour certain interests. This approach allows the construction of New Zealand national identity to be examined in terms of how the Panel may employ persuasive techniques or exert influence in communication. My research also draws on a dialogic perspective (dissensus and local / emergent oriented) because it focuses on how reality is constructed especially through language. This is valuable because discourse is a central way national identity is developed and expressed (de Cillia et al., 1999; Wodak et al., 2009).

The research is also qualitative rather than quantitative. A qualitative approach lends itself to examine processes that involve discourse and construction of reality and identity (Morgan & Smircich, 1980) because it aims to understand behaviour, values, and beliefs in terms of the social context (Creswell, 2013). This aligns with my research question of how national identity is constructed within the specific context of the Flag Consideration Project. A quantitative research would allow for an exploration of national identity in terms of values and attitudes measured against categories because it seeks to objectively measure phenomena (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). A quantitative approach uses methods from natural sciences to capture "a view of the social world as a concrete structure" (Morgan & Smircich, 1980, p. 498). However, this would also require the researcher to determine aspects of national identity rather than allowing for the understanding of national identity to emerge from the data. Allowing constructions of national identity to emerge from the data set is important because social identity is based on evaluation and perception by members of the social group (Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and because the nation is socially constructed (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992; Smith, 1995). Qualitative research also allows for the researcher to interpret data (Flick, 2009), but this is also a limitation because of the potential for researcher bias. Researcher bias will be managed by following an established, comprehensive method of discourse analysis. By adopting a qualitative approach, conclusions drawn will provide insight into how the Panel has constructed national identity.

3.2 Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis as a form of qualitative research allows social realities to be explored through interpretation of texts (Flick, 2009; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). It can be broadly defined as the close study of patterns of written or spoken language (Taylor, 2001) and is used to understand the relationship between discourse and social reality. Traditional qualitative approaches begin with interpreting the social world and can evolve into an understanding of

how meaning is created for and by participants. Discourse analysis, however, considers how ideas and objects are socially created and produced, rather than interpreting social reality as it exists (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). As a result, discourse can be analysed to identify some of the meanings constructed in the texts (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). This also presents a challenge for how the relationships between the content, meanings, context and purpose of the text will be conceptualised (Flick, 2009). The way this part of analysis is dealt with will influence the interpretations and conclusions that can be drawn by the researcher. This limitation can be minimised through following an established methodology.

Each approach to discourse analysis provides a methodology and accompanying method (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Phillips and Hardy (2002) offer a framework that categorises four types of discourse analysis according to whether the analysis emphasises the individual text or surrounding context, and whether the analysis explores power and ideology or processes of social construction. Social linguistic analysis and interpretive structuralism are constructivist forms of discourse analysis, which means there is a direct focus on the way a particular social reality has been constructed and organised. This would allow the way national identity was constructed in the discursive context of the text to be examined, but there is not specific concern over power and ideology. Critical linguistic analysis maintains a close focus on the individual text to explore the power dynamics that are implicated in it. This would confine analysis of national identity to the presence of power dynamics and ideology in the texts, which may mean overlooking previous constructions of national identity and the place of New Zealand's history. Critical discourse analysis can be used to examine power relationships and ideology, as well as the social context. There must be an in-depth, thorough investigation of the context to critically interpret the text (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). This method of analysis enables the researcher to be focused on the social context, as well as on the text, and will be adopted to analyse the selected texts.

3.3 Critical discourse analysis

Critical discourse analysis focuses on the relationship between discourse and society, and the relationship between the analysis of discourse and discursive practice (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Fairclough (1992) defines discourse as spoken or written language use, and is considered to both represent the social world and construct its meaning. Accordingly, there is a dialectical relationship because discourse reflects and shapes social structures, institutions and context (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002) and discourse can be considered as a form of social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997). Viewing discourse and social reality dialectically avoids reducing discourse into providing a reflection and representation of reality or overstating the way discourse constructs reality (Fairclough, 1992). Critical discourse analysis, then, seeks to

show the "constructive effects discourse has upon social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 12). Following this, discourse in the texts produced by the Panel will reflect New Zealand's national identity in particular ways as well as contribute to its on-going negotiation and construction in society.

Critical discourse analysis is a valuable method to analyse constructions of national identity because discourse "plays a central part both in the formation and in the expression of national identity" (Wodak et al., 2009, pp. 29-30). Therefore, national identities are constructed, reproduced, transformed and dismantled through discourse, and these can be examined through an analysis of constructive, perpetuation, transformation and destructive strategies (de Cillia et al., 1999; Wodak et al., 2009). Analysing discourse provides assists the researcher in understanding how national identity is conceptualised and also offers insights into the strategies used in its construction. For example, conducting critical discourse analysis allowed de Cillia et al. (1999) to conclude that in Austria, national identity is most effectively constructed through difference, distinctiveness and uniqueness. S. Hall (1996a, 1996b) also considers identities to be constructed within discourse especially in terms of unity and difference. The text not only reveals insight into national identity but also how national identity is continually evolving through the discourse. This alludes to the role of agents in the formation of discourse and by extension national identity, which will be useful in the analysis of texts produced by the Panel.

Critical discourse analysis is a valuable way to gain insight into how national identity is constructed because it can show connections and causes that are hidden (Fairclough, 1992). For Wodak (2001) this refers to the presence of social inequality in discourse. Critical discourse analysis can uncover how relationships of power and ideologies can be encoded in discourse and how the text can be a site of struggle (Fairclough, 1992 Wodak, 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). For these reasons, critical discourse analysis provides the best platform to identify and explore power relationships that shape national identity.

Finally, critical discourse analysis is valuable in identifying attempts at persuasion. Van Dijk (1998) offers a useful definition of persuasion as "a process in which people change their opinions as a consequence of discourse" (p. 244). The goal of persuasion is to affect the belief or behaviour of an individual to align with the communicator (Taillard, 2000). Discourse may affect beliefs held by an individual on particular issues, however it may not lead to opinion change in which case the persuasion has failed. To be persuaded, the individual must comprehend and process the meaning of the text, and according to Taillard (2000) believe the messages presented in the communications. Persuasion also depends upon how the message fits within peoples' existing attitudes, feelings and knowledge (Greenwald, 1968). Petty and Cacioppo (1984) outline the way persuasion can occur via two routes: the central route and the

peripheral route. When communications are assessed according to the central route, a change in attitude occurs because the individual carefully considers the information in the message. The peripheral route is where an individual is persuaded by the positive or negative cues associated with the message. This could be in terms of the credibility of the communicator or personal relevance. Therefore, language may be persuasively employed in texts to encourage identification with the nation and also distance the nation from others (de Cillia et al., 1999; Wodak et al., 2009).

3.4 Fairclough's (1992) method of critical discourse analysis

My research will follow Fairclough's (1992) method of critical discourse analysis presented in *Discourse and Social Change*. Fairclough (1992) proposes research projects should investigate forms of social practice particularly related to social or cultural change. The Flag Consideration Project meets this expectation because the process is a moment of potential social change for the national flag. Fairclough (1992) proposes a three-dimensional framework to analyse discourse through; the text, discursive practice, and the social practice (see figure 3.1). His approach is considered the most sophisticated and detailed framework to analyse the relationship between language in texts and social practice (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002; Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). The focus on both the text and social context, and clear framework allows analysis to be rigorous.

Figure 3.1: Fairclough's (1992) three-dimensional approach to critical discourse analysis
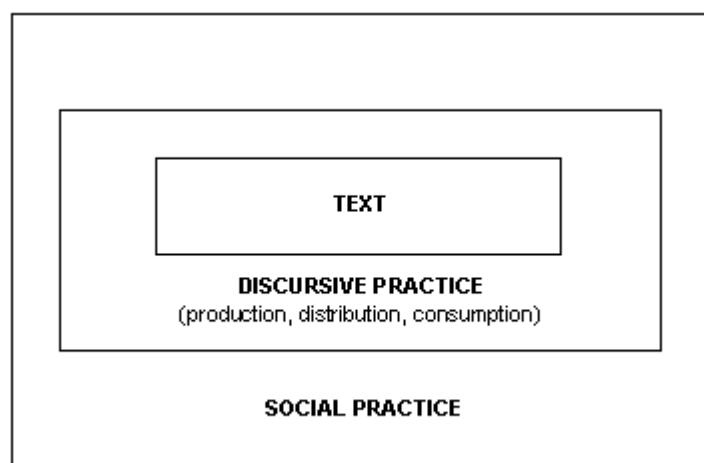
The level of the text is analysed for particularly linguistic features such as text structure, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary. Within a critical approach to discourse analysis, close textual analysis is guided by the assumption that "signs are socially motivated" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 74) and that there are reasons for the way language is used in the text. Although

Fairclough (1992) uses close textual analysis, he critiques linguistic approaches for too much of a focus on this part and a superficial and simplistic focus on the relationship between the text and society. Consequently the method allows for the social context to be analysed through discursive and social practices.

The discursive practice dimension considers the social processes of production, distribution and consumption of the text. According to Fairclough (1992), it is presumed that the text is produced in a specific way according to specific social contexts, and will also be consumed based on social context. There is also a consideration of intertextuality because texts are considered inherently intertextual and are "full of snatches of other texts" (p. 84). The text will draw on and transform other texts and genres both explicitly or implicitly because they exist in a wider social context. Consideration of intertextuality is a way to examine how the text has been constructed and reveals relations of power and hegemonic struggles. The concept of intertextuality, which is part of critical discourse analysis, is not part of other methods (Meyer, 2001). The discursive practice plays a significant role because it mediates the relationship between the text and social practice.

The social practice provides the necessary context to understand why the text will have been constructed in a particular way (Fairclough, 1992). As a result, this dimension is concerned with ideology and hegemony, and how they have contributed to the production, reproduction or transformation of relations of domination. Furthermore, examining the social practice allows the research to consider whether the discourse reproduces, restructures or challenges existing hegemonies and power relations in the text. Fairclough (1992) draws upon Thompson's (1990) view that ideology is a practice that operates in processes of meaning production in everyday life, whereby meaning is mobilised to maintain relations of power.

Among the limitations of using critical discourse analysis is the fact that the analysis is not "a self-contained activity" (Sayer, 2006, p. 463). That is, the researcher has to research beyond critical discourse analysis to fully engage and provide insight into the discourse. Following Fairclough's (1992) approach means the text cannot simply be examined in isolation, but requires specific knowledge about the matter the discourse discusses. This could also be seen as an advantage of this methodology because it allows the analysis to be thorough.

Another limitation of critical discourse analysis is the researcher may influence the interpretation of the analysis (Widdowson, 1995, 2004). Widdowson (2004) critiques Fairclough's (1992) method of critical discourse analysis on the grounds that Fairclough does not outline which of the linguistic devices need to be commented on. In other words, the research could pick and choose which linguistic devices to consider, and this could produce

researcher bias. The researcher is implicated by the choice of the topic, selection of texts, sampling of discourse and the way that the critical discourse analysis is employed (Weiss & Wodak, 2003). This can be minimised by ensuring that the analysis does not seek to evaluate the discourse in terms of being right or wrong, and instead is justified based on theory and other academic literature.

Widdowson (2004) expresses concern that engaging in critical discourse analysis is motivated by "an ulterior motive: a pretending to do one thing but intending to do something else" (p. 78). Weiss and Wodak (2003) also consider the conclusions drawn will be determined by what the researcher decides to include and exclude. In addition, Widdowson (1995) describes how the results of analysis may not be able to be replicated. This reinforces the need for the research to be situated within context and go beyond the text to increase the validity of claims. Despite these limitations, this approach of analysing the texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Panel will allow for an understanding of how national identity is constructed.

3.5 Texts under examination

The official organisation overseeing the Flag Consideration Project, the Flag Consideration Panel, has been selected as the organisation whose communications will be analysed. The Panel play an active role in conceptualising New Zealand's national identity due to the authority granted to them by the government "to design and lead the public engagement process over the New Zealand Flag, and to select a shortlist of designs" (English, 2015, para. 27). The texts circulated by the Panel construct New Zealand's identity making the texts worthy of critical examination, particularly because the texts may influence the way New Zealanders perceive their social identity and vote within the referenda. The Panel's contribution to the texts in the Flag Consideration Project is part of the provision of relevant information required for citizens to be informed and educated to have enlightened understanding. As texts that enter the public sphere, they may be used by New Zealanders to inform their decision-making and could be perceived as the official construction of New Zealand's national identity.

The two texts selected for analysis were released during two key stages in the Flag Consideration Project, before the first and second referendum. The first text, *5 Alternatives*, focuses on the five selected alternative designs that were part of the first referendum (the text can be found in Appendix B). The second text, *Our nation. Your choice.* presents a comparison between the preferred alternative flag and the current New Zealand flag and preceded the voting in the second referendum (the text can be found in Appendix C). These texts are significant because they were produced before two significant milestones where New Zealanders expressed their democratic rights as citizens. The result of the second binding referendum could have led to a new national flag being adopted, and a change would have been determined by public

opinion rather than by government. Therefore, these communications released by the Panel had the potential to contribute to an individual's perception of the flag's on which they were to vote.

3.6 Method

The following section outlines how the research was carried out using critical discourse analysis to examine constructions of national identity in Aotearoa - New Zealand in texts distributed in the Flag Consideration Project. After much research to develop a comprehensive understanding of the relevant scholarship in my chosen field, the texts for analysis were selected. Fairclough (1992) considers the selected samples should be based on a preliminary survey of the corpus and advice from colleagues to ensure the analysis of discourse will provide insight into the social practice. I scanned the pieces of communication produced by the Panel, which were designed to keep New Zealanders informed during the Flag Consideration Project. There was a wide range of texts to consider including brochures, social media posts, advertising content, letters from the Panel, videos, content from flag.govt.co.nz or standfor.co.nz websites. Similarly as the instigator of the Flag Consideration Project, the communications of Prime Minister John Key, such as his 2014 speech and video about reasons to change the flag, could have been selected in order to examine power relations in the construction of identity.

The selection of texts was based on Fairclough's (1992) notion of "cruces", which are texts that "make visible aspects of practices which might normally be naturalised" (p. 230) and show how change is occurring. Following this, I selected *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice..* The Panel produced both texts prior to the two referenda, which was valuable because these were two key moments in the Flag Consideration Project in which citizens could exercise their democratic rights. From a public sphere perspective, citizens in their decision-making process could use these communications as guides, so the way the Panel used their power was significant. These texts also offered insight into how the Panel conceptualised national identity, and these were based, to some degree, on input received from the public throughout the process. The texts provided insight into key moments of meaning making in the Flag Consideration Process and could also reflect any change in the way national identity was being constructed by the Panel. Although the brochures in the voting packs were produced at the same stages and potentially reached a larger number of New Zealanders, the texts from the website were selected because they provided more detail and allowed for a greater understanding of how New Zealand identity was constructed. Furthermore the brochures included elements of the website material. I also sought advice from my supervisors to ensure the selection would provide useful insight into national identity.

The analysis of the two texts was guided by Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis and as a result, began with a consideration of the social practice to understand the orders of

discourse the texts existed within. In addition, there was a consideration of hegemony and ideology related to constructions of national identity in New Zealand, which drew on ideas presented in the literature review. I also conducted an analysis of the discursive practice, which focused on the production, consumption and distribution of texts as well as intertextuality. This understanding was also valuable because of the way it contributes to the construction of national identity within the texts.

Following on from my assessment of the social and discursive practices, an initial analysis of the texts was conducted in terms of the four areas of text structure, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary. This provided an early indication of how national identity was being constructed and also how the Panel adopted an authoritative position. During this stage, it was evident that tools of persuasion were incorporated in the texts, which led me to explore literature in this field to further substantiate my initial findings. After an initial analysis each text was analysed multiple times with a focus on constructions of national identity and power relations to allow the question guiding the research to be answered. Due to the significance of social context and intertextuality in Fairclough's (1992) method, I also conducted wider research. The final analysis allowed for a holistic understanding of each text and involved selection of aspects of textual analysis that were relevant to the construction of national identity or Panel as authoritative voice. This allowed me to then draw conclusions about the way the Panel constructed national identity and locate this within the social context in my discussion chapter.

Chapter 4

Social & Discursive Practice

Following Fairclough's (1992) model of critical discourse analysis, this chapter addresses the social and discursive practices of the two texts under examination. The chapter opens with a consideration of the orders of discourse and hegemony and ideology, which are part of the wider social practice. Understanding the external forces that influence the texts feeds into an examination of the discursive practice. The text production, distribution and consumption of *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice.* are discussed together due to the similarities in these processes. The chapter closes with the beginnings of the textual analysis by examining the new lexical items "Flag Consideration Project" and "Flag Consideration Panel" which are present in both texts.

4.1 Orders of discourse

An order of discourse is the complex discursive formation and "structural entity which underlies discursive events" in a social domain (Fairclough, 1992, p. 68). The texts under examination can be situated within the discourse of government because the Flag Consideration Project was instigated by, involves process of, and is accountable to the New Zealand Government. The government produces public information for citizens in the public sphere and as such, communication addresses individuals as democratic citizens. Government discourses are guided by the notion of meeting public need rather than market pressures, because agencies are established to benefit citizens (Liu & Horsley, 2007). The New Zealand Government, then, is committed to providing citizens with access to official information to empower them and promote democracy (Cullen & Houghton, 2000).

Political communication was traditionally produced from a top-down approach and there is evidence to suggest that the texts analysed here are in keeping with government expectations. For example, the govt.nz style guide outlines how straightforward, authoritative and impartial language must be used to make texts as clear and simple as possible for New Zealand citizens (Crown, 2016a). That said, there has been a transformation in the relationship between government and citizens, courtesy of digital media and the opportunities it presents to the democratic process (Blumler & Kavanagh, 1999; Dahlberg, 2001; Dixon, 2010; Linders, 2012). Governments use online channels to disseminate information to citizens to assist citizens' decision-making and well-being (Dixon, 2010; Linders, 2012). Digital media allows for a two-

way exchange of information between citizens and government, which provides the potential to increase citizen participation in political and public processes (Dixon, 2010) and this can prompt governments to "facilitate rather than act" (Linders, 2012, p. 453).

According to Blumler and Kavanagh (1999) political communication has changed in the postwar period to become more individualised, economised, aestheticised, rationalised and mediatised. Fairclough (2001, 2005) considers the government order of discourse to be dominated by public relations because government communications allow for information to be selected and ordered, and consequently, promoted to citizens. As a result, discourse produced by governments may be persuasive, and the blend of information and persuasion reflects a colonisation of advertising into other domains (Fairclough, 1992). The use of a promotional order of discourse is not unexpected particularly as, on analysing 42 referenda, LeDuc (2015) found governments are often not neutral in the process because they instigated the referenda. Therefore, the government may use their position to advance their preferences by engaging in persuasive and promotional discourses (LeDuc, 2015). Fairclough (2005) also considers public discourse to be conversationalised where the boundaries between public and private orders of discourse have blurred. Forms of conversational language are drawn on in communication, although this does not mean that the public was involved at a greater level or the processes are more democratic (Fairclough, 2005). These changes to the government order of discourse may be reflected in the production of the texts because texts come from discursive practices of institutions and wider society (Fairclough, 1992).

4.2 Hegemony & ideology

The texts exist within the government order of discourse and reflect an official construction of national identity, suggesting hegemony is embedded in the discourses produced by the Panel. In considering national identity, the concept of hegemony is useful because the Panel has been given legitimate power (French & Raven, 1975/2015) by the government to make decisions about the flags and how they are communicated. According to Gramsci (1977 as cited in Urbinati, 1998) hegemony refers to the subordination of individuals and groups, where a dominant group's ideas, values and interpretations may become internalised and accepted by others. Hegemony is maintained through "disproportionate access to the fora of social persuasion" and the use of linguistic techniques to advance the interests of individuals or groups that hold social power (Ricento, 2003, p. 615). The Panel's construction of national identity on behalf of New Zealanders can be considered a 'hegemonic struggle' because there is a discursive battle over aspects of identity that can and should be claimed by New Zealand. Billig (1995) states "the battle for nationhood is a battle for hegemony, by which a part claims to speak for the whole nation and to represent the national essence" (p. 27). In other words, the Panel's construction of national identity provides them with the opportunity to construct and promote particular aspects of national identity according to their ideas and perspective.

Therefore, the way discourse is constructed by the Panel in the texts may allow them to exert power over New Zealanders and construct national identity.

In other words, external authorities, such as governments, can hold power over citizens and place limits on their individuality, particularly as citizens will accept the presence of asymmetrical power relationships. Acceptance of asymmetrical power relationships is encouraged "through concessions or through ideological means" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 92), because individuals will challenge power and authority if they perceive the presence of injustice or preferred alternatives (Chomsky, 1998; Hardy & Phillips, 2004). Fairclough (1992) draws upon Thompson's (1990) view that ideology is a practice that operates in processes of meaning production in everyday life, whereby meaning is mobilised to maintain relations of power. The Panel may draw on, reinforce or develop existing ideologies about national identity, which may become embedded as common sense and hegemonic. The aspects of New Zealand's national identity that have been examined in chapter two can be considered systems of belief that already exist. For example, the value of egalitarianism that has become part of New Zealand's national identity can be considered an ideology, which has been utilised to maintain power between Māori, Pākehā and other cultural groups in New Zealand. Individuals can be subtly persuaded to adopt ideologies through covert control. Everyday verbal and written expression can function as an ideological form of control, which subtly persuades individuals towards accepting and re-enacting norms (Mumby, 1987). As a result, covert control reproduces the existing power structure, but because this occurs in a covert way, the discourse can be protected from examination and scrutiny (Witten, 1993). Therefore, the Panel may exert dominance over New Zealanders through their construction of national identity in a more complex way than overtly stating their position.

Mumby and Stohl (1991) point to the way hegemony is maintained and negotiated through social relationships, which allows meaning to be accepted by individuals without coercion. Consequently, hegemony is not fixed (Mumby & Stohl, 1991) and the texts may reflect a negotiation. For example, the shift from the monocultural construction of New Zealand in which Pākehā ideas and values dominanted over Māori (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu et al., 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; O'Sullivan, 2007) to the way New Zealanders claim positive distinctiveness through Māori culture (Harding et al., 2011; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Mikaere, 2011; Olssen, 1991; Sibley & Liu, 2007), demonstrates a negotiation in cultural hegemony. Additionally, the persuasive, promotional function, and conversational language that is part of the government order of discourse may allow the texts to reinforce a hegemonic position. This may mean the texts employ persuasive strategies and conversational tone, which may encourage New Zealanders to accept the discourse embedded with ideology and hegemony.

The order of discourse as well as hegemony and ideology can be considered as external forces that are at play on the texts and will impact upon the construction of the two texts under examination. The focus now shifts the discursive practices associated with *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice.* in terms of how they were produced, distributed and consumed. The discursive practice may also provide insight into hegemonic struggles and power relations through understanding how the texts were developed and transformed, which can also be enhanced through considering intertextuality (Fairclough, 1992).

4.3 Production of texts

The production of *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice.* is examined following Fairclough's (1992) adaption of Goffman's concept of the animator, author and principal to break down collective and complex text production. The animator is responsible for the "marks on paper", the author is responsible for the wording and the principal is the person or group "whose position is represented by the words" (p. 78). This framework is used in this section to address the way the Flag Consideration Panel, New Zealand public and Secretariat contribute to the collective text construction and therefore the construction of national identity.

Flag Consideration Panel

The Flag Consideration Panel can be considered the principal of the texts, and this is signalled by the statement "authorised by the Flag Consideration Panel" in the lower left corners of both documents. *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice.* were produced by the Panel during the lead-up to the first and second referendum respectively as part of their public communications role to provide information throughout the Flag Consideration Project (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2014). Their communication objective was to help people get to know the designs prior to the first referendum (DPMC, 2015a), and to provide balanced and factual information about the stories behind the flags prior to the second referendum (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet [DPMC], 2015b). The position of the Panel is noted in the way the texts are constructed through descriptions of the flags, opinions from the public and organised through comparison to meet these obligations. The position of the Panel is also evident in the way the texts in the Flag Consideration Project had to comply with the requirements of government, such as being accessible to a wide range of New Zealanders through the use of plain English and the expectation that the texts be translated into 25 languages (DPMC, 2015a). According to the Panel, they adopt a fair, balanced, inclusive position in the communication with no presumption of change (DPMC, 2015a). This suggests the motivation behind these texts aligns with public sphere principles and it would be expected for the texts to emphasise the Panel's neutral and impartial position to avoid exerting influence over a democratic decision (Habermas, 1962/1989).

The democratic ideals the Panel seeks to facilitate may be limited because the construction of national identity is "authorised" by the Panel. As the principal of the texts the Panel is afforded the opportunity to construct a version of national identity on behalf of New Zealanders. This suggests power relations of dominance will exist, because by producing the texts the Panel is positioned as a source of knowledge. The word "authorised" also highlights how the Panel is officially appointed by the New Zealand Government and has authority as the facilitating organisation. Asymmetrical power relationships occur when a social actor holds a greater level of influence over others (Castells, 2009). This may undermine the democratic potential of the process and may enhance or limit New Zealanders identification with the nation, depending on whether they agree or disagree with how the nation is constructed by the Panel.

Secretariat

The Panel's contribution to the text production as the principal is complicated by the role of the Secretariat, which comprised government officials from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet[4]. The presence of the Secretariat undermines the independency of the Panel and brings into question their impartiality. The terms of conditions of submitting a design reveal the "Panel has been set up to consider flag designs in a process run by the New Zealand Flag Consideration Panel Secretariat" (Crown, 2015, para. 3). According to Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2014, p.5), the Panel is the "face", which suggests a desire to distance the Flag Consideration Project from the government as a way to encourage participation and discussion among New Zealanders without the perceived influence of government. However, it reflects an intrusion of the state into the production of information that could influence decision-making in the public sphere (Habermas, 1962/1989). The Secretariat, and therefore the government, may be constructing national identity rather than the Panel.

In terms of the texts, the Secretariat was involved in the production of content and approved communications before they were released[5]. According to the Secretariat Report, "on the Panel's behalf, the Secretariat developed, and the chair of the Panel signed off, the content of many of the above activities to ensure that they were balanced and factual" (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet [DPMC], 2016, para. 4). As a result, the Secretariat could be attributed as the author, responsible for the wording of the texts (Fairclough, 1992), which implies they were more involved in the construction of national identity than the texts statement "authorised by the Flag Consideration Panel" would suggest. On 15 December 2015, the Panel

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[4] The Secretariat Team consists of Director - Kylie Archer, senior advisor - Ian Thompson, executive assistant - Jo Crawford, project manager - Martin Rodgers, senior advisor - Robin Paratene, communication contractor - Suzanne Stephenson, digital media advisor - Georgie Wiles (Archer 2015).
[5] Emails released under the Official Information Act provide evidence of this: Kylie Archer on 4 August 2015: "I have attached an updated version of the open letter for your consideration", which she tried to "keep succinct and focussed" and seeks "comments on the open letter" (as cited in Lin, 2015). From John Burrows on 4 August 2015 to Martin Rodgers: "I'm happy with this letter. Thank you for drafting it" (as cited in Lin, 2015). From Ian Thompson to John Burrows on 26 August 2015: "John please see a draft letter to Tomas attached for your review and approval" (as cited in Lin, 2015).

decided an infographic should be developed to summarise key information about the flags, which was to be pursued by the secretariat (DPMC, 2016). *Our nation. Your choice.* was developed from the letter by the chair, John Burrows on 22 January 2016, and released the following week (DPMC, 2016). This suggests the text was produced by the Secretariat but reflective of the Panel's position. The Secretariat could also be considered the animator of the texts because of their role in drafting communications, which allows the texts to be read as cohesive. The animator is valuable because it allows texts to be presented as if written by a single author, although there may be collective production (Fairclough, 1992).

Designers of the alternative flags

The designers of the five alternative designs are part of the collective text production in *5 Alternatives*, and the designer of the silver fern flag, Kyle Lockwood, contributes to *Our nation. Your choice.* The designers contribute to the texts through their production of the flag designs, which were selected by the Panel, or by the government in the case of Red Peak. In *5 Alternatives* a section of the text is labelled "designer's description", which allows the meaning embedded in the alternative flag design to be unpacked according to each of the designers' personal interpretations. This provides a dominant reading of the design, and could be decoded by receivers as the preferred meaning of the flags proposed in the texts (S. Hall, 1980). Therefore, the Panel allows the designers to construct meanings for the possible national flag, which places them in a position of power in comparison to the New Zealand public.

The descriptions of the colours, elements and patterns of the alternative designs are "full of snatches of other texts" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 84) because they use ideas and phrases from the description initially submitted by the designer. As a result, the designers could be considered the author of the text and responsible for wording (Fairclough, 1992). However, due to the ability for the Panel to edit and modify the descriptions, the designers cannot be considered principals. An email from Kylie Archer of the Secretariat to the Panel (as cited in Lin, 2015) expressed the intention of the Secretariat to "polish" the designer's titles and descriptions, and the Panel were invited to provide feedback on the "images of the four designs in a selection of contexts, the name of the design, the updated title and description of each design" (Archer as cited in Lin, 2015). This suggests that the Panel and Secretariat have also adapted the perspective of the designers and these transformations of the descriptions show the power dynamics and ideologies of the Panel and the extent they have been involved in the construction of New Zealand's national identity.

New Zealand public

The New Zealand public can be considered part of the collective production in *5 Alternatives* through the presence of Red Peak. *5 Alternatives* was released following the announcement of

the four designs selected by the Panel. The initial text was originally titled *4 Alternatives* and featured the four designs that would comprise the options available in the referendum. Following the change in legislation which included Red Peak as a fifth alternative option in the first referendum, *5 Alternatives* was modified to include an additional page addressing this design and the order of the pages were changed to reflect the new order in referendum voting. As previously mentioned, Parliament changed the legislation based on the social media campaign and 50,000 signature petition that came from the New Zealand public, which fulfilled democratic ideals of public opinion guiding political decision making (Habermas, 1962/1989; Held, 2006). It also reveals the complexity of power relations in the process where the Panel's ability to select the flags for the first referendum was superseded by government's decision to follow public opinion.

New Zealanders who expressed their opinions throughout the project contribute to a section of the *Our nation. Your choice.* text where the most commonly expressed views of the public were collated. The inclusion of this section signals a democratic contribution to public discussion and suggests public opinion has guided the process. This increases the credibility of the project because it alludes to the ideal way for matters of interest to be handled (Habermas, 1962/1989). However, the Panel continues to be the author of this section because the qualitative data collected through public engagement has been sorted and analysed by the Panel. The Panel functions as gatekeepers because they control the flow of information by selecting, displaying and withholding opinions expressed by the public (Barzilai-Nahon, 2008). This creates asymmetrical power relationships between the Panel and New Zealand public. It also allows them to influence the construction of identity through the selection of certain opinions.

The most commonly expressed views section of *Our nation. Your choice.* is intertextual because it draws upon previous texts where New Zealanders have expressed their opinions (Fairclough, 1992), but it does not identify the original texts that informed this section of the text. The Panel presents evidence of public engagement as 25 workshops and hui hosted, 850,000 visits to website, 500,000 video content views and reach of 1.18 million via social media, however this is dated until 7 August 2015 (Burrows, 2015b). In addition, public input is also evident through the 43,000 submissions of what New Zealanders 'stand for' and 10,292 flag design submissions (Burrows, 2015b). However, it is not clear how many of the public engagement activities allowed the expression of opinions that could then be collected. It is likely this section of *Our nation. Your choice.* incorporates values collected by the 'stand for' campaign because this campaign invited New Zealanders to answer questions of "what was important to New Zealand". The Panel constructed a word cloud from this data, but software consultancy Entopix has since critiqued the word cloud for not including the *most* common themes, which skews the results (Nippert, 2015). Adding weight to Entopix's view is the statement of Suzanne

Stephenson, head of communications for the Secretariat, who claimed the word cloud should not be considered "statistically significant" and submissions were discounted if they did not directly answer the question. Similarly, information submitted about the current flag was "outside the Panel's remit" (Nippert, 2015). This implies a lack of clarity over where the "most commonly expressed views" came from and suggests there is a lack of transparency in the process. In addition, the layout of the infographic in *Our nation. Your choice.* attributes views to the two flag designs, however it is unclear whether these views were expressed about the silver fern flag specifically.

4.4 Distribution & consumption of texts

The two texts were distributed by the Panel in both online and offline settings and therefore, each has different patterns of consumption (Fairclough, 1992). Both texts were available online on the "home of the Flag Consideration Project" flag.govt.nz. As the URL indicates this is a New Zealand Government hosted website and the aim of Govt.nz is to guide citizens through government information and processes (Howie, 2015). It further implies that the Panel is not as "independent" from government as proposed, which limits the ability for discussion of national identity and the flag to exist outside state influence (Habermas, 1962/1989). Linders (2012) describes how governments can use websites as platforms to 'nudge' citizens through providing them with additional information to make informed decisions. Using the internet to deliver this content is useful because it is the preferred source of information in New Zealand (Crothers et al., 2016) with 80% of New Zealand households having access to the Internet in 2012 (Statistics New Zealand, 2013b) and 91% of New Zealanders considered active internet users (Crothers et al., 2016). Within New Zealand, 52% of internet users had logged into secure areas on government or council websites, which indicates a level of engagement with government websites (Crothers et al., 2016). Consumption of the texts online is indicated by 411,301 users accessing information on the alternative flags and their designers through flag.govt.nz website from 11 September to 11 December 2015 (DPMC, 2015a). In the lead up to the first referendum the website had an average weekly visit of 50,000 users and the infographic had 26,000 page views (DPMC, 2015b).

The Panel promoted consumption of the texts through their 'Stand For' Facebook page. On 1, 11 and 29 September and 5, 12, 16 and 20 October 2015 the Panel posted about the upcoming referendum including a link to the *5 Alternatives text*. Excerpts of the *Our nation. Your choice.* were posted as images on 2, 3, and 9 February 2016 with a link to the larger infographic. The use of a social networking site could increase consumption of the texts by New Zealanders because 85% of New Zealand internet users use social networking sites (Crothers et al., 2016). According to Burrows (2016b), between the two referenda 1.1 million users were reached on social networking sites, and the promotion of the infographic specifically reached 144,715

users. These posts can be considered a further reproduction of the text as part of its intertextual chain (Fairclough, 1992) and also provided an opportunity for the Panel to stimulate public discussion through the content of the text. Engagement is exemplified through 249 comments and 17 shares of the 9 February 2016 post. The active encouragement of discussion among citizens and the facilitation of political dialogue allows the internet to expand the public sphere (Dahlberg, 2001) and could prompt public discussion about national identity. However, undermining the legitimacy of the public sphere discussion on national identity is the fact that the discussion is led by the Panel through social media instead of emerging from citizens.

The texts were also distributed in offline settings, which allowed them and the constructions of national identity to reach a larger group of New Zealanders. This is valuable because internet usage differs based on age, ethnicity, income and area. For example, Asian and New Zealand European internet users are more highly engaged in a range of mediated activities (Crothers et al., 2016). The infographic was placed as a full page in 55 Fairfax community newspapers nationwide. These papers had had a weekly readership of 1,638,355 people. The infographic was also reproduced as A2 posters distributed to 140 tertiary student associations (DPMC, 2016). Approximately 2000 A5 brochures with the infographic were distributed at public events including the Otara markets, Lantern festival, NRL 9s, Breakers Basketball and Mangere markets (DPMC, 2016). Both texts were also reproduced and redistributed in the two brochures included in the posted voting packs for the referenda. The brochures in particular, provided condensed descriptions of the flags to permit ease of reception. Overall, it can be inferred that the conceptions of national identity found in the texts would reach a range of New Zealanders across a number of platforms, and may have influenced the publics' perceptions of New Zealand's identity.

The intended consumers of the texts, then, are New Zealand voters and the purpose of the texts is to assist the voters in their decision-making prior to the referenda. Fairclough (1992) describes how production and consumption of texts draw upon and can be constrained by members' resources. In this case, the texts will be consumed by New Zealanders based on their personal perception and evaluation of their social identity. It is outside the scope this thesis to consider the range of interpretations of the texts by New Zealanders, instead the textual analysis will address lexical construction and organisation of the texts.

4.5 New lexical items of "Flag Consideration Project" & "Panel"
Having discussed the social and discursive practices of the texts, the focus of this research shifts to the textual analysis. Although chapters 5 and 6 explore the lexical elements and structures of both texts, the following discussion on the labels "Flag Consideration Project" and "Flag Consideration Panel" appear here because they are repeated across both texts.

"Flag Consideration Project" and "Flag Consideration Panel" can be considered as new lexical items, which are generated through new wording that in turn establishes new meaning (Fairclough, 1992). Both labels include "Consideration" which is a nominalisation. Nominalisations remove the agent of a clause, which enables the process to be concealed and backgrounded, and it becomes an abstract entity (Fairclough, 1992). In this case, the two groups involved in the process (New Zealand Government and Panel) are made explicit, but they are both asking the New Zealand public to "consider" the flag. The word "consideration" has connotations of careful thought, deliberation and reflection, which suggest a level of discussion involved in the decision and also paints the process in a favourable light because it aligns with democratic ideals.   The nominalisation also backgrounds the process of considering the *change* of New Zealand flag through reducing it to "flag consideration". This reinforces the flag may not change after both referenda, which may influence individuals to participate or not participate depending on their perception of the process.

New lexical items need to be considered in terms of intertextual relations (Fairclough, 1992). The word "consideration" can be traced back to John Key's initial speech, in which he stated New Zealand should write a "new chapter in our national story by *re-considering* the flag" (Key, 2014b, para. 94). The feature published on the Official Website of the New Zealand Government on the same day, titled "*considering* a new flag" stated "*consideration* of a new flag will begin after the 2014 election" (Key, 2014a, para. 4) and "any *consideration* of a new flag must include genuine input from New Zealanders" (para. 5). The use of "consideration" in both the name of the overall process and organisation reinforces how John Key's influence is inescapable because it is embedded in the discourse surrounding the flag debate. The way consideration is used in earlier texts is always in conjunction with a new flag, which suggests the emphasis of the project is on the "new flag" rather than facilitating a discussion of national identity. This could imply there is an existing presumption towards change in the government's previous use of this word.

Examining the word "project" through the "historicity of texts" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 84) also reveals that there have been transformations in discourse. The "Flag Consideration *Project*" is a transformation from the "Flag Consideration *Process*. The word "process" becomes "project" in Deputy Prime Minister, Bill English's release of the Panel members on 26 February 2015 (English, 2015). The word "project" may have been adopted to encourage participation and allude to the democratic ideal of public discussion about this national symbol. Fairclough (1992) describes how alternative wording could change the meaning of the text. In this instance "project" is selected over "process", despite the similarities between the word choice: a project also entails a series of actions to achieve a particular outcome. Process may be considered more

formal, procedural and connected to government, which could be off putting to New Zealanders and limit the perception to voting rather than discussing.

The word choice of "Panel" for the organisation governing the project may also contribute to their position as the source of knowledge. "Panel" is more formal than group or team, which is necessary because they are government appointed to "facilitate this national conversation about the flag" (Crown, 2016b, para. 1). It is also not as elitist or expert as suggested by committee, council, board or advisory group[6], and implies a degree of independency from the government. Although the Panel is defined as "12 New Zealanders from all walks of life, age and experience" which suggests they are ordinary New Zealanders, there is a suggestion of status (Crown, 2016b, para. 1). The Panel was selected based on the criteria of having a cross-section of New Zealand society in terms of representation of Māori, Pacific Island and ethnic communities, variety of ages, gender balance and "having an understanding of all that goes to make up New Zealand's sense of national identity" (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2014, p. 6). This places responsibility and expectations on the Panel when national identity is subjective and constructed by the social group. Furthermore the word "panel" is used in other government agencies to refer to individuals who hold specialised knowledge or skill in a particular area[7]. The word "panel" suggests the power dynamics between the Panel and New Zealand public are unequal through positioning the Panel as the source of knowledge, which is coupled with the removal of New Zealanders through the nominalisation. This is problematic considering their role is to oversee the project and help facilitate public discussion rather than lead it or discuss it amongst themselves.

The social practice identified in this chapter suggests that the texts may have been imbued with ideologies and ideals that reflect the dominant views and groups of New Zealand society. The discursive practice detailed above indicates that the texts were collectively produced and suggests that they are sites of complex power dynamics between the Panel, Secretariat, designers and the New Zealand public. Finally, early indications are that the texts are sites of purposeful lexical choices which can be interpreted and responded to in varied ways by the voting public of New Zealand.

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[6] There is an advisory committee connected to the Flag Consideration Panel who provided advice to the panel on the shortlist of alternative flag designs. On 24 July 2015 the Secretariat provided a preliminary long-list of alternative flag designs for "review from a technical, not subjective, perspective" (as cited in Lin, 2015). The group was asked to provide feedback on the designs.

[7] 1993 New Zealand referendum was "directed by a *panel of experts*" (Vowles, 1995, p. 109); "Constitutional Advisory Panel" consisted of twelve members appointed "on the basis of *their knowledge* of the constitutional topics and *their ability* to articulate the issues to a wide audience" (Constitutional Advisory Panel, 2013, p. 154). Security and Related Services Panel is a "group of *industry experts* contracted to provide government agencies with services and advice on a range of security and privacy practices" (Internal Affairs, 2016, para. 1). Cycling Safety Panel is a group of "10 *experts* in the fields of cycling, transport and human behaviour" (NZ Transport Agency, 2016, para. 1).

Chapter 5

Analysis of 5 Alternatives

The purpose of this thesis to examine constructions of Aotearoa - New Zealand's national identity in two texts distributed by the Flag Consideration Project before the binding referenda. The first text that will be examined is *5 Alternatives*, which provides information about the alternative designs that are part of the first referendum. Each page of the text presents an official description, designer's description and images of the alternative design in different contexts. The five designs are the Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue) by Kyle Lockwood, Koru by Andrew Fyfe, Silver Fern (Black and White) by Alofi Kanter, Silver Fern (Red, White and Blue) by Kyle Lockwood, and Red Peak by Aaron Dustin. The flags will be addressed by their titles with the exception of Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue) and Silver Fern (Red, White and Blue), which will be addressed as the Lockwood designs. In general, the two flags will be addressed together due to the similarity in the descriptions and when one is specifically discussed, this will be highlighted. As Fairclough (1992) states, "any sort of textual feature is potentially significant in discourse analysis" (p. 74) and the analysis will specifically focus upon textual features that construct New Zealand national identity. These include text structure, grammar and vocabulary. It is outside the scope of the analysis to examine and interpret every element in the text.

5.1 Construction of the Panel as authoritative

"Official" descriptions

The "official" descriptions of each alternative flag offer an objective and literal interpretation of the designs. The description allows the Panel to establish the position, scale and colour of the elements in the design. For example, both the Lockwood designs are explained as follows: "the *dominant* element of this flag is a *white* fern frond that sweeps up *diagonally* from the *bottom left corner* to the *right* of the *top centre*" (emphasis added). The text reduces any ambiguity over the design to maintain the objective position established for the Panel and to avoid overtly constructing the meaning behind the flag. The simple language allows the text to be accessible to the New Zealand public and as such, the text meets the criteria of the New Zealand Government style guide, because it is written in a straightforward, human and impartial tone, and uses plain, familiar language (Crown, 2016a).

The "official" description also labels the elements of each alternative flag. The dominant elements are labelled "fern frond", "stars in the Southern Cross constellation" and "koru" in the flags except in the case of Red Peak where the dominant element, "the upside down V shape," is more descriptive. The decision to offer a more descriptive label positions the flag as being 'different' from the others. The lack of a definitive label may not be intentionally designed to subordinate Red Peak, but readers could infer the flag is unable to reflect New Zealand to the same extent as the other alternatives that use recognisable, known elements. In addition, the labels offered in the official and designer descriptions align except Red Peak's "upside down V shape", which is labelled as "the chevron" in the designer's description. Although it was the intention of the designer for the symbol to be recognised as chevron, the official description supersedes this and labels it in a way, which may undermine the integrity of the design. The lack of consistency in the construction of Red Peak's descriptions may reflect the Panel's attitude towards the design, because they did not select it and it was a late inclusion. Nevertheless, the inconsistent description appears to undermine the neutrality of the Panel, which can have implications for citizens and their final decision. In other words, the Panel can contribute to the formation of public opinion in the public sphere (Habermas, 1962/1989).

The authority and power of the Panel is revealed in the use of declarative statements within the official descriptions. The declarative allows the author to inform the reader "what is the case in no uncertain terms" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 76). The official description asserts the "left side of the fern *is sitting* on a black background" and "to the right of the fern *there are* four stars in the formation of the Southern Cross constellation" (emphasis added). The declarative is coupled with the present tense, which Fairclough (1992) considers to be "categorically authoritative" (p. 76). These statements assertively establish the characteristics and features of the designs as fact, which allows the Panel to construct truth statements about the flag. The incontestable construction of the flag limits the interpretation of the elements to the single view presented by the 'official' description. This may not seem problematic due to the neutral and objective nature of the description, but it establishes the relationship between the individual and the Panel, which has implications that will be discussed in the designer descriptions. The use of the declarative could be expected because the New Zealand Government style guide states they write in an authoritative tone (Crown, 2016a), however it also draws attention to the ability to impose their view on the flag. It allows the Panel to assert meaning about the flags in an official capacity rather than allowing public opinion about the flags to be formed through discussion (Habermas, 1962/1989).

Text organisation

The power of the Panel within the Flag Consideration Project is also evident in analysis of the "architecture of the text" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 77). Power relations are revealed through the sequential structure of the descriptions because the structure of the text contributes to the meaning within it (Fairclough, 1992). The official description is above the designer's, which positions the Panel as the authority on the flags design. Furthermore, it positions the "official" meaning as more significant than the subjective interpretation of the individual designer. Additionally, the use of "official" implies an objective, accurate account of the flags as opposed to the subjectivity imbued in the "designer's description". Framing the connection to New Zealand identity through the designer's description suggests there is distance from the "official" authority and avoids imposing meaning onto the flag. What is not articulated, however, is that the Panel contributed to the development of both sections by approving the content for inclusion, which reinforces their position of power in the formation of the texts.

The text is structured with one design per page to allow each alternative flag to be considered in their own right. On each page there is a consistent layout to direct attention to the content of the text, which also allows differences between the designs to be observed. The official and designer's descriptions on the Koru page are noticeably shorter in length. There is less explanation about the meaning and symbolism of the elements. For example, unlike the other designs there is no explanation about the colour choices, which could suggest a lack of intention or consideration by the designer. The shorter explanation may suggest the flag does not hold rich symbolic, political, aesthetic and emotional meanings compared to the other designs, and cannot function as a condensed symbol as a national flag should (Eriksen, 2007). This may impact the public's perception of the flag as a viable national flag and could undermine its credibility, which could influence decision-making. It appears the Panel did not modify the description to include more detail, although they could edit and add to the description to increase the consistency. The inconsistency may suggest a lack of attention by the Panel and suggest the design's inclusion was tokenistic. Before the government added Red Peak, this flag was the only option that addressed Māori beyond labelling New Zealand as Aotearoa. Its inclusion ensured there was an option that constructed New Zealand as bicultural. It also suggests a preference towards other constructions, as indicated by the other three designs using the silver fern.

5.2 Construction of New Zealand's national identity

Selection of images

There is a visual construction of New Zealand in the text through the inclusion of six images, which depict the alternative flag in different contexts. Although the focus of critical discourse

analysis is linguistic elements, the notion of discourse is extended by Fairclough (1992) to consider the way language and image is combined. The selection of the images provide insight into how the Panel sees the national flag functioning in New Zealand society and contributes to the construction of national identity. The flag is depicted both on a flagpole flying in the wind, forwards and backwards, as well as hanging limp. The pale, blue sky and clouds in the background of the three images create an image of a sunny, calm day. Although it would be unexpected to depict the flags against a cloudy, gloomy day because this could invoke negative feelings, the peaceful, calm and idyllic sky reinforce the construction of New Zealand following the 100% Pure New Zealand brand (see pages 58-59). It demonstrates the continued use of New Zealand's natural environment to construct a distinctive national identity (C. Bell, 1996; Clark, 2004; King, 2003; Rae, 2011). The images also reinforce aspects of national identity presented in the designer's description such as "Aotearoa's peaceful multicultural society" and "our clear atmosphere" in the Lockwood designs.

The images provide an opportunity to visualise the flags as legitimate national flags, which may have an evocative capacity within the text. Images contribute to the text because they may "create a world which potential consumer, producer and product can jointly inhabit" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 211). The images may persuade New Zealanders to see how the flag is relevant to their everyday life through constructing potential scenarios rather than overtly stating it. The Panel positions the flag design in front of a large crowd to show how the alternative flag may act as an outward expression of unity and pride (Cerulo, 1995; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; W. Smith, 2001). The emphasis on belonging and reference to identity that accompanies the construction may be persuasive if it taps into positive attributes (Miller, Brickman & Bolen, 1975). The image constructs New Zealand as a unified social group through the large social occasion and suggests New Zealanders share common bonds. Although it is unclear why the crowd is gathered and the flag is being waved in public, this image is captioned on the website as "being flown by a fan at a sporting event". This locates an expression of national identity, unity and pride within the cultural sphere of sport, which draws upon existing constructions of New Zealand's identity and as such could influence flag preferences (Barclay, 2005; Crawford, 1985; Jackson, 2004). However, it may also lead to disidentification if New Zealanders do not perceive sport as a valuable part of identity.

Two images are intertextually linked to John Key's initial speech, in which he offered scenarios as part of his argument for changing the flag. He proposes the flag needs to represent New Zealand "whether it's stitched on a Kiwi traveller's backpack outside a bar in Croatia, [or] on a flagpole outside the United Nations" (Key, 2014a). As a form of intertextuality, these images reveal relations of power (Fairclough, 1992) and allude to the influence of John Key in the Flag Consideration Project. This undermines the impartiality and independence of the Panel because

they have chosen to follow his perspective on how the flag should be part of society and how it reflects national identity. Firstly, the flag is inserted in the line of national flags in front of the United Nations building in New York. This allows New Zealanders to imagine how the flag could fulfil the requirement to signal the uniqueness of the nation to those outside of New Zealand (Cerulo, 1995; Elgenius, 2011; Schatz & Lavine, 2007) by situating New Zealand in the global context. It also connects to the argument that the flag is unable to construct New Zealand as distinctive because it is mistaken for Australia's flag. This is problematic because the flag is supposed to display the unique image of the nation, which is important for the identification process and the positive perception of the in-group in comparison to out-groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). The inclusion of this image may also provide insight into a potential motivation for changing the New Zealand flag in terms of increasing recognition in the international context.

Secondly, the flag is shown on a backpack as proposed by Key (2014a), however it is worn by a male standing in front of a waterfall instead of outside a bar. It allows New Zealanders to imagine the design as a symbol of identification (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; Schatz & Lavine, 2007; W. Smith, 2001) and positions the flag as a source of pride that an individual would choose to identify themselves with. Wearing the flag also suggests the relationship the individual has with the nation is significant because they have selected this symbol to signify identification. It also signals the cultural coming of age ritual for young Pākehā New Zealanders of the 'OE', which "helps the individual understand their own nationhood" (C. Bell, 2002, p. 54). The OE allows New Zealanders to return home with a deeper appreciation of the taken-for-granted everyday New Zealand life, and draws upon a do-it-yourself attitude sense of curiosity and adventure (C. Bell, 2002). The selection of this location suggests travelling, exploring the natural environment, and being active outdoors is part of the New Zealand lifestyle. These values continue to construct New Zealand's national identity using distinctive elements of Pākehā identity that emerged as part of the experience of settlers (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003).

"Designer's" description

The "designer's description" in the text offers a subjective interpretation of each design. The designer articulates how the design projects an image of the nation to citizens (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; W. Smith, 1982; Weitman, 1973) and how the flag compresses meaning, which could allow it to function as a symbolic container (Eriksen, 2007). The ability for all five designs to be linked to New Zealand's identity provides space for the expression of shared values, which may establish common ground and as a result, persuade the audience to identify with a proposed alternative (Cheney, 1983). Such an eventuality could also offset some of the public dissatisfaction with the process and change of the current flag. The labelling of this section of text as the "*designer's* description" suggests this description is from an individual's

or regular New Zealanders point of view. The designer, then, comes to represent an individual to whom New Zealanders can identify with, rather than a "Panel" or collective entity that is undefinable and 'detached' from the flag alternatives. Consequently, the public may be more persuaded by the designer's construction of national identity, because the designer is able to offer compelling and convincing arguments, which Petty and Cacioppo (1984) argue permit cognitive processing and positive associations in message recipients.

Admittedly, the designer's description obfuscates the role of the Panel and Secretariat in the "polishing" of the "designer's description" section (Archer as cited in Lin, 2015). Examining the original descriptions submitted to the "designer's description" presented in *5 Alternatives* suggests the Panel constructs a particular version of national identity. For example, the Lockwood description described the colour red as "a prestigious colour to Māori" and white as representing "Aotearoa, 'Land of the Long White Cloud', the Māori name for NZ". The removal of these clauses means the description of the Lockwood designs constructs New Zealand through inclusivity and multiculturalism rather than biculturalism (see pages 54-57) especially given the phrases "our yin and yang" and "binding us all together" have been added to the description of the Silver Fern (Black and white). The description is also adapted to use the adjective "independent" to describe New Zealand, which suggests the Panel intends to construct New Zealand as separate to Britain (see pages 54-55). The initial designer's description for Red Peak described it in terms of the Taniko pattern, representation of land and sky, Rangi and Papa mythology and heritage of the 1902 flag. When Red Peak became part of the first referendum, the first line of the designer's description, "this flag breaks down *multicultural* elements into simple, *shared* forms" (emphasis added) was added. This aligns with the Panel's understanding of national identity as progressive and inclusive, and allowed the description to construct New Zealand beyond the bicultural conceptualisation intended by the designer (see page 56).

The designer's description imbues the flag with meaning. This is unexpected, because the symbolism of a national flag is not considered inherent to the design, but rather is understood and learned over time (Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982). Eriksen (2007) contends that the flag "must be as empty a vessel as possible; it ought to be possible to fill it with many things" (p.6), because association with particular values is likely to be divisive. By providing a dominant reading of the flag (S. Hall, 1980), the text privileges the interpretation and intention of the designer over any personal interpretation of the flag. Not only does this afford the designer power in the construction of New Zealand's national identity, it also could create disidentification (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001) among the public who disagree with the version of national identity disseminated in this portion of the text. Presenting a single way to view the flag could be problematic because the alternative flag selected is intended to function as a collective symbol that assists in identifying with the nation (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). The

analysis of the designer's description suggests the power to define New Zealand identity does not rest with the citizens and their experiences, but with the Panel and the designer.

The difference between the "official" and "designer's" descriptions is also constructed through the shift in tone. The text is neutral in the official description and emotive in the designers' descriptions, which also uses the possessive adjective "our" to construct New Zealand as a collective group. Throughout the text "our" is used to describe "*our* nation", "*our* clear atmosphere" "*our* geographic location", "*our* islands", "*our* land, light and position" and "*our* uniqueness as Aotearoa New Zealand" (emphasis added). The descriptions refer to uncontroversial and attractive elements of the collective group, which can be claimed as belonging to all New Zealanders to construct an "imagined political community" (Anderson, 1991, p. 6) and establish common ground (Cheney, 1983). According to Cheney (1983), the use of "our" is a powerful lexical tool as it can be used to marry the interests of dissimilar groups by persuading those who want to belong to the collective to alter their understandings to those offered by the author. In this instance, "our" suggests the nation and elements of New Zealand belong to New Zealanders, which fosters feelings of unity and inclusion.

The designer's description echoes the official description through the use of the declarative and present tense. This allows the meaning of the elements to be authoritatively asserted as facts to show definitively how the flag is symbolic and represents New Zealand (Fairclough, 1992). The meaning asserted by the designer's descriptions will be explored through the following elements of the alternative flag designs: silver fern, natural imagery, Southern Cross, Māori patterns and the colour red.

Silver fern

The text asserts the silver fern is an established image of New Zealand and is symbolic of national identity. The Silver Fern (Black & White) description reads "the fern has been a distinctive symbol of New Zealand for the past 100 years" and "represents our uniqueness as Aotearoa New Zealand". The Lockwood designs include the comment "The silver fern: A New Zealand icon for over 160 years, worn proudly many generations". These truth statements draw on members' resources in terms of knowledge of "social worlds they inhabit, values, beliefs, assumptions" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 244). In this case, the silver fern holds cultural meaning for New Zealanders due to its development and use as a national symbol and promotional image of New Zealand[8]. It is also used as the logo for national sports team, particularly the All Blacks[9].

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[8] The silver fern is the common name for a species of medium-sized tree fern, the cyathea dealbata, which has a silver-white underside and is endemic to New Zealand. It was a main, unique feature of New Zealand bush, which led to its adoption as a national symbol of New Zealand in the late nineteenth century. It is used to sell a wide range of New Zealand goods, as a sporting emblem particularly, as the badge for the New Zealand Army beginning in World War I, as part of the New Zealand Coat of Arms in 1956 and on the 1 and 20 cent coins (Florek & Insch, 2008; Wolfe & Barnett, 2001).

The construction of New Zealand via the silver fern capitalises upon the recognition and success of the All Blacks and as a result, continues the conceptualisation as a 'great little sporting nation' (Barclay, 2005; Crawford, 1985; Jackson, 2004). This may be persuasive because sport fosters unity and pride for the nation (Cha, 2009; Hobsbawm, 1992; Polley, 2004; Silk, Andrews & Cole, 2005) but may also lead to disidentification for New Zealanders who do not perceive sport or the fern as positive or distinctive aspects of the nation.

The descriptions encourage New Zealanders to view the fern as a part of the nation's history and heritage through the adverbial phrases of time "for the past 100 years" and "for over 160 years". The emphasis on the length of time the silver fern has been used to reflect New Zealand justifies its inclusion on the flag and implies that New Zealanders have an existing connection to it. The use of the adverb "proudly" enhances the notion that the silver fern already functions emotively and activates a sense of national pride to persuade the reader to view the silver fern as the natural choice for the national flag. The way the silver fern is positioned in the description emphasises how the national flag should be an image New Zealanders choose to identify themselves and is an outward expression of pride and identity.

The presence of the silver fern also reflects a continued reliance on Pākehā symbols (C. Bell, 1996; Mulholland, 2010, 2011) because it is part of Kiwiana and became a national symbol when New Zealand was a settler society (Florek & Insch, 2008; Wolfe & Barnett, 2001). Perpetuating a construction of national identity from a Pākehā perspective does not overcome the issue of the invisibility of Māori in the flag (Fox, 2011). This means that a new national flag may not address the issues of the past, as it would be expected in this process. The inclusion of three silver fern based flags also suggests the influence of John Key who publicly asserted his preference for the fern when he introduced the notion of changing the flag in March 2014 (Key, 2014a). This undermines the Panel's construction of independence from the state and its ability to reflect public sphere principles (Habermas, 1962/1989).

The silver fern is also used as a metaphor for the nation. Metaphors construct reality in a particular way and as a result "structure the way we think and the way we act, and our systems of knowledge and belief" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 194). The appearance of the fern is used to construct the nation as inclusive and unified. The statements, "softly curved spine of the frond *binding us all together* as a young, independent and proud nation", "a single fern spreading upwards represents *we are all one people growing onward* into the future" and "the multiple points of the fern leaf *represent* Aotearoa's peaceful multicultural society" (emphasis added) are metaphors positioning New Zealand as inclusive of cultural diversity. These three statements

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[9] The All Blacks began using the fern as their logo in 1887 and the Silver Fern All Blacks logo was registered as a trademark in 1986. The Rugby Union indicated to the Panel they were unlikely to grant permission for its use in the flag, although it was featured in 370 submissions.

will be examined individually in terms of how the metaphor constructs national identity. Firstly, three adjectives "young, independent and proud" are used to emphasise positive distinctiveness in comparison to other nations or out-groups to discursively construct New Zealand's identity (Wodak et al., 2009) and produce positive self-enhancement through affirmation. The freedom and flexibility of being "young" are attractive values, which could be expressed through the changing of the flag. The nation is also defined as "independent", which highlights how New Zealand is no longer a colony or dominion of Britain. It could suggest the flag should be changed to reflect the sovereignty of New Zealand and could subtly suggest the inclusion of the Union Jack is unnecessary. The use of the word "proud" can also be considered a persuasive, constructive strategy where positive values are explicitly highlighted to encourage identification (Wodak et al., 2009).

The construction of New Zealand as unified and inclusive through the silver fern metaphor can be examined through the intertextuality of the phrase "we are all one people". At the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, William Hobson said to the rangitaria "he iwi tahi tatou", which was translated as "now *we are all one people*" (McHugh, 1991). The translation was subsequently adopted by leaders at Waitangi anniversary ceremonies (Sorrenson, 1998), but has also become embedded with negative perceptions of race relations. That is, a belief in the unified nation of New Zealand relied upon and hid the domination of Pākehā over Māori (Walker, 2004) and underpinned the assimilation and integration policies that were implemented until the 1970s (Sorrenson, 1998, Walker, 2004). In 2004 "we are all one people" re-entered public discourse in Don Brash's Orewa address (Brash, 2004), which brought with it an outdated, assimilationist construction of New Zealand (Mikaere, 2004). It connected the belief held by Pākehā that Māori receive unfair, preferential treatment especially in terms of resource distribution (Johasson, 2004; McCreanor, 2005; McHugh, 1991), which does not align with the 'one people' conception of New Zealand. Therefore, the *5 Alternatives* text goes against Metge's (2010) advice that the phrase should no longer be used for political purposes. The use of the phrase in the text can be considered a modern iteration of the 'one people' ideology, which seeks to reinforce common values and belonging to New Zealand. This may also marginalise the contributions and needs of Māori and ethnic minorities.

The silver fern metaphor also constructs national identity as developing and progressing from the past. New Zealand is "*growing* onward into the future". Growth can be considered a "profoundly naturalized" metaphor (Fairclough, 1992, p. 195) because of its common use to describe human, cultural and national "growth" (Nisbet, 2009), "growth" in social change (Leary, 1990) and economic "growth" (White, 2003). The growth metaphor allows progression to be understood more holistically rather than through individual events or acts (Nisbet, 1970). Positioning New Zealand as progressing forward justifies a change in the national symbol as

part of representing and constructing New Zealand in a new era. It also allows the text to suggest that New Zealand and New Zealanders are experiencing progress and "growth", and this is advancing in the right direction. This is echoed in another truth statement in the text: "the fern is an element of indigenous flora representing the *growth of our nation"* (emphasis added). The notion of cultural, social and economic progress is constructed as a reality in the text, which may be considered a positive attribute although no evidence or explanation is provided.

The assertion that the silver fern is also "an element of *indigenous* flora" evokes a sense of belonging and historical connection to the land. Māori are considered as indigenous as a way to "refer to the particular status of peoples who occupied a territory at the time of colonization" and continue to have a connection to the place (A. Bell, 2014, p. 8). The recognition of the indigeneity of "flora" rather than Māori draws attention to the absence of acknowledgement of Māori within the construction of New Zealand's identity in the Lockwood designs descriptions. This feeds into the construction of New Zealand as 'one people'. The absence of Māori as a significant group in New Zealand is consequential because the flag tells stories, which define the nation (W. Smith, 2001). It is also surprising because Fox (2011) and Mulholland (2011) presented the invisibility of Māori in symbols and the dominance of Pākehā in national symbols as justification for changing the flag.

Finally, the silver fern metaphor is used to construct New Zealand as "multicultural" fostering an image of inclusivity, which also addresses the cultural diversity of New Zealand. Ward and Lin (2005) consider New Zealand to have "de facto multiculturalism" because of New Zealand's cultural diversity as indicated by the 2013 Census. Embedding the value of multiculturalism in the flag design shows how the national symbol could "serve as a basis for identification for a sprawling and diverse citizenship" (Eriksen, 2007, p. 4) and exemplifies how the flag authenticates boundaries of who belongs to the nation and who does not (Eriksen, 2007; Schatz & Lavine, 2007). This overcomes the potential barriers for identification with the nation currently because the national flag constructs New Zealand from a Pākehā and colonial perspective. The design projects multiculturalism as a value and attribute that the nation wishes for citizens and those outside the nation to associate with them (Weitman, 1973). Framing New Zealand through multiculturalism is a new conceptualisation of national identity for New Zealand, which could serve to justify the reason for changing the national symbol.

The conceptualisation of New Zealand as multicultural is echoed in the descriptions of Red Peak and Silver Fern (Black & White). The description of Red Peak reads "this flag breaks down *multicultural* elements into simple, shared forms" (emphasis added). The description proposes a wide range of New Zealanders can identify with the flag because the "elements" will hold different meanings for different people. It also reinforces the way cultural diversity can

come together in the "shared" national construct. Silver Fern (Black & White) refers to multiculturalism indirectly through proposing the black and white colours of the design "show our *yin and yang*". "Yin and yang" is a concept from Chinese philosophy, which proposes everything is shaped by the integration of two opposite but complementary energies, yin and yang[10]. It may have been included in the description to allude to the way that New Zealand society includes values and practices from other cultures, like Chinese. The comparison can be understood in terms of the visual similarity to the yin and yang symbol, although this is not a commonly used phrase in New Zealand. The notion of two complementary elements existing in perfect harmony could refer to the relationship between Māori and Pākehā, which constructs New Zealand through bicultural ideology (a point which will be discussed in the analysis further on). The lack of grounding of the "yin and yang" concept has in New Zealand culture could suggest it is a tokenistic reference to multiculturalism due to the other elements of the description, which point to biculturalism.

The construction of New Zealand as multicultural in four of the five descriptions has political and ideological implications. Multiculturalism expresses more than openness to cultural diversity as the text infers, because it refers to a formal framework that allows for equal participation of minorities (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). New Zealand has not officially endorsed multiculturalism (Bedford et al., 2000; Pearson, 2005) and yet the descriptions promote the adoption of a national flag that will construct the nation in this way. This has implications for biculturalism because it reduces the status of Māori as indigenous people (Bromell, 2008; Marotta, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2007) and is used to avoid fulfilling obligations to Māori (Walker 2004). For some New Zealanders, such a framing could be perceived favourably because bicultural discourse is critiqued for privileging Māori (Barclay, 2005). Constructing New Zealand as a multicultural society through the flag seeks to move New Zealand beyond the official bicultural framework and suggests this can be positioned in the past.

The inclusive construction of New Zealand through the descriptions of the silver fern is enhanced through the use of pronouns "we" and "us", which can also be considered as part of persuasion. "We" is employed persuasively in the discursive construction of national identity to activate a sense of national solidarity and sense of unity as a "national we" (de Cillia et al., 1999). In addition "we" allows the text to speak on behalf of the collective group (Cheney, 1983; Fairclough, 1992). The use of "we" is often unnoticed, which allows for an organisation to "present similarity or commonality among organizational members as take-for-granted assumption" (Cheney, 1983, p. 154). In this case, the text speaks on behalf of New Zealanders

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[10] Yin represents the female elements of the "moon, night, water, weakness, darkness, mystery, softness and passivity' and yang represents the male elements of the 'sun, day, fire, strength, brightness, clearness, hardness, and activity" (Fang, 2005, p. 76). It is visually depicted through a circle, which is equally divided into black (yin) and white (yang) areas by a curved line, and each half features a dot of the opposite colour. The dots represent the coexistence and unity of opposites, which together form the whole.

to assert "all" New Zealanders feel they belong to the inclusive nation. Constructing New Zealand as unified draws upon the value of egalitarianism that has been embedded in national identity (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Rae, 2011; Sibley & Liu, 2007; Sibley et al., 2011b) and continues the narrative that New Zealand's development is built on the democratic ideals of freedom and equality (Liu, 2005). The description of the fern also constructs New Zealand following the dominant discourse of Māori/ Pākehā relations where harmony is achieved through favouring national unity and burying "actual diversity under a single political entity" (McCreanor, 2005, p. 59). The construction of unity minimises differences between groups to promote identification with the nation, which is problematic because it suggests assimilation is favourable.

The silver fern is also used to construct New Zealand as a brand because the "credit for the fern goes to The New Zealand Way Limited" in the Silver Fern (Black & White) description. Tourism New Zealand and New Zealand Trade and Enterprise established New Zealand Way Limited in 1995 as part of the strategy to project a unified image of New Zealand to global markets (Kent & Walker, 2000). Accordingly, NZ FernMark[11] was designed to be a distinctive visual representation of Brand New Zealand, capitalising on the recognition of the silver fern particularly in relation to the All Blacks (Florek & Insch, 2008). The statement in the designer's description reveals how the silver fern design is based on a registered trademark and is emphasised by the word "credit". In other words, an image developed for commercial gain and guided by commercial logic has entered into a space for citizens to discuss national identity. The use of a commercial trademark reflects an intensification of blurring between national identity and national brand to the extent that a logo could also function as the national flag. The selection of this flag by the Panel could connect to the need to construct New Zealand as an iconic brand and capitalise on the commercial value of national identity, which is not unexpected given New Zealand has engaged in nation branding for economic purposes since the late 1990s (Dürr, 2008). Nevertheless, the inclusion of the trademark is further evidence of how New Zealand is part of a shift to develop and redevelop national identity into a national brand for commercial gain (Aronczyk, 2007; Jansen, 2008).

Natural imagery

The construction of New Zealand as a brand is also evoked through vocabulary choices, particularly those that are snatches from the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign. Such evidence of intertextuality is observed in the inclusion of the word choices italicized within the following

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[11] NZ FernMark is a stylised black and white fern. It is licensed for use on New Zealand companies' products to promote its New Zealand origins and 'leverage this global brand value and awareness' for economic gain. For example, in 2013 Air New Zealand entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with Tourism New Zealand, which allowed them to use the FernMark as the livery on aircrafts. It is used by New Zealand Government organisations including Tourism New Zealand and government owned entities.

sections of designer's descriptions: "the *bright blue* represents our *clear* atmosphere and *Pacific Ocean*", "our geographic location in the *antipodes*", *"peaceful* multicultural society", "the collision of two tectonic plates which form the *Southern Alps*", "a *landscape* of *red earth* and *black sky*", "the *uniqueness* of our *land*, *light* and *position*". These descriptions embody the construction of clean, young, beautiful New Zealand developed in the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign, which launched in 1999 (Morgan et al., 2002). It intentionally projected to a global market a single image of New Zealand as an unaffected paradise with natural beauty. The word choices indicate an adoption of ideas that were developed for commercial purposes using marketing techniques to develop and promote a particular version of national identity (Aronczyk, 2008; Jansen, 2008; Skilling, 2010). Jansen (2008) argues the national brand is a "reductive form of communication that is intended to privilege one message" (p. 134), which is problematic considering the national symbol should condense a number of ideas and values of the nation (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982; Weitman, 1973). This design suggests aspects of Brand New Zealand have been internalised as part of national identity.

The construction of national identity using words and phrases that are part of the 100% Pure Campaign could have implications for identification. Dürr (2008) found national identity was reinforced and legitimated by the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign for Pākehā. The campaign allowed contestations over land, deprivation and racism to be hidden, and for cultural hegemony to be reinforced. According to Dürr (2008), the campaign had the unintentional implication of reflecting and accepting a Pākehā perspective, which obscures more difficult social realities and impedes critical reflection. Furthermore the myth of 'clean, green and beautiful' disguises the reality of pollution and the economic reliance on agriculture and forestry industries, water and landscape abuse, erosion and the widespread use of pesticides (C. Bell, 1996). The inaccurate construction of New Zealand may create identification issues, although New Zealanders have a "tendency to deny or ignore environmental problems" (C. Bell, 1996, p. 53). Alternatively, this construction may produce disidentification for New Zealanders whose everyday life does not involve the natural environment, such as those living in cities, and they may not perceive this as an authentic construction of national identity.

Southern Cross

The Southern Cross is depicted in the texts as a "navigational aid for centuries", which "helped guide early settlers to our islands". The past is constructed as a common, unifying experience as all early arrivals to New Zealand journeyed over the Pacific Ocean using the stars to navigate. This is significant because national symbols reflect the dominant and official version of national history (Elgenius, 2011). Here, the adverbial phrase of time "for centuries" allows the nation to be constructed through positive continuity (Wodak et al., 2009) to emphasise New Zealanders

existing connection to the constellation. However, the dominant and official version of history emerges by the inclusion of "early settlers", because this wording commonly refers to the Europeans who immigrated to New Zealand. A. Bell (2014) contends the label 'settler' hides the "harsh violence of colonial invasions of indigenous homelands" (p. 7) because the 'settler' imposed physical, legal and symbolic violence over the indigenous people. This suggests that the use of "early settlers" brings with it the implied reading of history, that the arrival of Europeans is justifiable action because of the way this phrase allows the "harsh violence" that ensued to be obfuscated. It is also possible that "early settlers" refers to Māori arriving to the islands from Polynesia or to Chinese immigration because the text also states *"all* New Zealanders" arrived via the Pacific Ocean. This may then reinforce the inclusive discourse of the text where the common experiences are emphasised and the differences between cultural groups are not discussed. For example, the way Europeans arrived and settled differs from the Chinese who arrived in New Zealand in the 1860s and suffered social discrimination exemplified through the poll tax and permit system intended to limit immigration (Ip & Pang, 2005). Instead, the text encourages the perception of New Zealand as unified through the stories the text includes.

The description of the Southern Cross does not acknowledge that it is part of the current New Zealand flag. The decision not to reference the current flag may have been made to ensure it was addressed as a new symbol and could be viewed as distinctive and unique. The presence of the Southern Cross on both the Australian and New Zealand flag is used as part of the argument to change the flag to make it more visually distinctive (Barnett & Wolfe, 1989). The Panel's decision to select two flags featuring the Southern Cross implies that it is still viewed as representative of the nation and, in fact, the change from the current flag is driven more by the inclusion of the Union Jack. In comparison Red Peak describes how the chevron is "an iteration of elements of the tip of the stars from *our* existing flags". The text does not try to construct distance through *"the* existing flags" but draws upon the current flag design to show how Red Peak is a continuation of New Zealand's history.

Māori patterns

The two alternative flags that do not feature the silver fern use Māori patterns in their designs. The chevron pattern in Red Peak is inspired by *"Māori* weaving *taniko*[12] patterns" because the design uses the chevron motif and the colours, which were predominantly used in original weave designs (Mead, 1952). The Koru alternative flag draws upon *"Māori kowhaiwhai*[13]

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[12] Taniko refers to a unique method of weaving used to create colourful, geometric patterns on the borders of the cloaks (Te Kanawa, 2014). The designs express history, ideas and values and were part of Māori culture prior to the arrival of Europeans (Mead, 1952; Te Kanawa, 2014).
[13] Kowhaiwhai is a system of thin interweaving koru elements, which represent tribe genealogy through the sequences of patterns (Shand, 2002). It is commonly seen painted on the rafters of tribal meeting houses (Shand, 2002; Thomas, 1995).

patterns" where "the *koru* represent new life, growth, strength and peace" (emphasis added). The text acknowledges the symbolic meaning of the koru[14], which suggests this can be transferred to the construction of New Zealand. The construction of New Zealand as growing, strong and peaceful is in line with other descriptions (see page 55), however in this description it is framed from a Māori perspective. The patterns are part of Māori visual culture, which overcomes the reliance upon Pākehā icons and the critique levelled at the current flag, which is accused of not acknowledging the Treaty of Waitangi (Mulholland, 2011). A Māori perspective is further integrated into the design through using Māori mythology to assert the symbolic reason for the colours in Red Peak. The colours "reference the story of *Rangi* and *Papa*, a creation myth in *Māori* mythology". Walker (2004) considers the creation story[15] to be part of the mythological origins of Māori society, and its inclusion in the flag allows Māori mythology to be considered part of New Zealand's origins rather than relying upon the dominant 'early settlers' narrative. This is significant because "most national flags tell stories about the country's origins and events that define the nation" (W. Smith, 2001, p. 5).

The assertion of meaning through Māori patterns and myths constructs New Zealand as a bicultural nation. The flags solidify the official adoption of biculturalism and change in national identity in the 1970s, which challenged the 'one people' ideologies through acknowledging Māori as a significant, indigenous group (Fox, 2011; O'Sullivan, 2007; Pearson, 2000; Williams, 2001). This is significant because the primary purpose of the flag is to inform members of the feelings and attitudes they should have toward the nation (Weitman, 1973). The incorporation of Māori is important in addressing what Fox (2011, p. 9) dubs as "virtual invisibility" within national symbols and recognises the shift in national identity.

The use of te reo Māori within the Red Peak and Koru descriptions reinforce the construction of national identity incorporating Māori culture. The use of this official language provides "access to a Māori world view that currently struggles to be heard and understood" (Rankine et al., 2009, p. 187). The use of te reo Māori was restricted during colonisation in the education system and English was commonly used in justice, health and commerce (Rankine, Barnes, Borell, Kaiwai, Nairn, McCreanor & Gregory, 2009). The Māori Language Act 1987, following the advent of the Waitangi Tribunal, officially recognised the language as taonga, and as an official language. The inclusion of te reo Māori in the text suggests a commitment to biculturalism especially in the way "Aotearoa" is used to label the nation in four descriptions. The use of Aotearoa in conjunction with New Zealand has become part of the official, symbolic

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[14] Koru refers to a spiral motif of a fern frond unfurling that features in *kōwhaiwhai* patterns and carving, which symbolises creation (Florek & Insch, 2008; Royal, 2013).
[15] The creation story is based on Rangi, the sky and father, and Papa, the earth and mother, being separated from lying next to each other by their children to create light in the world (National Library, 1963). It was written by Wii Maaihi Te Rangi-kaheke in 1849 and presents a Māori view of the universe where everything began with Rangi and Papa (Shirres, 1982).

expression of biculturalism after the 1970s (Doerr, 2009; Pearson, 2000; Sissons, 1993) although New Zealand is the sole official name[16]. However, the inclusion of te reo Māori could be considered part of the tension of constructing New Zealand biculturally and being tokenistic (Sissons, 1993). Therefore, the symbolic use of Māori culture can be viewed as cultural appropriation, which is when an object or design from a culture is employed for the purposes of another. Shand (2002) considers this to be part of the on-going process of colonisation. The alternative designs could be perceived as borrowing from Māori culture in a superficial way to construct New Zealand. The designs used in the alternative flags, koru and kowhaiwhai have been adopted by Pākehā since the late nineteenth century for commercial and national identity purposes, which has reduced the meaning and history of these two elements of Māori culture simply to a design pattern (Barker, 2012; Royal, 2013; Shand, 2002; Thomas, 1995). It may reflect another level of colonisation where Māori culture is assimilated into the Pākehā mainstream for nation building and identification purposes.

The construction of New Zealand as bicultural may also have implications for identification. Biculturalism is critiqued because it excludes non-British and non-Māori New Zealanders from being part of national identity (Bromell, 2008; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Thakur, 1995). If the embedded meaning within these two flags relates to Māori and Pākehā as social groups within New Zealand, this could position those outside of these groups as out-groups. The national flag triggers identification with the nation (Schatz & Lavine, (2007) and consequently needs to address all members of the population (Eriksen, 2007; Kølsto, 2006). In Red Peak the description refers to New Zealand as multicultural as well as using Māori words and concepts, which suggest acknowledgement of Māori as indigenous people is not incompatible with multiculturalism. Ward and Lin (2005) consider the tension between multiculturalism and biculturalism as unnecessary and artificial, arguing there is no evidence to suggest they are competing or mutually exclusive frameworks.

The comparison of the visual design of a koru to other natural elements within New Zealand could also be used as a way to overcome the limitation of constructing New Zealand biculturally. The koru is "also reminiscent of a wave, a cloud and a ram's horn" and the word choices can be understood contextually as relating to different aspects of identity. Instead of prescribing one meaning into the koru, this approach celebrates how the element can be interpreted in different ways and this could encourage more individuals to see themselves reflected in the design. It suggests that this flag alternative is valuable because of such inclusivity and the way the flag can activate identification for the population who are not considered to be a homogenous group.

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[16] The name Aotearoa emerged after the arrival of Europeans through the myth of Kupe discovering New Zealand. According to the story, Kupe saw a cloud looming over the land, so named it Aotearoa, 'land of the long white cloud' (Wilson, 1966). This story has become part of New Zealand culture and internalised by Māori (King, 2003).

The "wave" can be considered a representation of New Zealand as an island and allude to New Zealanders relationship to the beach. The beach became an important national symbol during the twentieth century (Barker, 2012) and is considered to embody the kiwi dream of freedom, relaxation and escape (Phillips, 2015). Through linking to this way of life and common experience, the designer may create common ground with readers (Cheney, 1983). The "cloud" can be interpreted as referencing 'the land of the long white cloud', which allows for the acknowledgment of Māori culture as a defining feature of New Zealand. The "ram's horn" connects to New Zealand's identity and history as an agricultural nation. Sheep farming has played a significant role in the development of New Zealand's economy and New Zealand is one of the largest exporters of meat and wool globally (Stringleman & Peden, 2016). Sheep are a symbol of New Zealand, which can be traced back to New Zealanders construction of identity as pioneering farmers (Barker, 2012). The reference to this part of New Zealand's identity and culture allows for the history of settlers and Pākehā communities to be incorporated as part of the flag.

Red colour

The power held by the Panel to select the alternative flag designs is highlighted visually through the inclusion of two designs by the same designer, which are almost identical. The Lockwood flags are the same design in different colour schemes. This is emphasised in the descriptions with the only statement that differs addressing one of the background colours. In Silver Fern (Red, Blue and White) the red colour "represents our heritage and sacrifices made", whereas the colour black is not addressed at all in Silver Fern (Black, Blue and White). Therefore, Burrows' (2016b) statement that accompanied the release of the alternative designs is undermined because the Lockwood flag options do not seem to communicate something different to different people, given their marked similarities. The Panel's decision to include two very similar designs limits the options available for New Zealanders, which may suggest there is a preference towards this design. This is problematic considering the Panel's neutral, facilitator position and the democratic ideals associated with the entire process.

The description of the colour red alludes to New Zealand's contribution in wars and is accompanied by word choices such as "sacrifices made". It also draws attention to the way the flag can evoke an emotional response because it stands for the nation (Eriksen, 2007; Knowlton, 2012). This is evident especially during times of war because according to Firth (1973), a soldier "loses sight of the fact that the flag is only a sign, and that it has no value in itself, but only brings to mind the reality that it represents; it is treated as if it were the reality itself" (p. 339). Accordingly, the flag is connected to sacrifice for the nation and holds rich emotional connotations. It also seeks to persuade the public that changing the flag does not mean losing

that heritage and the sacrifice of the past because it is incorporated within the new design. As a result, the description may attempt to capitalise and include the argument against changing the flag because forces served and died under the flag (Royal New Zealand Returned Services Association, 2015), through showing another flag design addressing this heritage. New Zealanders could interpret this as exploiting the sacrifice and connection to war to position the Lockwood flag favourably.

Conclusion

The Panel demonstrates their power in *5 Alternatives* as the text categorically asserts a single perspective of each alternative flag in the official description, which is carried over into the construction of national identity in the designer's description. *5 Alternatives* informs New Zealanders how they should perceive the symbolic meaning of each flag, which could align with their perception of national identity or cause disidentification with the nation, based on what aspects of national identity have been drawn upon. In *5 Alternatives* because there were five designs by four different designers, there was an opportunity for differing constructions of national identity to be expressed. Although this was evident with two designs using Maori patterns and concepts, which signalled a bicultural construction, overall, similar aspects of New Zealand's national identity were consistently used. New Zealand is conceptualised in terms of inclusivity and unity, multiculturalism, peacefulness, natural beauty following the 100% Pure New Zealand campaign and possessing common history and experiences. Although the Panel is described as impartial and maintain they produce unbiased communication, *5 Alternatives* positions the three silver fern flags more favourably due to the rich descriptions, consistent labelling of elements, multiple meanings given to the silver fern and clearly showing how New Zealanders can identify with the nation through the design.

Chapter 6

Analysis of Our nation. Your choice.

The second text under examination is *Our nation. Your choice.* composed by the Flag Consideration Panel and released before the second referendum It compares the current New Zealand flag with the preferred alternative flag, the silver fern flag by Kyle Lockwood. The textual analysis that follows uses Fairclough's (1992) categories of text structure, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary to explore how the descriptions of the two flags and the most commonly expressed views, construct New Zealand national identity and connect the flag to the nation. Because the silver fern flag was also discussed in the *5 Alternatives* text, there will be some overlap in content.

6.1 Framing of the Flag Consideration Project

Heading

The heading of the text, "Our nation. Your choice." sets up the purpose of the text, second referendum and entire Flag Consideration Project. The possessive adjective "our" constructs the nation as collectively belonging to New Zealanders, which suggests it is an inclusive social group. The text is designed to address New Zealanders and proposes the decision about the flag is significant because of its connection to "our nation". The possessive adjective "your" also implicates New Zealanders as determining the outcome of the referendum, which refers to its binding nature. On one level "your" directly addresses the individual reading the text as part of the collective group and as such is an individual call to action. This can be considered a persuasive tool because it may allow the text and second referendum to become more personally relevant (Greenwald, 1968; Petty & Cacioppo, 1984), which in turn may encourage New Zealanders to participate. "You" and "your" are used strategically within political communication to increase the involvement of the audience and effectiveness of messages (Bull & Fetzer, 2006). At another level, "your" refers to the collective social group of New Zealand and communicates the collective responsibility of the nation. This reinforces the way the Flag Consideration Project draws upon democratic ideals of public voting and participation (Dahl, 1998; Held, 2006) because the "choice" of flag is the responsibility of the New Zealand public. It can also be interpreted as each individual being responsible for the collective of "our nation".

The heading cements the role of the public in the decision-making process because "your choice" will affect "our nation".

The word "our" is also repeated throughout the description of the silver fern flag, which is an instance of lexical cohesion (Fairclough, 1992). The silver fern flag descriptions use "our" to emphasise how elements of the design are connected to and represent "*our* many achievements", "*our* history and identity", "*our* diverse communities', "*our* clear skies" and "*our* location" (emphasis added). It fosters a sense of unity and pride because the population can claim these positive aspects of New Zealand as part of their collective national identity. This can be considered a constructive strategy where there is an emphasis on similarity (Wodak et al., 2009), which may encourage the perception of collective belonging and bonds. It also emphasises aspects of social identity that can be considered unique and distinctive, which may assist New Zealanders positive evaluation of the nation and increase the value of the social identity to the individual (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). The positive aspects of New Zealand may also establish common ground (Cheney, 1983), which creates an understanding that New Zealanders are subtly forced to embrace these parts of the group identity in order to belong. The repetitive use of "our" links the elements together to suggest the silver fern flag is reflective of "our" nation, which may infer it should be selected to represent the nation as a national symbol. In comparison "our" is used once in the descriptions of the current New Zealand flag to link the Southern Cross to "*our* location". The lack of "our" subtly positions the reader to see the silver fern flag as more connected to New Zealand, which suggests the Panel, either consciously or unconsciously has constructed the silver fern flag in a more favourable light. The silver fern flag is positioned under "our nation", which establishes a visual connection between the inclusive construction of New Zealand and this particular flag.

The language used in the heading is indicative of the text's conversational, informal language. This allows the Panel to relate to New Zealanders, which is appropriate for the laid-back New Zealand culture (Gilbertson, 2008). It also fosters an image of the Panel encouraging democratic participation because the tone does not overtly establish unequal power relations or the Panel as authoritative in the Flag Consideration Project. In addition, it is in keeping with the New Zealand Government style guide, which states they write in a straightforward, human, and impartial tone to make their work as simple and as clear as possible (Crown, 2016a). This is reflected in their use of plain, familiar language and use of 'you' to address the reader. The direct address of the reader as "you" is considered by Fairclough (1992) as a marker of informality.

Subheading

The subheading of the text elaborates on the significance of participation in the second referendum and Flag Consideration Project, which reinforces the purpose of the text is to aid the decision-making process. The New Zealand public is described as "the people of New Zealand" instead of "we" which would echo the headings use of "our nation". The shift in address to third person as the "people of New Zealand" can be considered part of public speech and addresses New Zealanders as citizens alluding to their role within the voting process. Marshall (1950/2006) outlines three elements of citizenship in terms of civil (rights for individual freedom such as freedom of expression, thought and faith), political (right to participate in exercise of political power) and social (right to live in society according to standards). The text positions the Flag Consideration Project as a way for citizens to exercise their rights through expressing values about national identity and voting in the referenda. It suggests the responsibility for the outcome lies with "the people of New Zealand", as it is the citizens who will "decide the future of *our* flag", and the possessive adjective is used to communicate the flag as belonging to the nation. The shift in language in this sentence could also be interpreted as a threat because the future of "our flag" will be the result of citizens' participation. The voter turnout in the first referendum was 48.78% (Electoral Commission, 2015c) and the direct address may encourage those who did not participate in the first referendum to participate in the second. A lack of engagement in the referendum would undermine the democratic potential of the process because the outcome would not be reflective of the general population. It could also have implications for the overall perception of the project as a waste of time and money because low voting turnout suggests lack of interest.

As Fairclough (1992) states, analysis of word choices allows for the identification of "interpretative perspective that underlies this wording" (p. 237). The adjectives used in conjunction with "flag" change in the text to privilege the silver fern flag. For instance, the statement "we shouldn't have another country's flag on *our flag*" (emphasis added) emphasises the argument for why the silver fern flag should be selected because, unlike the current flag, the silver fern is conceptualised as being a more accurate national symbol for representing the nation. Additionally, the preferred alternative flag is not labelled as the "preferred alternative" but as "*silver fern* flag" and "a *uniquely New Zealand* flag", which attaches positive characteristics to it. Comparatively, the current New Zealand flag is referred to as "*current New Zealand* flag", "*current* flag", "*the* flag", twice as "*this* flag" and twice as "it". The use of the definite article "the" and the impersonal pronoun "it" is more neutral than the possessive adjective "our", and creates distance between the flag and individual. "This" is a demonstrative adjective, which allows it to be specific and refer to the current flag but does not communicate belonging in the same way as "our". Thus, the word choices construct the silver fern flag in a more favourable light than the current flag. This may foster a positive impression and function

as a positive cue that goes unnoticed, but may persuade readers to vote for the silver fern flag following the peripheral route of persuasion outlined by Petty and Cacioppo (1984).

Comparison infographic text type

Analysis of the "large-scale organisational properties of the text" focus on the way the text draws upon conventions of genre (Fairclough, 1992, p. 75). The text draws upon the conventions of the infographic where there is a visual representation of information through the combination of textual and visual features. This text type provides a visualisation of data to communicate in a clearer, more efficient way to assist the cognition of the information (Lankow, Ritchie & Crooks, 2012; Siricharoen & Siricharoen, 2015). The combination of language and image affects the reading of the text (Fairclough, 1992). It could allow individuals to grasp the differences between the flags with ease, which fulfils the text's purpose of informing the public to assist in decision-making.

The text uses a visual illustration of each flag, which is surrounded by four descriptions that correspond to the element of design. For example, the background on the left side of the silver fern flag is black, and the text box in the upper left corner addresses "the black" element of the design. The visualisation of this information clarifies how the design element has meaning. This also allows the Panel to construct meaning about the flag on behalf of the citizens and visually establishes their meaning as factual, which undermines the ability for the individual to read the flag differently. Cook (2013) proposes infographics are a valuable communication medium because they also encourage reflection rather than reaction to information. The layout provides information about each flag, which is used by the reader to construct a narrative of each flag individually and together. However as will be discussed, the limited impartiality of the text encourages the silver fern flag to be viewed more favourably, and may reflect the Panel attempting to construct a narrative about the flags for New Zealanders.

The text is specifically a comparison infographic, which provides a side-by-side comparison of the flags to illustrate similarities, differences, advantages and disadvantages (Chibana, 2015; Crane, 2016; McGuire, 2015). *Our nation. Your choice.* follows the conventions of the text type using two vertical white lines, and differing background text colours to differentiate the two sides (Crane, 2016; McGuire, 2015). According to Chibana (2016) the comparative infographic requires similar types of data to be used to compare and for data points to be observed on both sides. The text provides four points of comparison through descriptions of elements of each flag, and they are designed to correspond to one another for ease of comparison. This allows the reader to consider the relationship between points in the text and the way the silver fern flag is positioned more favourably through the comparison could be persuasive in decision-making.

6.2 Construction of New Zealand's national identity in the flag descriptions

The four descriptions accompanying each flag use declarative statements to assertively explain the elements of the design. As discussed in the analysis of *5 Alternatives*, the declarative is "categorically authoritative" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 76) and allows the Panel to exert power in the text to construct truth statements about the flags. The declarative is used to state the meaning of each element, which again suggests there is a preferred reading of each flag (S. Hall, 1980). The authoritative establishment of how the flag represents the nation does not allow it to function as an empty vessel, which citizens can fill with meanings as Eriksen (2007) proposes. It does not allow meaning to be attributed to the flag over time as would be expected (Kølsto, 2006), which could have implications for the identification process for individuals where the flag is used to activate national identity (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). The inclusion of descriptions that assert the meaning of each element allow the silver fern flag to be positioned as a viable and legitimate option, which may be necessary because the current New Zealand flag is part of New Zealand's banal nationalism, so the way it fits with national identity may already be recognised. The meanings asserted in the descriptions will be unpacked, which will highlight the way the declarative statements solidify how the flag relates or does not relate to New Zealand's national identity.

Colour black in the silver fern flag

In the description of the silver fern flag the Panel asserts that "...black *has become* recognised *as* a national colour and *is* associated with our many achievements internationally" (emphasis added). The Panel constructs a truth claim that the colour is part of the nation, using the adjective "national", to explicitly connect it to the collective group of the nation. Such a claim is supported by the Department of the Prime Minister (n.d.), who identifies black as one of New Zealand's three national colours. Within the text "black" carries meanings due to the wider social processes and context that the word exists within (Fairclough, 1992). For instance, black is part of the national sporting identity as the team colour is included in the team name of the All *Blacks*[17]*, Black* Caps, Tall *Blacks, Black* Sticks Men and Women, *Black* Magic, *Black* Ferns, *Black* Fins, *Black* Sox, Diamond*blacks* and Ice *Blacks*. In other words, black is a valuable way to conceptualise New Zealand because it connects to "our many achievements internationally". de Pont (2012) states the colour black "embodies the notion of success with which we as a nation identify" (p. 31) because of the success of athletes, particularly rugby players. The adjective "many" emphasises the number of successes New Zealand has gained on the global scale, which may evoke a sense of national pride if individuals identify with New Zealand as a sporting nation. Aligning with sport is valuable because it continues the perception that New

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[17] Although the New Zealand athletics team first wore black, it acquired national status due to the national rugby team. The black rugby jersey was adopted due to the practicality of the colour and Scotland wearing the preferred dark blue jersey. The jersey led to the name "All Blacks", which was popularised following the 1905 tour to the British Isles (Clarke, 2012).

Zealand is a 'great little sporting nation' and overachieves in this area compared to other nations (Jackson, 2004). This allows for the uniqueness of New Zealand to be articulated in comparison with out-groups to foster a positive sense of identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Furthermore, sport is a key space where individuals overtly express their national identity (Barclay, 2005; Crawford, 1985).

The flag and description also rely upon the cultural capital of the All Blacks. Cultural capital is a form of resource that an individual can draw upon to develop their social status (Bourdieu, 1986/1997). Within a specific context, particular goods, activities, practices and skills acquire value as an expression of taste and status (Holt, 1998). In this case, the All Blacks are a form of cultural capital due to their legacy, reputation and success, and aligning the nation with these favourable values can extend the positive associations of the sport to the country's wider national identity. Rugby is considered a significant part of New Zealand's national identity (Bruce, 2013; Crawford, 1985; Deos, 2014; Jackson, 2004; Jackson & Hokowhitu, 2002) and the All Blacks are commonly linked to national pride. Drawing on "black", and by extension the All Blacks, a positive construction of New Zealand, and particularly the silver fern flag, may emerge.

However, asserting the meaning of black could also have adverse effects. In New Zealand, "black" can encompass a darker side to national psyche (Wolfe & Barnett, 2001), New Zealand's dark fashion, film and creative output, and the strong, hardworking "kiwi bloke" through the cultural icon of the black singlet (Malthus, 2012). The text does not consider these values and connections to black and through using the declarative to assert the meaning of the colour, restricts other interpretations that could allow an individual to identify with the silver fern flag.

Silver fern in the silver fern flag

The description of the silver fern authoritatively asserts how the element "*has been* part of our history and identity for many years and *is* an internationally recognised symbol of New Zealand" (emphasis added). The meaning of the silver fern is defined by its role in nation building and its recognition as a national symbol by those outside of the nation. The silver fern has been used as a national symbol as well as integrated in branding for sporting, commercial and national purposes (Florek & Insch, 2008; Wolfe & Barnett, 2001). The description acknowledges the silver fern is "part of our history and identity", and coupled with the adverbial phrase "for many years", reinforces the way the silver fern is embedded into New Zealand culture. The adverb "internationally" also recognises the silver fern as representative of New Zealand sports teams. Florek and Insch (2008) contend that the value of the silver fern as

national symbol is connected to sport and the national rugby team, which is a source of identity and identification.

Although the Flag Consideration Project is concerned with how the national flag represents New Zealand as a nation, there is an emphasis placed on "international" recognition. This can be understood by the way flag exists within the context of other national flags and expresses meaning beyond the confines of the nation (Cerulo, 1993; Weitman, 1973). For instance, the silver fern is "internationally recognised" because of New Zealand Brand's FernMark, which is projected as the image of New Zealand to global markets to encourage tourism, sell goods or attract investment (Jansen, 2008; Skilling, 2010). The focus on the perception of New Zealand within international markets suggests the national flag needs to represent the national brand rather than national identity. This may limit the ability for the national flag to condense many ideas and values of the nation into a shared, collective symbol (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2005; Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982; Weitman, 1973) for social identification purposes (Schatz & Lavine, 2007). If the national flag encompassed several aspects of national identity, it could provide opportunities for individuals to select values that they perceive to be part of national identity, and allow the flag to activate identification for a range of new Zealanders. However, the national brand does not seek to address the complexity or diversity of the nation because it is focused upon the way the nation can function as a commercially valuable commodity (Jansen, 2008).

As in the previous text, the silver fern description also creates meaning for the fern through its visual appearance. Specifically, the text refers to how the fern's "fronds *represent* our diverse communities coming together" (emphasis added). The Panel constructs New Zealand's diverse cultures and groups as collectively contributing to the nation of New Zealand. It allows the flag to authenticate boundaries of who belongs to the nation and who does not (Eriksen, 2007; Schatz & Lavine, 2007) and suggests the flag could allow for identification among a diverse population (Eriksen, 2007). The nation is constructed through acknowledgement of cultural diversity and unity, which can be seen as advancing beyond a 'one people' constructed on the myth of harmonious race relations (O'Sullivan, 2007; King, 2003; Olssen, 1991; C. Bell, 1996; Liu et al., 2005; Mikaere, 2011). The description uses the phrase "diverse communities" rather than "multicultural society", which was used in the description of this flag in the first text analysed. As previously established, "multicultural" is a politically loaded word in the New Zealand context due to its perceived conflict with the officially implemented biculturalism (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999). The deliberate use of "diverse communities" may allow a more favourable interpretation, and exemplifies Fairclough's (1992) notion that rewording highlights how meanings of words are part of wider social and political struggles.

Union Jack in the current New Zealand flag

The descriptions of the current New Zealand flag authoritatively establish the flag is connected to and comes from Britain. The reader is informed in "no uncertain terms" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 76) that "the Union Jack *combines* the English Cross of St George, the Irish Cross of St Patrick and the Scottish Cross of St Andrew". The use of toponyms, "English", "Irish" and "Scottish" reinforce the origin of the flag was to unify three nations under one sovereign. The inferred interpretation may be that the Union Jack is not distinctive to New Zealand unlike the silver fern flag because it references other nations. Additionally, the "Union Jack" is repeated in three of the four descriptions, which continually links the current flag to its British origins and is another instance of lexical cohesion (Fairclough, 1992). The repetition of the "Union Jack" in the description of the current flag suggests all elements of the design are inseparable from New Zealand's connection to Britain.

The text also emphasises the flag was "*designed* when NZ *was* a colony and *based* on the British Blue Ensign" (emphasis added). The statement addresses the period of time in which the flag was developed and emphasises how the current flag is tied to the nation's origins as a "colony". New Zealand became the 'Colony of New Zealand' within the British Empire after the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840. The description uses the past tense, which is a "grammaticalized expression of location in time" (Comrie, 1985, p. 9), to create distance between the origin of the flag and colonisation, from the present. The decision to only authoritatively establish the flag through its origins does not allow the meaning the flag has acquired over time to be embedded officially into the design. Barraclough (1969) considers the Union Jack on the New Zealand flag to express history of British rule, rather than signifying, as it once did, that New Zealand is a British colony. The grammatical decision to frame this in the past suggests the flag reflects and constructs 'old' New Zealand, which infers it is unable to continue to represent New Zealand.

The distancing of colonisation from the present could suggest New Zealand's national identity as a colony is in the past. On one level this is reflective of the reality because New Zealand's label as a colony was replaced by 'Dominion of New Zealand' in 1907 and then 'dominion' was dropped after World War II to reflect new levels of autonomy and independence (Wilson, 2006). However, the discourse changes from 'colony' to 'dominion' for example is part of the "progressive and evolutionary colonizing narrative" (Byrnes, 2007, p. 2). It suggests New Zealand has progressed beyond colonisation and constructs New Zealand as postcolonial. The silver fern flag shows how the "black" and "silver fern" are connected to New Zealand's history but not in terms of colonisation. This allows the flag to represent a shift to a new level of independence from Britain and could be seen as a push towards New Zealand as a republic. The narrative constructed in the text suggests changing the flag is about removing the colonial

connection rather than fulfilling obligations to the Treaty of Waitangi and constructing New Zealand biculturally as expected by Mulholland (2011) and Fox (2011).

Colour blue in both flags

The colour blue is a background colour in both flag designs but the vocabulary differences in the descriptions exemplify how alternative wording contributes to the construction of meaning (Fairclough, 1992). The silver fern flag asserts "the blue *represents* our clear skies and the Pacific Ocean" while the current New Zealand flag establishes "the blue *comes from* the Blue Ensign and *has come to represent* the blue sea and sky" (emphasis added). Although both descriptions connect the blue to sky and sea, the silver fern flag constructs New Zealand in more detail. The "sea" is labelled as "the Pacific Ocean" in the silver fern flag description, which connects the flag more directly to New Zealand than the abstract and general "sea". Wodak et al. (2009) consider toponyms to play a constructive role in discursive development of national identity because it emphasises similarity and national uniqueness. Toponyms of "lovely, idyllic place" hold positive connotations, which construct a positive argument about the nation (Wodak et al., 2009). This is built upon by "the sky" being labelled as "*our clear* skies" in the silver fern flag description and it is reinforced by the background image of the text, which depicts a pale blue sky with few clouds. The combination of image and text is part of its interpretation (Fairclough, 1992), reinforcing an idyllic, peaceful construction of New Zealand.

Contrastingly, the current New Zealand flag description primarily attributes the blue to "British Blue Ensign", which reinforces the British connection. The focus rests upon the origin of the colour to suggest the reason it was included in the flag is more significant than what it "has come to represent". The meaning that the blue colour has acquired over time is attributed as secondary and positioned as less significant than the intention behind the flag. This conflicts with the expectation for the national flag to act as symbolic containers, which is filled with meaning over time (Eriksen, 2007; Kølsto, 2006; W. Smith, 1982). Accordingly, the past is presented as negative and change as positive (Wodak et al., 2009). In this case, continuation in terms of symbolic construction of New Zealand as a colony is negative while change in terms of constructing New Zealand in the Pacific Ocean is positive.

The differences in the description highlight how choices made by the designer of the infographic can allow a narrative to be constructed. The intention of some infographics is to persuasively position a product more favourably (Crane 2016; Siricharoen & Siricharoen, 2015). The lack of descriptive and specific language, and the use of the definite article instead of possessive adjectives, distances New Zealanders from the current flag because it is not seen as connecting to New Zealand in the ways the silver fern flag can. This suggests a bias towards the silver fern flag, which is problematic because this infographic may unfairly influence voters

towards one flag based on the feelings of connection through language. New Zealanders may be persuaded because of the positive cues associated with the silver fern flag rather than due to the design and meaning of the flag (Petty & Cacioppo, 1984). In which case, the Flag Consideration Project is no longer a democratic process and the contribution of this communication to public discussion no longer abides by public sphere principles.

Southern Cross in both flags

The same description is used in both flags to address the meaning of the Southern Cross. This allows the description to construct New Zealand in the same way, which reflects the impartial position of the Panel not evident in the treatment of the description of the "blue". The Southern Cross "emphasises *our location* in the *South Pacific Ocean*", which also uses a toponym and spatial reference to construct national identity through the emphasis on national uniqueness and places with positive connotations (Wodak et al., 2009). The second statement about the Southern Cross is "it connects with the colours in the Union Jack" where the Panel connects another design element to Britain. This is unexpected because the Southern Cross was included into the flag to signify New Zealand's distinctiveness, which the text seeks to limit. The repetition of the description also reinforces the Southern Cross is placed and designed on each flag in the same way. It suggests the Southern Cross continues to express meaning about New Zealand that remains valuable and representative of the nation. This is understood in terms of banal nationalism where New Zealanders may have come to accept this is symbolic because of its continual reproduction (Billig, 1995). Its meaning in New Zealand context has been established and learned so there are fewer interpretations.

6.3 Construction of New Zealand's national identity in the "opinions"

The lower half of the *Our nation. Your choice.* summarises popular opinions collected by the Panel, which are arranged under the two flags. The justification for the inclusion of these opinions is as follows: "Throughout this process, thousands of New Zealanders shared their opinions". The public is addressed through the third person as "*New Zealanders*" who contributed "*their* opinions", which distances the public from the Panel, rather than inclusively addressing the contributions as "*our* opinions". This is echoed in the following statement "the most commonly expressed views are summarised below to help voters consider the options and make an informed decision" where distance is also suggested between the public and Panel.

The opinion section highlights how the Panel sought public input and encouraged discussion about a matter of public concern, which enabled public opinions to emerge as part of the public sphere (Habermas, 1962/1989). However, the power for the Panel to determine "the most commonly expressed views" reflects intervention by a government appointed and connected Panel, which is not ideal (Habermas, 1962/1989). It also exemplifies staged public opinion

where the Panel has "summarised" and determined popular views rather than allowing them to emerge due to rational-critical discussion (Habermas, 1962/1989). The original sources are also not included and the lack of attribution makes it difficult to dispute the accuracy of these claims. Public engagement may be more peripheral to the process than as presented, which may in turn suggest an underlying agenda to change the flag rather than engage in genuine discussion. The public sphere requires citizens to engage in discussion and reflexivity rather than simply sharing views (Dahlberg, 2001). The language of the public sphere is used in these statements to position the process favourably and suggest a level of inclusion of citizens in public life, however this does not exist authentically or organically due to the Panel's involvement. Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to expect a perfect public sphere to exist (Kellner, 2014) and it is positive to see democratic principles included.

This section of the text can be examined intertextually because it was constructed using the chair of the Panel's earlier message encouraging New Zealanders to vote (Burrows, 2016b). In Burrows' initial address the compiled opinions are titled "*some* of the most commonly expressed views" (Burrows, 2016b), which differs from this text where it is stated these are the "most commonly expressed views". The list of public opinions about the silver fern flag are almost identically worded to the *Our nation. Your choice.*, however the views about the current New Zealand flag address the same main idea but are expressed differently, which will be discussed below. The way the two texts differ suggests, although Burrows is the chair of the Panel, the Panel may have not held as much power compared to the Secretariat.

Use of "we"

The ability for the opinions to indicate "the most commonly expressed views" of "New Zealanders" is suggested through the use of "we", which indicates another shift in address. As discussed in the analysis of the first text "we" is employed persuasively in the discursive construction of national identity to activate a sense of national solidarity and sense of unity as a "national we" (de Cilia et al., 1999). The "assumed we" allows the text to speak on half of the collective group of the nation (Cheney, 1983) and "implies a claim to speak for ordinary people" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 94). The use of the personal pronoun suggests the statements speak on behalf of New Zealanders and may encourage the construction of New Zealand to be accepted as correct and as reflective of public opinion.

Among the opinions is the assertion that "*we* are far more aware of our bicultural origins, and have become a multicultural society", which seeks to define New Zealand as "multicultural" with "bicultural origins". It alludes to the official implementation of a bicultural framework occurring in the 1970s. The combination of "origins" and "bicultural" acknowledges the partnership between Māori and Pākehā, but suggests that biculturalism as a defining feature of

New Zealand is part of the past. Because the opinion states "we are *far more* aware" of this construction of national identity, it could suggest a change in flag is appropriate because the understanding of the nation has changed. This justification could be compelling and persuasive for New Zealanders, yet lacks clarity over when the awareness of change occurred. It may encourage New Zealanders to accept the shift to biculturalism as taken-for-granted assumption but also feed into the endorsement of biculturalism symbolically and at a surface level rather than ideologically embedded in the nation (Harding et al., 2011; Liu, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2004, 2007). The current society is defined as "multicultural", which aligns with the growing cultural diversity of New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013) and allows the in-group of the nation to be inclusive beyond only Māori and Pākehā. This may not align with an individual's understanding of national identity due to the push to biculturalism, and as such, speaking on behalf of the nation may not work persuasively, but could lead to disidentification with the silver fern flag.

The construction of New Zealand as multicultural connects to the description of the silver fern representing "our diverse communities coming together", which suggests the flag also constructs New Zealand multiculturally. It is unclear how the flag references "bicultural origins" because the descriptions of the elements do not draw on any aspects of Māori culture. The decision to include this comment allows the bicultural shift in conceptualisation of New Zealand to be acknowledged, but it may also be a tokenistic acknowledgement because this is not connected to the flag design. Furthermore, Māori are not referred to at all in the text, which is surprising because this was considered a fundamental reason to change the flag by Mulholland (2010, 2011) and Fox (2011). This reinforces how New Zealand has "become a multicultural society" because Māori are not directly addressed as an individual group. It is also problematic considering their status as indigenous people and the official implementation of biculturalism in New Zealand, which views both cultures as equally significant to the nation (A. Bell, 2009; Fox, 2011; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; O'Sullivan, 2007; Pearson, 2005; Sibley & Liu, 2004). The lack of acknowledgement of Māori coupled with the reliance on a Pākehā symbol, the silver fern, and constructions of national identity that have Pākehā origins including egalitarianism, sport and nature, could suggest the Panel is painting New Zealand from a Pākehā perspective.

"We" is also employed to express opinions about common experiences of the nation in relation to the current flag. The text speaks on behalf of the nation where "*we* have grown up with and feel connected to this flag" and "it reminds *us* of events and achievements from *our* past". This may foster common ground (Cheney, 1983) among New Zealanders because they connect to memories of seeing the New Zealand flag in the celebration or commemoration of events. This reflects the way the national flag becomes part of the nation and its meaning is learned over

time (Kølsto, 2006; Eriksen, 2007; W. Smith, 1982). The use of personal pronouns and the content of these two statements about the current New Zealand flag reflect the way language can be constructed to appeal to emotions (Van Dijk, 2006). The statements may tap into an individual's personal experience and influence the perception of the flag through the emotional appeal.

Considering the text intertextually reveals how the descriptions of the current New Zealand flag are not as emotive or detailed as it could have been. The opinion "we have grown up with and feel connected to this flag" was originally expressed as "people have a strong attachment to the current flag. They have known it for a long time, and to them it represents the country of which they are very proud" by Burrows (2016b, para. 20). Additionally, "it reminds us of events and achievements from our past" has transformed from "people speak of 'our beautiful flag' and believe it represents our history, heritage and tradition, fearing that would be lost if the flag is changed" (Burrows, 2016b, para. 18). Burrows (2016b) version of the text includes more distance because "people" rather than "our" or "us" is used to represent all New Zealanders, however his text is more emotive and personal, which positions the flag differently. The differences between Burrows's (2016a) announcement and the Panel's *Our nation. Your Choice* text suggests the intention of the Panel is to position the silver fern flag in a more favourable light.

Another opinion asserted on behalf of New Zealanders is "*We* are no longer a British colony, so *we* shouldn't have another country's flag on our flag" (emphasis added). The statement uses a coordinating conjunction "so" to join two main clauses together and construct an argument about why the flag could change. The first clause correctly addresses New Zealand's historical status as a colony and the second clause suggests the inevitable course of action is to change the flag. The modal auxiliary verb "should" allows opinion to be expressed as an expectation (Fairclough, 1992) and the statement advises New Zealanders that it is wrong to have another flag on the national flag. This is also an instance of clause negation where "not" is attached to the verb for "polemical purposes" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 121). In this case, the assumption is "another country's flag" should not appear on "our flag" because the flag should represent the distinctive qualities of the nation. It positions the current flag in a negative light because it emphasises what the flag is unable to do. Similarly, the opinion that "the flag *hasn't* changed since 1902" presupposes the flag should have changed since 1902. The verb "change" is negatively framed to suggest the lack of change is problematic with the inferred suggestion that New Zealand has changed since 1902 although the flag has not.

Use of "will"

The use of the modal auxiliary verb "will" is used to express opinions about the silver fern flag. For example, the text states "a uniquely New Zealand flag that will *not* be confused with Australia" (emphasis added). The use of "will" "gives a meaning of categorical prediction" and "suggests that the text producer is writing from a position of insider knowledge" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 173). In speeches made by President Barack Obama and President Hassan Rouhani "will" was frequently used as a persuasion strategy to encourage citizens to believe the government would be able to overcome future difficulties (Sharififar & Rahimi, 2015). Through describing how the flag "will not be confused", it encourages the reader to imagine what will happen if the silver fern flag is selected and also construct meaning about how the flag should function in society. It reveals the power of the Panel to authoritatively offer truth about the future. This statement also uses the negative verb form, which exemplifies a destructive strategy, which aims to dismantle aspects of national identity through emphasising similarity with other nations (Wodak et al., 2009).

Another opinion is modalized with "will" to assertively predict another benefit of the silver fern flag. The opinion states "'*we'll* remain part of the Commonwealth", which suggests New Zealanders view remaining part of the Commonwealth is desirable. It also highlights the current connection the nation has with Britain because the Commonwealth of Nation is based on the British Empire[18] (McLeod, 2010). This contradicts other statements, which imply the connection to Britain is historical and have been previously used to argue the flag should be changed. Throughout the text the silver fern flag is framed through its connection to New Zealand and the current New Zealand flag by its connection to Britain. However in this opinion this pattern is no longer observed. It is also asserted "of 53 Commonwealth countries, only four still have the Union Jack as part of their flag". Colonies and dominions of the British Empire adopted new national flags to signify their independence with the exception of New Zealand, Australia, Fiji and Tuvalu who continue to display the Union Jack on their flags (Crampton, 1990; Knowlton, 2012; Brabazon, 2000). "Only" is an adverb of limitation, which is used to emphasise the limited number of countries that continue to use the Union Jack, which infers New Zealand has been left behind. The adverb of time "still" also reinforces how this remains unchanged.

Past tense

In comparison to the framing of the silver fern flag in terms of the future, the corresponding data point under the current New Zealand flag uses the past tense. The current New Zealand flag

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[18] Originally the Commonwealth referred to dominions of the Empire who had continued allegiance Britain after the decline of the British Empire and New Zealand was a founding member of the group in 1931 (McLeod, 2010). After the dominions gained further independence, the Commonwealth developed into a new network in 1949 as an associated of sovereign nations which did not require Britain to hold legal authority and was open to independent nations (McLeod, 2010).

reflects "our connection to Britain, which *gave* us democracy, respect for the law and a fair judicial system, can be seen in this flag" (emphasis added). The past tense is used to describe the relationship between Britain and New Zealand, suggesting the benefits of the connection have been exhausted because the connection *gave* us fundamental systems and values. In addition, this statement limits the consequences of colonisation to positive outcomes. Colonisation also established an unequal relationship between Pākehā and Māori with assimilation and integration policies, which led to the marginalisation of Māori and domination of Pākehā within all spheres of life (A. Bell, 2004; Pearson, 2005; Spoonley, 2015; King, 2003; Mikaere, 2011; Walker, 2004). In Burrows (2016b) message, this view was elaborated further and following the list of positive attributes that came from Britain, the text states "all of which have contributed to this being a great place to live and the envy of many others in the world" (para. 16). The shift in tense to "being" brings these contributions from Britain into the present and suggests they are of value in the present day. It reinforces the value of British heritage to the formation of the nation currently in the global context. The latter portion of the opinion was omitted from *Our nation. Your choice.*, which suggests a downplaying of the positive outcomes of Britain. This opinion is accompanied by the image of the Union Jack to reinforce this as a symbol of Britain and echoes the repetition of the word in the descriptions of the flag above it. It visually reinforces the current New Zealand flag relies upon a British connection.

The past tense is also employed in the opinion that the current flag "represents the country which our soldiers *fought* and *died for*". The verbs used refer to New Zealand's participation in war and sacrifices made to protect the nation, which has a powerful emotive appeal. It allows the current New Zealand flag to be connected to the nation through defining moments in the nation's history and alludes to the way the flag emotively function as a rallying point of identification. Firth (1973) contends for the soldier the flag becomes the nation and what is being fought for. The way the statement is constructed may downplay the emotive appeal and limit the potential for persuasion. The opinion uses "country" instead of New Zealand and "it" instead of current New Zealand flag, which may create distance. Fairclough (1992) considers alternative wording as a way to consider meaning is constructed within statements. This is also revealed intertextually because Burrows (2016b, para. 22) original were "*our* flag is a *powerful* symbol of the country which soldiers fought, and *in far too many instances*, died" (emphasis added). The use of possessive adjective "our" involves the reader, the adjective "powerful" explicitly reinforces the value of the flag, and the adverbial phrase "in far too many instances" also emphasises the sacrifice of soldiers. The lexical devices in Burrows (2016b) version position the current New Zealand flag more favourably than the infographic text.

The sacrifice of previous generations is also addressed in the opinion under the silver fern flag, which states "All New Zealanders having a say in this decision *honours* the rights and freedoms

that have been *fought for*." The statement alludes to the referendum process which allow "all New Zealanders having a say" and uses the language associated with the public sphere where public opinion is formed through the contribution of all (Habermas, 1962/1989). The use of 'all' suggests inclusion and directly addresses all members of the national group as belonging. It connects the protection of the 'rights and freedoms' of New Zealand to soldiers who 'fought for' the nation. The use of the declarative in this statement asserts a link between contributing in the referenda and honouring the sacrifice of generations of New Zealanders. This suggests the sacrifice and fighting of soldiers and New Zealanders was for democracy and the ability to contribute to such decisions. The inclusion of this statement under the silver fern flag is interesting because there is no direct link and the statement is referring to the process. It can be seen as another instance where a favourable construction of New Zealand is aligned with the silver fern flag, and constructs New Zealand as inclusive and guaranteeing rights of citizens.

Conclusion

On one level *Our nation. Your choice.* is constructed by the Panel as a way to help New Zealanders make an informed decision in the second referendum. This is suggested through the layout of comparison to increase awareness of differences between the flags, the combination of images and text to enhance the descriptions, and the inclusion of opinions from other New Zealanders to allow the individual to be exposed to arguments for either flag. When looking at the language in this text, the impartial position is undermined by the way that the Panel positions the silver fern flag more favourably, which could suggest an underlying motivation to change the flag rather than conduct a democratic process. This text uses persuasion more than the previous and considering the text intertextually against Burrows (2016b) release, further reveals the way the arguments to retain the current New Zealand are downplayed. Within the text, the choice between the flags is presented as a choice between the silver fern or the Union Jack because the Southern Cross and colour blue are the same. As a result emphasis is placed on the relationship between New Zealand and Britain, and distancing of 'old' colonial New Zealand. This focus may be at the expense of considering New Zealand biculturally and there is an absence of Māori as significant people and culture in the text, and as a result in both flags.

Chapter 7

Discussion

The question guiding this research was how has the Flag Consideration Panel conceptualised New Zealand's national identity? The discussion of the national flag is underpinned by a discussion of national identity because this national symbol is "the main image" (Elgenius, 2007, p. 14) and "the strongest, clearest statement" (Cerulo, 1993, p. 224) of national identity. A change in New Zealand's national flag could impact the identification process for New Zealanders (Billig, 1995; Schatz & Lavine, 2007), and influence the perception of the nation internationally (Cerulo, 1993; Weitman, 1973). The adoption of a new flag signals a renegotiation between the nation and national identity, which is attributed to a change in government or ideological regime (Elgenius, 2005, 2007; Firth, 1973). Using Fairclough's (1992) critical discourse analysis, I found that Panel provided the New Zealand public with an official, authoritative conceptualisation of New Zealand's national identity. Although the flag did not change as a result of the referenda, the two texts examined reveal the Panel has constructed for New Zealand an identity that emphasises inclusiveness, independence and distinctiveness and therefore implies that the current New Zealand flag is inadequate in representing contemporary New Zealand.

The Panel produced and released *5 Alternatives* prior to the first referendum, and offered official and designer's descriptions of where New Zealanders ranked the five alternative designs. *Our nation. Your choice.* was produced before the second referendum and offered descriptions and opinions about both the silver fern flag and current New Zealand flag. The referenda were two critical points within the Flag Consideration Project in which the New Zealand public exercised their democratic rights as citizens. Consequently, the communications released were potentially influential over the decision-making processes of New Zealanders, particularly given the asymmetrical power relationships imbued in the texts. This chapter begins by unpacking these power relationships before narrowing the focus to the ways in which national identity was constructed. In addressing my research question, I also consider the implications of the messages of the texts for individuals, the nation and the Flag Consideration Project.

7.1 Power dynamics

Critical discourse analysis is useful for considering how relations of power are encoded in texts and how discourses may reproduce existing hegemonies (Fairclough, 1992). National identity is considered "a battle for hegemony" (Billig, 1995, p. 27) where social actors, in this case the Panel, seek to construct national identity on behalf of the nation. Although it was not the Panel's intention to "persuade or influence anyone's opinions" (Burrows, 2015c, para. 5), in constructing New Zealand's national identity, the Panel used a number of persuasive techniques. For instance, "our" and "we" were frequently incorporated to imply that elements of New Zealand's identity were collectively agreed by citizens. In essence, the Panel was engaging in what Mumby (1987) calls covert control, because the Panel were subtly persuading the readers to accept as given the identity presented across both texts. Not only does this undermine the impartiality of the Panel, but the covert dissemination of ideologies of national identity grants the Panel power over the public, assuming they accept the statements about the flag and nation as reflective of public opinion.

Additionally, the Panel is able to control the New Zealand public by limiting their choices. For instance, although Red Peak was added as a flag alternative after public outcry, the other alternative flags were chosen by the Panel and offered to the New Zealand public as viable options. Similarly, the inclusion of declarative statements in both texts asserted incontestable truth claims (Fairclough, 1992), which reduced interpretations of New Zealand's national identity to the dominant view held by the Panel. The Panel, then, is given the power to make executive decisions on what constitutes New Zealand identity, despite the "Flag Consideration Project" being 'promoted' to New Zealanders as a democratic process. That said, it is not unexpected that the Panel would operate from a position of power in the referenda process. In fact, the actions of the Panel are in keeping with Miller and Yudice's (2002) position on governmentality in which citizens' behaviour is managed. What could be considered as problematic, however, is the ways in which this apparently transparent process and impartial The Panel are influencing the decisions of voters, which undermines the principles of democracy. The Flag Consideration Project is presented as an egalitarian and open process, but how it is enacted may actually limit the voices of citizens. In other words, by guiding the Flag Consideration Project the Panel can reinforce cultural hegemony rather than producing an ideal public sphere, in which citizens develop decisions free of state and market interventions (Habermas, 1962/1989).

Having developed asymmetrical power relationships in the discourses of both texts, of particular concern becomes the motivations of the Panel and by extension the Secretariat and Government. Although it is difficult to say for certain what motivated some of the communication disseminated, Burke (1969) argues that much can be inferred about peoples' motivations based

on their linguistic choices. For instance, in the *Our nation. Your choice* text, the text producers have opted to use figurative and emotive language to describe the silver fern flag, as opposed to the direct and plain explanations offered for the current flag. Such an approach presents a particularly favourable view of the 'new flag' and unfavourable view of the 'current flag'. This is but one example from the data of the new flag being portrayed positively and preferentially, and suggests that there could have potentially been a push by these contributing groups to advocate for a change in flag. Therefore, depicting the silver fern flag in a positive way may lend support to the decision to undertake the Flag Consideration Project, particularly in light of the fact that over half of the New Zealand public considered the decision to engage in the Flag Consideration Project a distraction and waste of money (UMR Research, 2016).

Admittedly, truly independent referenda are difficult to achieve when they are instigated by governments (LeDuc, 2015). This might account for why the activities of the Panel were overseen by the Secretariat and why although, there is no indication of Prime Minister John Key's involvement at the level of the text, the texts reinforce Key's opinion through the inclusion of three flags with the silver fern and the favourable presentation of the silver fern flag. It could suggest New Zealand has a top-down approach to democracy, which is guided by the notion that the 'government knows best' (Marsh, Richards & Smith, 2003). Asymmetrical power relationships do not align with an open and democratic process, but they are nevertheless expected given the inception of the project. The ideal purpose of *5 Alternatives* and *Our nation. Your choice.* is to fulfil the democratic requirement to provide citizens with relevant information (Dahlberg, 2001) and strengthen the discussion in the public sphere around the national flag (Habermas, 1962/1989). A more equal relationship between the Panel and New Zealand public could be established if the texts maintained an objective perspective on both flags and allowed New Zealanders to discuss and determine the symbolic meaning of the flags, rather than this being asserted by the Panel and their co-producers.

7.2 Construction of New Zealand as inclusive & multicultural

The construction of New Zealand as an inclusive social group emerges from the analysis of the two texts. The Panel's intention to construct New Zealand multiculturally is suggested through the modification of designers' descriptions. Multicultural references were added to the Silver Fern (Black and White) and Red Peak descriptions to construct New Zealand beyond the bicultural conceptualisation intended by the designer. The texts emphasise how all New Zealanders and cultures are encompassed within the boundaries of the multicultural nation, which allows the Panel to adopt a constructive strategy of unification. This exemplifies the way political leaders deliberately use the flag to foster bonds and unity among citizens (Cerulo, 1993). Whether they intended to or not, the Panel suggests there has been a shift in New Zealand society beyond biculturalism and into becoming "a multicultural society". The

conceptualisation may be valuable because it overcomes issues of identification for ethnic groups outside of Pākehā and Māori New Zealanders (Bromell, 2008; Fleras & Spoonley, 1999; Thakur, 1995) and suggests New Zealand is entering a new era of national identity.

However, the Panel's construction of New Zealand as an inclusive, multicultural society places an emphasis on commonality at the expense of cultural differences. In the texts, the Panel draws on common experiences and memories to establish common ground (Cheney, 1983) and also construct a common history, which may reinforce the common bonds between New Zealanders. The selective re-construction of history encourages New Zealanders to perceive their experiences in a similar way, which obfuscates the way some groups experienced racism and assimilation. The construction of a common past, coupled with restricting biculturalism to "our bicultural *origins*" (emphasis added) could express an ethnocentric minimisation of cultural differences. Ethnocentrism assumes one's own culture, beliefs and experiences are central to social reality while ethnorelativism considers them as one of many possibilities (Bennet, 2004). The texts suggest national identity is constructed from a Pākehā perspective, which means that the Panel does not overcome past issues and creates an artificial image of New Zealand society devoid of post-colonial tensions. Therefore, the texts could be accused of supporting the view of the dominant majority in the historical accounts of New Zealand's development (Mikaere, 2004), which could sustain what Mikaere (2011) describes as Pākehā 'selective amnesia'. The seemingly inclusive and multicultural construction in fact reinforces cultural hegemony and can be considered an artificial construct where inclusivity is based on rhetoric rather than fact.

Although the word "multicultural" is potentially contentious (Fleras & Spoonley, 1999), it does signal the cultural value of egalitarianism, which has been considered a defining aspect of New Zealand's national identity (C. Bell, 1996; King, 2003; Liu, 2005; Rae, 2011; Sibley & Liu, 2007; Sibley et al., 2011b). According to Sibley et al. (2011b), respect for other cultures, tolerance and treatment of all people of all races equally, are considered by New Zealanders as part of the value of equality. It may be persuasive for the Panel to draw on egalitarianism because it is a defining aspect of national identity and espousing this value may encourage identification (Cheney, 1983). However, it is concerning that this strategy is used to potentially encourage the acceptance of a different political and social framework because the myth of egalitarianism has been used in New Zealand since the 1870s to hide the subordination of Māori (Barclay, 2005). Multiculturalism is also consequential for Māori because it reduces them to an ethnic minority, as opposed to an indigenous culture (Bromell, 2008; Marotta, 2000; O'Sullivan, 2007). The construction of inclusive New Zealand hides the implications it has for Māori, and may encourage New Zealanders to accept a political framework without understanding the way it reframes indigenous people.

7.3 Construction of New Zealand as independent from Britain

Analysis of the two texts also reveals that the Panel constructs New Zealand's national identity through independence from Britain. The past tense is consistently used to imply that New Zealand's relationship with Britain is not as relevant to contemporary New Zealand as it once was. As a result, colonisation and its outcomes are also situated in 'old' New Zealand. This is consequential because it implies colonisation is a resolved issue, which A. Bell (2004) and Kirkwood et al. (2005) consider influential in the perception of on-going policy that addresses indigenous rights and historical injustices. The presentation of colonisation as unrelated to the present, is often accompanied by the construction of a unified, tolerant nation (Kirkwood et al., 2005). In line with this, the construction of inclusive and multicultural New Zealand coupled with an emphasis on discontinuity from the past, reinforces how New Zealand exists within a new era of national identity. The texts overlook any negative enduring consequences associated with New Zealand's relationship with Britain and status as a colony and dominion, which also obfuscates the way "Māori continue to bear the scars of colonisation" (Mikaere, 2011, p. 108). This is another instance where the Panel may consider Pākehā experiences of colonisation over Māori, and the perspective the texts adopt suggest there may no longer be the need to address historical injustices.

Locating New Zealand's connection to Britain in the past also allows the Panel to construct the nation's present and future separately. The Panel uses explicit statements to define the nation as "independent" and assertively inform New Zealanders "we are no longer a British colony". There is ambiguity surrounding how New Zealand's progress is evident because although the Panel alludes to New Zealand forging a separate, distinct identity through the repetition of the notion that New Zealand is experiencing growth, there is no explanation provided to support this positive assertion. Canada, Australia and New Zealand are in the process of asserting national identity in a post-imperial era (Ward, 2007) and in New Zealand the replacement of colonial symbols are slow (Cox & Miller, 2010). This could be because New Zealand identified as a British colony until the early twentieth century and "became an independent nation gradually" (McIntyre, 1992, p. 337). Kullmann (2008) agrees there is ambivalence towards adopting new post-colonial symbols, exemplified by 'God Save the Queen' continuing to be an official national anthem of New Zealand. Accordingly, the encouragement by the Panel to discuss national identity through the Flag Consideration Project and assertion of New Zealand's national identity "in no uncertain terms" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 76) may allow for the enduring sense of shallow roots for some Pākehā New Zealanders (A. Bell, 2009) to be overcome. The texts show how New Zealand's national identity can exist without Britain and the ways distinctiveness can be claimed in other areas. For example, the adverbial phrases of time used in relation to the silver fern assert how this native plant is embedded in New Zealand's history and allows New Zealand to be constructed in terms of heritage outside of Britishness.

The Panel firmly locate and reinforce New Zealand's relationship with Britain in the past, and is no longer relevant in the contemporary context, which could allow republicanism to gain more traction. This strategy aligns with the way the monarchy and Australia's British past are highlighted and discredited in Australian media (Kullman, 2008). Australians are more oriented towards republicanism compared to New Zealand. In 2008 only 32.8% of New Zealanders were in favour of a republic (Cox & Miller, 2010) and the Constitutional Advisory Panel (2013) also found there was limited support for a republic in their engagement with New Zealanders about New Zealand's constitution. If New Zealand was to adopt the silver fern flag, a symbolic element of Britishness would be removed, which could be a useful way to cultivate a desire for further change. It is significant that New Zealanders are potentially being encouraged to perceive the nation as independent from Britain because it could suggest there is a manufacturing of change and top-down push towards a political change by the Panel. Such a change would have implications, for example, for the Treaty of Waitangi in terms of the continued presence of the 'Crown'. Although metonymically the Crown refers to the New Zealand Government, the treaty is an agreement between the British Crown and Māori tribes, and establishing New Zealand as a republic could allow retribution and Waitangi Tribunal claims to become void and no longer binding.

7.4 Construction of New Zealand as a national brand in the global context

The Panel emphasises the need for New Zealand to be perceived as unique in the international context in the texts. This could be expected because social identity is based on the perception of distinctiveness in relation to out-groups (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Stets & Burke, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and because the national flag functions as a marker of identity and projects values to those outside the nation (Cerulo, 1993; Elgenius, 2011; Weitman, 1973). However, the consistent emphasis placed on other nations could also suggest the Flag Consideration Project is an exercise in re-positioning New Zealand in the global context to ensure the image projected by the flag is favourable for international activities. National identity may be considered valuable not only for assisting New Zealanders sense of self but also for economic and political purposes. This aligns with Urry's (2003) assertion that there has been a shift from banal nationalism to brand nationalism, in which everyday representations of national identity are "increasingly consumed by others, compared and evaluated, and turned into a brand" (p. 107).

Since the 1980s New Zealand has adopted neoliberal policies and there is increasing pressure for the government to attract investment, particularly tourists (Scherer & Jackson, 2010), which can be seen in the development of the New Zealand Brand since the 1990s (C. M. Hall, 2010). The global, neoliberal context has redefined the role of government due to their reduced capacity to regulate national economies independently (Castells, 2010; Held & McCrew, 2003;

Strange, 2003; Tomlinson, 2003) and they act strategically to ensure the national economy is globally competitive and favourable to capital flow (Castells, 2010). Therefore, in the texts the Panel perpetuates the branding of New Zealand through the construction of New Zealand as distinctive. Firstly, the Panel continues the narrative of clean, green, beautiful New Zealand projected to global markets through the way nature is used to construct New Zealand as distinctive. Secondly, the Panel capitalises upon the established reputation of New Zealand in the sporting arena and "our many achievements internationally". The overachievement of New Zealand in terms of sport is used to foster a sense of pride, and the silver fern flag becomes a way to further promote New Zealand's sporting success. This may suggest that sport is not only a tool for understanding New Zealand's national identity, but is a means for constructing a favourable image internationally.

Thirdly, the previously discussed construction of New Zealand as inclusive and multicultural can also be considered as part of nation branding. The texts could also be interpreted as a continuation of a previous strategy employed by the New Zealand government of 1999 to 2008 where "openness, diversity and tolerance" and a shared purpose were emphasised as part of the nation brand (Skilling, 2010, p. 175). In addition, the selective construction of New Zealand's common history reflects the way the national brand may rely on "reappropriation of national history" (Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011, p. 612). The way New Zealand is constructed as independent and distinctive from Britain may represent a new image of national identity that will also be projected externally for branding purposes.

The way aspects of the construction of New Zealand's national identity align with and perpetuate national branding discourse reflects an intrusion of commercial imperatives into national identity, and a conflation between the national brand and national identity. It implies the Flag Consideration Project may have been about positioning New Zealand positively in the global context rather than engaging in an authentic discussion about identity. It also reinforces the economic focus of the current New Zealand government and the way a national flag as an extension of the nation can be redefined economically as part of the nation brand. This is problematic because national branding benefits political and economic elites rather than the entire nation (Kaneva, 2016; Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011) and addresses New Zealanders as nationalist consumers rather than citizens (Kania-Lundholm, 2016; Volcic & Andrejevic, 2011, 2016). The individual is encouraged to identify with an image constructed for commercial purposes, which will have reduced and simplified aspects of identity to project one message (Jansen, 2009). The Panel could never have accounted for or constructed New Zealand's national identity in terms of its complexity because a national brand relies on a simple image. Transforming the national flag into an overt marker of a brand was a lot for the flag to carry especially when considering national identity is fluid and multi-faceted.

7.5 Implications of the constructions of national identity for the Flag Consideration Project

Despite the positive positioning of the silver fern flag and construction of New Zealand as different from the 'old' New Zealand of the current flag, the outcome of the second referendum was 56.6% voted to retain the current New Zealand flag as the official flag (Electoral Commission, 2015a). The result of the Flag Consideration Project does not suggest New Zealanders do not want a change in flag. It does, however, indicate that the silver fern flag designed by Kyle Lockwood was not viewed as more appropriate or reflective of New Zealand's national identity than the current New Zealand flag. Despite a lack of change in flag the outcome reflects some democratic processes in the Flag Consideration Project because the public, rather than executive government or Panel, determined the decision. That said, the process was not entirely democratic because of the asymmetrical power relationships between Panel, government and New Zealand public observed in the texts.

The disparity between the Panel's texts and result could suggest the Flag Consideration Project was involved in manufacturing public opinion. Habermas (1962/1989) critiqued the contemporary public sphere because of the way public opinion was increasingly managed and administered by political, economic and media elites, and that this staged public opinion was favoured over rational debate. In the context of the Flag Consideration Project, there may have been a misreading of public opinion by the government that this was an issue that New Zealanders were concerned about discussing within the public sphere. The Panel may have misinterpreted or misrepresented the way New Zealanders perceived national identity or viewed the flags, which could have contributed to the outcome in the second referendum.

The decision to carry out the Flag Consideration Project at this particular moment may not have coincided with significant shifts in national identity due to societal or political changes that usually contribute to the adoption of a new flag (Elgenius, 2005, 2011; Firth, 1973). The case studies of South Africa and Canada reflected the change in flag occurred because of the post-apartheid construction of the nation, and unification of French and British cultures respectively. The decision to change New Zealand's flag may have been better received and more appropriate during the 1970s and 1980s during the Māori cultural renaissance. As a result, the texts may reflect an attempt by the Panel to manufacture a change in national identity, for example through the emphasis placed on multiculturalism, which may not have aligned with New Zealanders' perspectives.

Another potential reason for the referendum result could be related to the way that New Zealand's national identity was constructed by the Panel in the texts. Despite using persuasive

techniques such as the 'national-we', fostering common ground, drawing on commonly held values, and constructing New Zealand as distinctive and unique, individuals may not have agreed or identified with the version of national identity presented. The Panel asserted how the silver fern was embedded with meaning, which may not have been accepted by New Zealanders, reinforcing Sibley et al. (2011a) finding that the silver fern did not activate meaning in a similar way as the New Zealand flag. Furthermore it may be a reaction to the attempt to brand New Zealand for economic purposes rather than in the interests of the citizens. The Panel held legitimate power due to their official appointment by the government as the facilitators of the Flag Consideration Project, which placed in them in a position of influence (French & Raven, 1959/2015). Reliance upon legitimate power can lead to dissatisfaction, frustration and resistance, but when it is used in conjunction with expert power can allow individuals to accept productivity and compliance with goals (Hoy & Miskel, 1996). New Zealanders may not have considered the Panel's construction of New Zealand as adequately reflective of national identity due to the Panel's perceived lack of legitimacy or expertise.

According to Kølsto (2006), the flag design does not determine its success or acceptance but is based on the values associated with it and the group attached. The way the silver fern flag was associated with Key and the government, and also the selectively constructed history from a Pākehā perspective, which could cause disidentification. The Flag Consideration Project could be perceived as driven by John Key as a vanity or legacy project. Politicians may be motivated to pursue "legacies that offer a symbolic political statement" (Jennings & Lodge, 2015, p. 11) and their preference may mean they are susceptible to optimism bias and disregard other evidence. In this case, Key's desire to change the flag may have also been motivated by the development of a legacy, which voters may not have responded to.

The outcome suggests that although an official organisation may construct and assert authoritatively how national identity can be conceptualised, national identity as a form of social identity is based on the evaluation and perception of members of the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Tajfel, 1981). In this way the process fulfils the democratic ideal of political good being generated by the people of the nation rather than via a top-down process (Held, 2006). This outcome highlights the way the nation is a social construct, which relies upon the shared belief of commonality and connection among members (Anderson, 1991; Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1992; A. D. Smith, 1995).

7.6 Future Research
This research offers one perspective on the construction of New Zealand's national identity within the Flag Consideration Project, through two texts produced by the Panel. Future research could broaden the analysis to other forms of communication produced by the Panel and could

have considered the flag process beyond the two referenda. For example, the structure of platforms of engagement developed by the Panel to provide opportunities for New Zealanders to express their national identity could be analysed. Conducting critical discourse analysis on a wider range of texts could allow the conclusions drawn about the conceptualisation of national identity to be extended.

The research also focused on understanding the perspective presented by the Panel and there was not scope to consider how these texts were responded to or interpreted by New Zealanders. This could be a future direction for research and enhance an understanding of how these texts contributed to the public sphere and discussion within New Zealand's democratic society. Further research could analyse responses on Facebook to elements of the text or other instances of interaction to gain insight into how individuals responded to the texts.

In addition, the two texts analysed were produced by the Panel and as a result reflected a dominant, official construction of national identity. As was revealed by the analysis and by the result of the project, the Panel's understanding of national identity may not have aligned with the public. Future research could look at other texts not produced by the Panel or government to understand how national identity was constructed. This could also be compared to the way that the Panel conceptualised it.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to examine the construction of New Zealand's national identity within the context of the Flag Consideration Project. Two texts produced by the group appointed by the New Zealand Government to oversee the process, the Flag Consideration Panel, were analysed following Fairclough's (1992) method of critical discourse analysis to gain insight into how national identity is perceived in contemporary New Zealand. The analysis revealed that the Panel attempted to construct national identity on behalf of New Zealanders through authoritatively asserting New Zealand as inclusive, independent and distinctive in the global context. Persuasive strategies and asymmetrical power relationships were evident within the texts, which undermined the notion of impartiality proposed by the Panel and the democratic potential of the process. Although the Panel presented the silver fern flag in a more favourable light and suggested New Zealand's national identity had changed significantly, ultimately the outcome of the Flag Consideration Project suggests their conceptualisation did not align with New Zealand's understanding of their national identity.

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Appendix A: Flag Consideration Project timeline

11 March 2014	Prime Minister John Key announced his intention for the flag consideration process to be held in 2015 if re-elected in speech at Victoria University in Wellington
28 October 2014	Cabinet agreed to the process to consider changing the flag
10 November 2014	Cross-party MPs group nominated New Zealanders for the panel
26 February 2015	Bill English announced selection of 12 New Zealanders to form Flag Consideration Panel
12 March 2015	First reading of New Zealand Flag Referendums Bill
13 April 2015	Responsible Minister, Bill English, approves Panel's engagement plan
5 May 2015	Flag Consideration Project public engagement begins - 'stand for' campaign and call for flag design submissions
16 July 2015	Deadline for alternative flag designs - received 43,000 submissions about values and principles and 10,292 flag designs.
10 August 2015	Long list of 40 flag designs announced by panel
14 August 2015	New Zealand Flag Referendums Bill enacted
21 August 2015	Flag Consideration Panel reports to Responsible Minister, Bill English, and recommends four alternative designs
31 August 2015	Cabinet approves designs
1 September 2015	Panel announced four alternative designs for the first referendum: Silver Fern (Black & White) designed by Alofi Kanter, Silver Fern (Red, White and Blue) designed by Kyle Lockwood, Koru designed by Andrew Fyfe, Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue) also designed by Kyle Lockwood.
2 September 2015	Social media campaign launched calling for Red Peak inclusion as an option
16 September 2015	Online petition with more than 50,000 signatures in support of Red Peak given David Seymour at Parliament
23 September 2015	Green Party MP Gareth Hughes introduced New Zealand Flag Referendums Amendment Bill to Parliament to add Red Peak as fifth option
24 September 2015	New Zealand Flag Referendum Amendment Bill enacted
20 November - 11 December 2015	First referendum was held requiring participants to rank the five alternative flag designs and guided by the question: "If the New Zealand flag changes, which flag would you prefer?"
15 December 2015	Results of the first referendum announced. Most preferred alternative flag design chosen through the first referendum was Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue)
3-24 March 2016	Second referendum was held requiring participants to choose between the current New Zealand flag and silver fern flag

30 March 2016   Results of the second referendum announced. The current flag received
                 1,208,702 votes with 921,876 votes for the alternative.

Appendix B: 5 Alternatives

Silver Fern (Black, White and Blue)

Designed by: Kyle Lockwood

Official Description

The dominant feature of this flag is a white fern frond that sweeps up diagonally from the bottom left corner to the right of the top centre. The left side of the fern is sitting on a black background. To the right of the fern there are four stars in the formation of the Southern Cross constellation, sitting on a blue background. Each star is red with a white border, and has five points.

Designer's Description

The silver fern: A New Zealand icon for over 160 years, worn proudly by many generations. The fern is an element of indigenous flora representing the growth of our nation. The multiple points of the fern leaf represent Aotearoa's peaceful multicultural society, a single fern spreading upwards represents that we are all one people growing onward into the future. The bright blue represents our clear atmosphere and the Pacific Ocean, over which all New Zealanders, or their ancestors, crossed to get here. The Southern Cross represents our geographic location in the antipodes. It has been used as a navigational aid for centuries and it helped guide early settlers to our islands.

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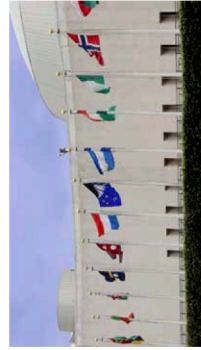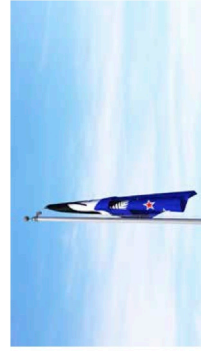
Red Peak

Designed by Aaron Dustin

Official Description

In the centre of this flag are two thick white diagonal lines. They start in the left and right bottom corners and meet in the centre top, forming an upside-down V shape. The spaces around the shape form triangles. The triangle in the centre of the shape is red, the triangle to the left of the upside-down V shape is black and the triangle to the right is blue.

Designer's Description

Designed to reflect powerful and fundamental visual elements from New Zealand culture this flag breaks down multicultural elements into simple, shared forms. The chevron is inspired by traditional Māori weaving tāniko patterns and refers to the collision of two tectonic plates which form the Southern Alps. The colours suggest a landscape of red earth and black sky and reference the story of Rangi and Papa, a creation myth in Māori mythology. The red triangle with a white stripe is also an iteration of elements of the tip of the stars from our existing flags. This design communicates the uniqueness of our land, light and position.
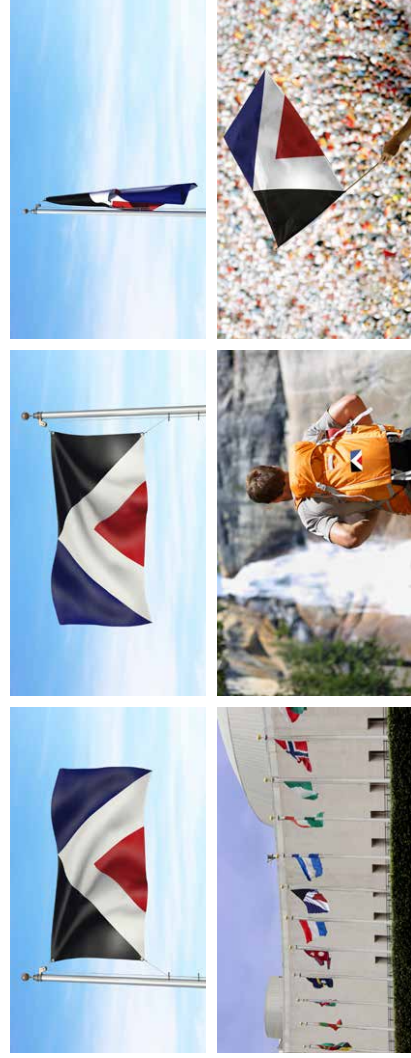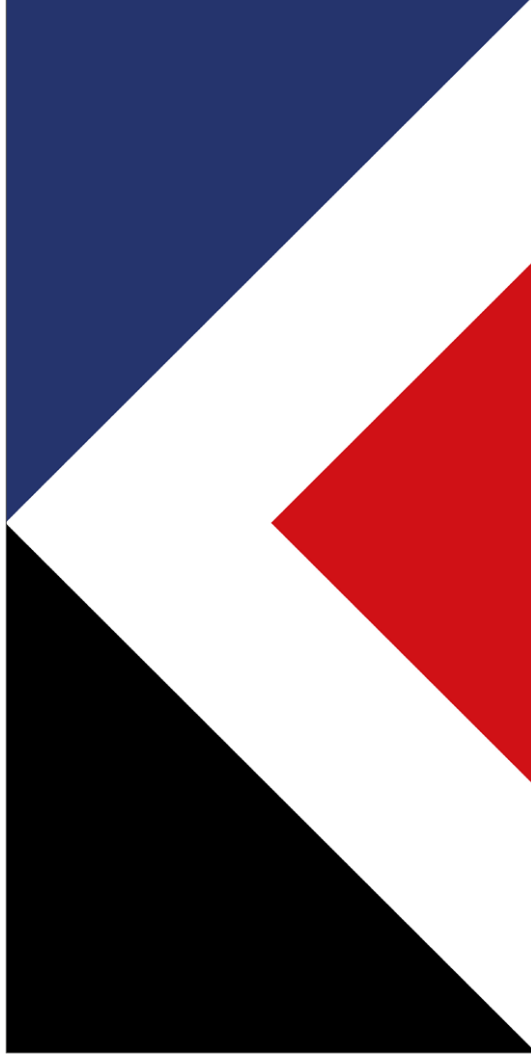
**Flag
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Koru

Designed by Andrew Fyfe

Official Description

The right half of this flag is black. At the halfway point of the flag the black forms a koru on a white background. The black koru spirals down and to the left from the top of the flag.

Designer's Description

As our flag unfurls, so too does its koru. The koru represents the fern frond, but is also reminiscent of a wave, a cloud, and a ram's horn. In Māori kowhaiwhai patterns the koru represent new life, growth, strength and peace, and for this reason has taken a special place in Aotearoa's visual language.
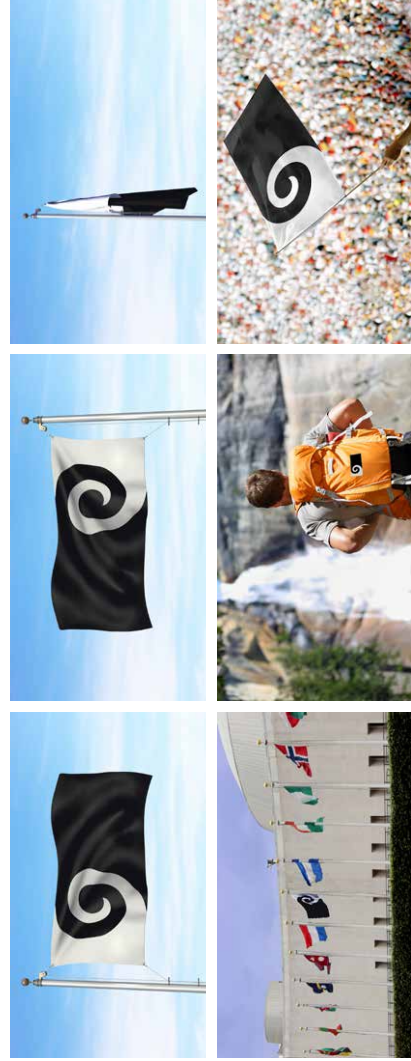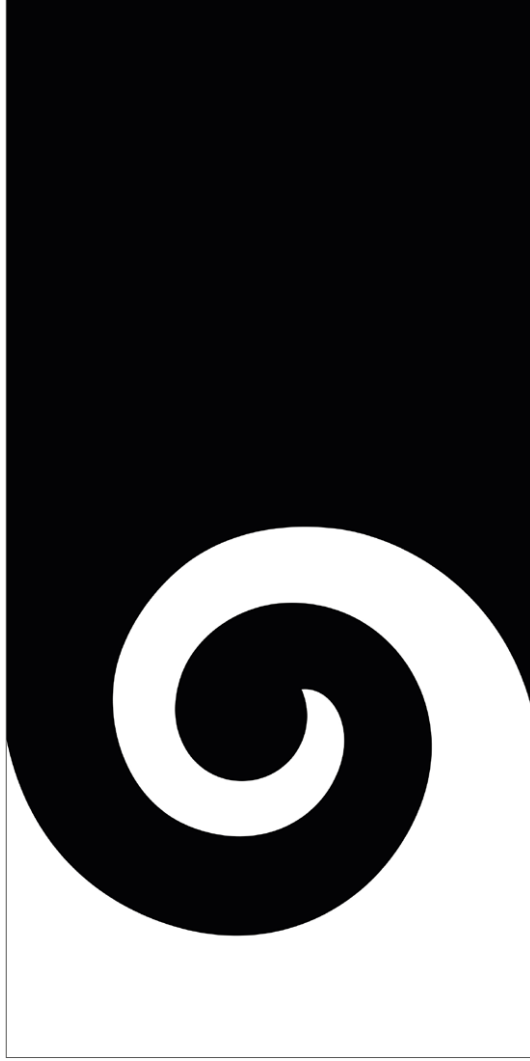
**Flag
Consideration
Project**

Silver Fern (Black & White)

Designed by Alofi Kanter

Official Description

The dominant feature of this flag is a black and white fern frond. The fern frond sweeps diagonally up from the bottom left corner to the top right corner of the flag. The leaves and the stem on the top side of the fern are black on a white background. The leaves and the stem on the bottom side are white on a black background.

Designer's Description

The fern has been a distinctive symbol of New Zealand for the past 100 years. Strong and simple, it represents our uniqueness as Aotearoa New Zealand and the black and white colours show our 'yin and yang', with the softly curved spine of the frond binding us all together as a young, independent and proud nation. Credit for the fern goes to The New Zealand Way Limited.
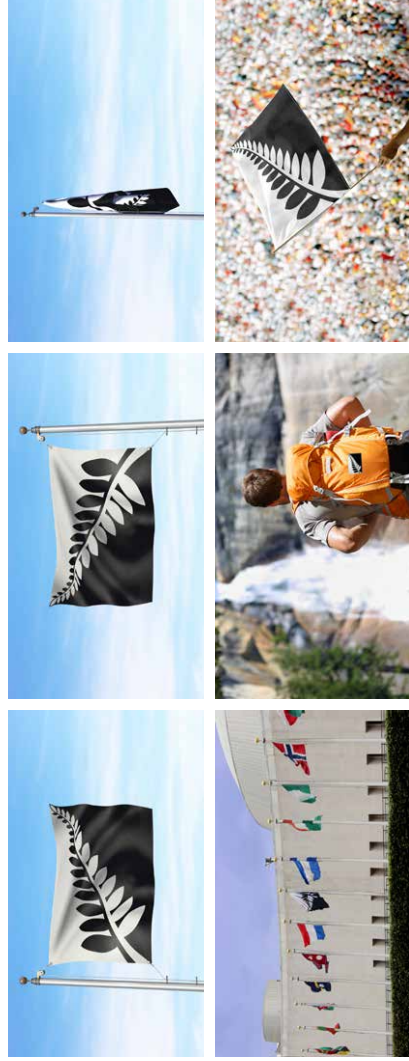
Flag Consideration Project

Silver Fern (Red, White and Blue)

Designed by: Kyle Lockwood

Official Description

The dominant feature of this flag is a white fern frond that sweeps up diagonally from the bottom left corner to the right of the top centre. The left side of the fern is sitting on a red background. To the right of the fern there are four stars in the formation of the Southern Cross constellation, sitting on a blue background. Each star is red with a white border, and has five points.

Designer's Description

The silver fern: A New Zealand icon for over 160 years, worn proudly by many generations. The fern is an element of indigenous flora representing the growth of our nation.

The multiple points of the fern leaf represent Aotearoa's peaceful multicultural society, a single fern spreading upwards represents that we are all one people growing onward into the future. The red represents our heritage and sacrifices made. Blue represents our clear atmosphere and the Pacific Ocean, over which all New Zealanders, or their ancestors, crossed to get here.

The Southern Cross represents our geographic location in the antipodes. It has been used as a navigational aid for centuries and it helped guide early settlers to our islands.

Flag Consideration Project

Appendix C: Our nation. Your choice.