Ka Mate, Ka Ora: On Truth, Lies, and Knowing the Difference

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Abstract

In Aotearoa New Zealand, education has long been seen as a force for good in people's lives, including in communities whose educational achievement statistics consistently fall below national norms, as is the case for Māori school students. Regardless of other changes, public belief in the benefit of 'a good education' is stronger than ever. This 'totally beneficial' image of education conceals its real nature and what drives it. The ideologies driving education, hidden beneath its shiny surface, are of particular interest to a Māori scholar studying how education operates as a form of structural violence against Māori people. To analyse how power operates unseen in Māori education entails attention to the larger power relations that link education to violence and the subjugation of personal autonomy, ultimately to war, in our contemporary 'democratic' globalised nation-states. Hence the Māori part of the chapter title, taken from the words of the famous haka[i] (war dance), means 'life or death'. There is a lie that weakens current education theory and reinforces the larger lie concealed deep in the heart of economic theory - both inherently Western knowledge bases. This chapter is interested in how these lies work as agnoses, or forms of managed social ignorance, to deliver human beings via education to the global war/profit machine in the 21st century. Māori scholars, and those of other non-dominant identities, have more reason and therefore may be more likely to study these linkages than Pākehā/White researchers; better positioned, perhaps, to identify with the interests of the planet against the deathly endgames of uber-wealthy global owners.

Keywords

Agnotology, Capitalism, Māori, New Zealand schooling, Philosophy of education, War

He Poroporoaki

Vale, David Graeber. We never met in person, but your writing speaks powerfully to me, so when I heard of your passing in September 2020, I was saddened to know your lifework was complete. Haere atu rā, e te rangatira.

Life in the symbolic zone

The above poroporoaki (eulogy) dedicates this chapter to the memory of David Graeber, who gave the 2006 Malinowski Memorial Lecture, later published as *Dead zones of the imagination: On violence, bureaucracy, and interpretive labor*[ii]. Graeber noted that the key ideas about power and ignorance in his article were already 'commonplace' in feminist literature, about which he was 'entirely oblivious' when he first wrote the article, using his own experience as an example of the power/*ignorance* nexus he delineated (though not in these words) in his article. Referring to such blindnesses as 'lopsided structures of the imagination' that become embedded in society, Graeber asks:

> whether our theoretical work is ultimately directed at undoing or dismantling some of the effects of these lopsided structures of imagination, or whether—as can so easily happen when even our best ideas come to be backed up by bureaucratically administered violence—we end up reinforcing them.[iii]

Graeber's article slots into a 21st-century 'ignorance tradition' dubbed 'agnotology'[iv] that claims to study ignorance in the same way epistemology studies knowledge[v]. A power/ignorance nexus is implicit in how 'Māori education' acts through bureaucratic means as a form of 'blind' or 'ignorant' violence against Māori people and their interests. The contemporary Māori experience is one of daily confronting the handful of truth-myths or 'thought weapons' told by dominant social truths - i.e. White/Pākehā propaganda - about Māori and national history.

Graeber's writing also reminds me of an essay written by C. S. Lewis, a pre-eminent British essayist (and one of my favourite childhood authors) of the mid-20th century. The radical thinking of Lewis in some ways prefigured the emergence of postmodern and post-structuralist concepts and critiques. *The Abolition of Man*[vi] an essay Lewis wrote in 1943 included what may have been the first published occurrence of the now-fashionable term 'post-human' (discussed in the next section, below). Lewis could see clearly then what has since become hidden from everyday view. In his *Narnia* books, Lewis's magic wardrobe that led to another world was a powerful echo of my own childhood experience of glimpses of te

ao Māori, the Māori world, as I grew up in the 'white-picket fence' neighbourhood of Mt Eden in central Auckland in the 1960s-1970s.

Aotearoa New Zealand is closely culturally connected though physically distant from centres of global culture such as the US, and by comparison, the local inter-racial dynamic operates on an exceedingly subtle level; indeed, to an outsider, given the current and growing visibility of Māori in media and public spaces, it may seem that Māori are a valued or even privileged part of national society. The disproportionate numbers of Māori caught up on the wrong side of the nation's prisons, hospitals, food banks and supported housing, however, suggests the opposite. Propaganda or 'thought weapons' regarding Māori and national histories were deliberately taught in schools for many years and are still firmly embedded in dominant discourses of national identity[vii]. Pākehā or White Kiwi identity and its quirks, even as mild as the tendency until the 1960s to think of England as 'home' can best be understood by noticing how such devices supported their identity as *not*-Māori.

Investigating how White ideologies work in Māori education led me to the remarkable essay by Cliff Falk[viii] that follows the chain of links between education, advertising (and other propaganda, and ideology more generally), and war, in the sense of regimes of deliberate death and destruction of other humans and their living spaces. My aim in this chapter is to put Falk and Lewis into conversation with Graeber, to look at the question that unites them, concerning the nexus between knowledge and power, war and education, and the implications for the future of humanity and the planet.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, education is widely regarded as a benefit and a force for good in people's lives. Even—or especially—within communities whose educational achievement statistics are significantly lower than national norms, adults tend to share this belief in the power of schooling to improve the lives of their children. After 35+ years of neoliberal education and social policy, the main aim of education has become generally equated with economic advantage; education is now valued mainly in terms of access to 'good jobs' and the accompanying personal benefits[ix]. Regardless of other changes, belief in the beneficial power of 'a good education' is stronger than ever. This "immaculate conception" ideology allows education "to maintain and at the same time hide" its real nature and what drives it.[x]

But education "has no ontological status independent of agentic factors": it is a social process and discourse, not a natural phenomenon. That means education "is 'always already'

political" and thus can be relied on to distribute its benefits unequally, favouring those who are already advantaged. For groups who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, including Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand, education is even more politically complicit and damaging to social psychology in its normativity. There is a widespread view portrayed in public media and the teaching profession that Māori people have equal chances as non-Māori (or better - the notion of 'Māori privilege' has appeal in some political quarters) but make 'bad choices' that end up consigning them to lives of poverty. The effects of the colonial bases of contemporary social systems is ignored. Education is held over Māori students, families and communities as both carrot and stick; despite the odds stacked against them, Māori students who fail are said to have parents who 'don't value' education, or are pathologised in some way. The lie at the heart of current education policy is to ignore the reliable link between family wealth and educational success, which involves other lies such as the pedagogical fantasy of measurable and predictable learning.

The stories Māori people tell about their family histories often feature the relationship with schooling.[xi] In my own family on my father's side, my people have been 'going to school' for only one or two generations above me. Like many other such families there were 17 children in my father's family, born over a period of about 20 years. Aged 90+ my aunt (my father's oldest sister, born in 1919) recounted snippets - how in the 1920s she and all the Māori children living in the valley would walk a few miles around the unformed coastal road each day to and from school, with only a few being rich enough to ride horses, but how the little ones would hold onto the horses' tails to help them up the hills. For all those Māori children, going to school meant learning English and being inducted into Pākehā/Western ways. My dad told me they were 'given the supplejack' by the teachers if they were heard speaking a word or two in Māori in the playground, despite it being their home language, because speaking in Māori was deemed 'swearing'. Most, like my father, were pulled out once they were big enough to fulfil a useful economic role. My dad resented for life being unceremoniously removed from school aged 13 to look after the team of horses his father was using to build a road (on contract) around to the next bay - the same route his sister, my eldest aunt, had walked a decade earlier.

Schooling for Māori has been an important part of the process by which we have been marginalised in our own land. Certain key aspects of pre-European Māori symbolic culture and identity still survive and are actively maintained, which, for me as a Māori scholar, has the effect of 'othering' the European-derived mainstream in my perspective and analysis. The

whole rationale for Britain invading Aotearoa to create New Zealand, in the process stealing the lands and sovereignty of my ancestors, was the 'declining rate of profit' in the UK and the need to export excess people to continue the economic advantage of the already-wealthy[xii] . Later, from 1984 onwards, the same need to increase profit was served by exporting production to poorer countries lacking in unions or social welfare systems.

Graeber calls "areas of violent simplification"[xiii] those "boring, humdrum, yet omnipresent forms of structural violence" that impact on daily life. Graeber gives **bureaucracy** and **social theory** as two important examples of social systems or ways of thinking that enable and promote simplistic interpretations of everyday human life and interpersonal interactions. This description also fits compulsory state schooling in modern Western nations, in which both bureaucracy and social theory play key roles. Schooling is a favourite political football in a country like Aotearoa New Zealand that prides itself (or used to, anyway) on providing state education as a 'level playing field' on which, according to the egalitarian dream, each individual can achieve their potential if they work hard and make good choices .

In any country, favourite social truth-myths have a longevity in the national imaginary that far exceeds their shelf-life as policy drivers. The 'Kiwi way' of giving everyone a 'fair go' is one such idea in Aotearoa New Zealand, still used in a 'State of the Nation' political speech in 2007[xiv]. Schooling is an important plank of that 'fair go' aspect of national identity. The 'fair go' idea can be considered one of Pākehā culture's most cherished 'areas of violent simplification'. Such an idea supports a 'lopsided structure' or blindness in the national imaginary, an 'agnosis' whose unspoken purpose is to enable socioeconomic policies that favour the already-wealthy at the expense of the impoverished sectors of society.

We already know that the benefits of school are unevenly distributed, so that they tend to reinforce existing wealth and social power relationships . Education policy in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2021 remains fixated with 'equity' as policy driver, which focuses on working towards fairer distribution of the benefits of education. This chapter examines the underlying fact that both school success *and* school failure are parts of the one machine called education, which serves the purposes of capitalism according to the underlying logic of war, as the next section explains in more detail. The point is, any Western education system, such as the state schooling system of Aotearoa New Zealand (in which many intelligent, well-informed people expend their life energy) serves the complete *opposite* of the dream of social justice through education. Today, education systems are working more effectively than ever before to

produce the requisite set of subjectivities, winners *and* losers (but mostly losers); individual citizens who are credulous consumers of advertising, fodder for the profit machine, blind to the larger realities of their social conditions.

Graeber reminds us that the implicit structural violence of our peaceful countries, including Aotearoa New Zealand, is always underwritten by the threat of physical violence. "Racism, sexism, poverty, these cannot exist except in an environment defined by the ultimate threat of actual physical force."[xv] All forms of power including 'symbolic power' inevitably link into this underlying structure of violence; the power to hurt and kill other humans.

If, as academics, we fall prey to agnosis and forget or ignore the reality of physical violence that underwrites our society, we cannot fully analyse how power works in our schools and other social institutions. In that case our academic labour becomes complicit in supporting the profit/war machine that drives capitalism. We would then fulfil Graeber's prophecy, above, 'reinforcing' the lopsided structures of imagination that fuel structures of violence of all kinds.

I have been studying the interface between Māori and science knowledge for 50+ years; as a 10-year-old I spoke about Māori Astronomy and appeared in the local newspaper[xvi] . As a Māori scholar in a mainstream university School of Education I hold a paradoxical, doubled position; both expert in, and critic of, Māori education policies. The gift/responsibility of my Indigenous Māori identity is a perspective that actively 'others' the dominant Euro-American global culture. The criticality of my analysis depends on this doubled identity; an insider/outsider view of both local *and* global culture/knowledge/power. A critical Māori view of education policy and its history and philosophy sees through the deceptions inherent in current dominant policy discourse.

This Māori attention and critique of the dominant culture is a form of aroha (nearest Māori word to 'love'). For a Māori scholar to study the Western Other is an act of love: dedicating time and energy to research that looks through more than one set of cultural lenses. The gift of the Māori/Indigenous critique is that it holds up a mirror to the West, to bring into view what monoculturalism hides from its people. In this way, Kaupapa Māori and Māori Philosophy, as Māori-centred approaches for studying Māori-Pākehā educational relationships, distinguish themselves from colonising educational research and its methodologies[xvii] .

Last summer I enjoyed a 'beach crawl' with my sister, visiting a different beach each day along the stretch of coast to which we belong, in Māori terms. Sitting on the sand on our folding chairs at one of those beaches, looking back at the gentle grassy hills rising up from the foreshore towards the public road, my sister told me the story of how our uncle and another local elder had made a deal some decades ago, signing over the entire beachfront to a wealthy Pākehā, now living the dream, the mansion and helipad hidden from public view up the private access road beyond the locked gate. By many means, including shady deals, ownership and occupation of Māori lands is continuously chipped away from the descendants of the original owners. As Indigenous peoples, Māori and our lands are raw materials for the profit machine; our post-European history in this way reminiscent of the 'enclosures' movement with which capitalism began in England, as explained in the next section below.

War, capitalism and education

Capitalism can be described in many ways, but in simple terms it acts like a 'concentrating mechanism' for money, that transfers monetary wealth from the less wealthy to the more wealthy. Monetary wealth is an anonymous form of power extracted from the primary sources i.e. human labor and natural resources. Through the concentrating mechanisms of capitalism, power over natural resources *and* over the quality of millions of other people's lives is becoming increasingly privatized - concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people. So how did all this begin?

Standard accounts of capitalism usually begin with the "English Enclosure movement (circa 1400-1800),"[xviii] which in simple terms meant building fences and transferring lands that formerly had been 'the commons' into private ownership - a process of "wrenching" non-wealthy people away from the land . The "multitude" of ordinary English people moved from living and working on the land to waged work in the mills and factories, and the industrial age arrived. This historic socio-economic shift catalysed traumatic psychological and philosophical changes for the people concerned, with the re-inscribing of subjectivity and the invention of the 'individual' of liberal humanism. This disconnection from the land (i.e. nature) and the adoption of a modernist 'atomistic' notion of the human being are key steps by which, among others, Western culture breaks from its original, Indigenous subjectivities of the old cultures of Europe and Great Britain. This process was recapitulated in Aotearoa New Zealand by the Māori urbanization process in the post-WWII period, whereby the Māori population transformed from mostly rural to mostly urban in 20 years.

Falk labels capitalism as "unique" in releasing personal identity from place, by replacing work on the land with work for wages in the "rise of money."[xix] In the academy, within social science disciplines like anthropology, and applied fields such as education that draw on those disciplines, Western culture has been taken as the norm against which 'other' cultures are appraised; from that perspective, Indigenous cultures are characterised as 'place-based', but Falk's sketch of the onset of capitalism shows how it is actually the Western culture that is the odd one out ('unique') in this regards. Today's globally dominant Western culture ruled by 'the market' is the end result of this de-territorialization (and re-territorialization, in repeated cycles) of subjectivity that begins with "the rise of money" signalling the birth of capitalism and modernity.

The rise of money as the standard measure of value transformed Western understandings not only of subjectivity but also inter-subjectivity, as explored by Marcel Mauss in his 1925 book *The gift,*[xx] which initiated a wide-ranging, ongoing debate about the nature of a gift, and the difference between gifts and economic transactions. This debate, including the treatment of the Māori example of 'the hau of the gift' was lucidly sketched by David Graeber in one chapter of his book, *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value: The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*.[xxi] As an early sociologist writing in French, Mauss had surveyed anthropological data on gifting practices in non-Western societies, exposing the concept of the gift as "the hidden face of modernity" because one can always find reasons for saying that gifts "are not really gifts at all."[xxii] This paradox has been built into Western social theory, which

> [speaks] of social ties without using the words that are associated with them in daily life: surrender, forgiveness, renunciation, love, respect, dignity, redemption, salvation, redress, compassion, everything that is at the heart of relationships between people.[xxiii]

Whether a transaction tends towards gift or commodity depends on whether the relationship between donor and recipient is considered to be permanent - what Graeber called 'open reciprocity' - or delimited i.e. 'closed reciprosity' denoting a transactional relationship, where transactions are subject to 'careful accounting' and incur legal debt. The binary in Western thinking points to the 'illusion' i.e. lie at the heart of global economic theory:

> between freedom and obligation is, like that between interest and generosity, largely an illusion thrown up by the market, whose anonymity makes it possible to ignore the fact that we rely on other people for just about everything.[xxiv]

The gift objects discussed by Mauss (including 'taonga' in Māori traditions) carry 'traces' of their former owners and histories, but money is generic and resistant to history . It is the 'inhuman' nature of the market that allows us to believe we can satisfy our needs and wants without considering the needs and wants of those with whom we engage in so doing. It seems reasonable to suggest this disconnection via the market from the 'others' with whom we engage in carrying on our economic activities lies behind the acceptance in Western culture of the otherwise implausible 'unlimited greed' as defining the default ethical position of market actors, or 'homo economicus'.

Falk traces how capitalism "proceeds by decoding representation altogether" and is "inherently unmeaningful":

> Capitalism destroys the Transcendental Signified wherever it finds it, replacing the stable signification of despotic society with the irresolute signifying system demanded by the logic of the capitalist system. Under capitalism, the focus of desire moves from the regus (monarch) or deus (God) - as was the case in precapitalist societies - to abstracted wealth (money).[xxv]

Falk argues that education as a social institution, far from its 'beneficient' reputation, is in fact "an interested technology of subjective formation, as the primary means to realize the de- and re-territorialization process."[xxvi] In education in Aotearoa New Zealand, this point is particularly relevant to Māori people, for whom education has been extremely important, and even more ideological, as in deceitful, with its real nature being hidden behind a shiny beneficial surface, than for students from 'mainstream' i.e. Pākehā/White backgrounds. Falk pursues his argument that education is therefore essential to the pursuit of violence against citizens, ultimately to war, drawing a convincing chain of links between war and education, as summarized in the next sub-section below.

Falk's point of departure is that education is viewed "as a force for unilateral good"[xxvii] and "as indiscriminately beneficial, as a good in its own right."[xxviii] These descriptors overstate how well education is viewed today, particularly amongst academic commentators, because (among other things) the deleterious effects of decades of neoliberal policy on national provision of education are more apparent now, compared with 15+ years ago, when Falk wrote his chapter. But Falk's comment that capitalism 'destroys the Transcendental Signified' goes to the heart of Lewis's *The Abolition of Man*, which uses the keyword '*Tao*' to refer to the transcendental concept. While Falk focuses on the consequences for education of the outgrowth of capitalism, Lewis was interested in the effects of the rise of the

bureaucratic forms of modernity, and the consequent loss of the *Tao* (as he phrased it) on British culture, people and education.

Lewis considers what today remains an urgent question for humanity's future, namely, the progress of applied science, which he noted was then-commonly expressed by the phrase "Man's conquest of Nature."[xxix] 'Man' with a capital 'M' is Lewis's word for what is now called 'humanity/humankind' in purging language of its sexist 'trace'. Lewis consistently refers to Nature as a proper noun, in keeping with older convention. Also dated is the verbal form 'conquest of' to depict the advance of science, now sounding impossibly coy, evoking the old metaphors of Nature as feminine and Science as masculine, with all the patriarchal undertones of Western modernity. Literally speaking, conquest is a military verb meaning to win in war. The existential question - the temper of the times, spirit of the age - has flipped in the seven decades since Lewis wrote: today our concern is no longer about humanity 'winning' against nature, but whether nature can survive against the human onslaught. Current plans by the global elite for inter-planetary colonization would seem to suggest they hold a pessimistic view on this question.

The dead-end dilemma of Western philosophy arises from "the fatal serialism of the modern imagination - the image of infinite unilinear progression which so haunts our minds"[xxx] - Lewis's words evoking not only the teleology that blinkers much of White scholarship, but also the reductionism, presentism and quantification of the economistic social theories that today run our national education systems.

> Because we have to use numbers so much we tend to think of every process as if it must be like the numeral series, where every step, to all eternity, is the same kind of step as the one before... There are progressions in which the last step is *sui generis* - incommensurable with the others - and in which to go the whole way is to undo all the labour of your previous journey. To reduce the *Tao* to a mere natural product is a step of that kind.[xxxi]

Two key differences pertain to the *sui generis* last step, which Lewis hypothesised would involve the emergence of a group he called "the Conditioners."[xxxii] These planners or puppet-masters would, firstly, have access to unprecedented levels of power, comprising the sum total of all the technological power accumulated by humanity until that point in time; and secondly, the last step involves, for the Conditioners, stepping outside of, in the sense of complete emancipation from the *Tao*: "Values are now mere natural phenomena." In arguing

that the Conditioners would have thus 'sold' their humanity for the power of maximum knowledge, Lewis coins the word 'post-human' possibly de novo:

> Man's conquest of himself means simply the rule of the Conditioners over the conditioned human material, the world of post-humanity which, some knowingly and some unknowingly, nearly all men in all nations are at present labouring to produce.[xxxiii]

Lewis was not arguing for one particular version of 'a doctrine of values' but for the need for people to retain values at all, understanding 'values' in the sense of an ethos or meta-narrative by which to live, which arises from a sense of (Indigenous) identity, and from which derive central values and principles for right behaviour in the world. That Lewis took the Chinese word 'tao' as his keyword for this essay, and appended a list of examples from a wide range of world philosophies, indicate his effort to think reflexively, cross-culturally and critically from and about his own (Anglican, analytical philosophical) perspective. He concluded that the modern, scientific worldview tries to "have it both ways" and that a "dogmatic belief in objective value is necessary":

> Either we are rational spirit obliged for ever to obey the absolute values of the *Tao*, or else we are mere nature to be kneaded and cut into new shapes for the pleasures of masters who must, by hypothesis, have no motive but their own 'natural' impulses.[xxxiv]

Lewis imagines "a regenerate science"[xxxv] of the future, evoking the now-widespread hope that Western science and philosophy can learn from engaging with Indigenous knowledge, including Mātauranga Māori,[xxxvi] saying: "When it explained it would not explain away. When it spoke of the parts it would remember the whole. Lewis recognised the significance of "education and propaganda based on a perfect applied psychology"[xxxvii] in the changes he saw taking place around him, and combined logic with imagination to argue those tendencies through to their final conclusions, making a useful contribution to philosophy of education.[xxxviii]

Education, Psychology, Technology, War

Western systems of education over time became increasingly industrialized, from the later stages of the Industrial Revolution onwards. Education, including compulsory state schooling, formed part of the imperial power machine in the era of European expansionism, of which the contemporary nation-state of Aotearoa New Zealand is a product.

War and education became increasingly entangled during the 20th century; increases in military spending invariably led to the expansion of education systems, while knowledge production has been an active front of modern warfare "to the point where *the research university itself proved to be the greatest war weapon ever invented*."[xxxix] That statement must give any university academic pause for thought. "The mutually determining relationships between knowledge production, education, empire, and war have been generally evident in every industrially developed jurisdiction for at least a century."[xl] Yet most academic theory - social theory including Marxism, or economic theory, which sees war as an 'aberration' - cannot account for the relationship.

Three major links between education and war traced by Falk are synopsised below:

1. Mutual benefit: Military spending leads to expansion of education systems, which in turn furnish more powerful war weapons;
2. The application of psychology to propaganda and advertising, and education for the production of subjectivity and subjects more susceptible to propaganda;
3. Digital technologies and the ongoing development of artificial intelligence, which threatens to make education redundant.

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) was "set up in 1863 under U.S. President Lincoln to harness science to the Union war effort;"[xli] paraphrasing Lewis, 'some people exercising the power of nature over other people'. NAS was responsible for the curriculum in the 1960s "well-funded overhaul of high school science and mathematics" in the US and parts of Canada. Today it is accepted that science and mathematics (STEM) education is essential for any country to maintain its 'international competitiveness' - a phrase generally taken to mean economic competitiveness - but the same logic extends to all forms of international competition, ultimately including war.

The exponential growth in destructive power of war weapons in the 20th century coincided with unprecedented growth of every type of educational and research institute. Most analyses note the influence of military spending on material technologies, but rarely include "technologies of 'invisible materiality' like propaganda, political and economic theory, and educational psychology."[xlii] Education is the prime social institution for influencing the production of subjectivity, which is essential to the postindustrial economy (i.e. the 'knowledge economy'). Subjectivity itself is the primary source of wealth in the "luxurious

postindustrial jurisdictions like Canada and Sweden."[xliii] Education enters the 21st century "as the *primary* driving force in the world economy."[xliv]

A major application of psychology knowledge has been to propaganda, which in simple terms is the manipulation of subjectivity, i.e. of human thought, motivation and desire. Psychological operations (psyops) are a "favored military strategy" and from WWI onwards, these operations were "scientized (academized)" for military purposes and used both to "demoralize the enemy" and to "control domestic populations" and promote the war effort "at home". The civil or commercial application of military knowledge of propaganda as a "waging of psychic warfare" was renamed 'advertising' in the late 1920s. Propaganda is a form of education in its own right; and the educated people within any society are the most susceptible to propaganda, since it works by manipulation of symbolic systems, so is dependent on literacy. These remarks recall how daily life in a Western country like Aotearoa New Zealand is saturated with advertising; and how 'advertising campaigns' are so often today's answer to social concerns.

Experimental psychology was applied first to warfare, in the development of the IQ test for the US army in WWI, then to education, notably with the post-WWII testing movement, and including "military technologies" such as learning theory and instructional design. "Educational technology, instructional technology (design, programming), and educational psychology are so tightly related as to make them almost inseparable." Education and psychology are thoroughly entangled with the military, hence with war.

Falk points to the development for military aims of the digital world: ICT, the internet and the infrastructure of the 'information age': "Life as we know it is an offshoot of post-WWII U.S. weapons research and development."[xlv] Falk considers the rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, with obvious advantages for "waging contemporary warfare whether military, ideological, or economic" and predicts such machines could replace masses of educated people who are currently employed

> in every area of the private and public sectors, in banking, industry, education, government, and the military. These thinking systems could technologically replace that last redoubt of humanism, the educated human being.[xlvi]

The logic of war that drives capitalism, in other words, will eventually make education completely obsolete. Falk's train of thought converges with that of Lewis: the future of

humankind is at stake. The post-human idea so popular today was predicted by Lewis in 1943 to result from 'stepping outside the Tao'.

No flying cars? Lopsided structures of the imagination

In a second essay published in the same year as *Dead Zones*, Graeber[xlvii] noted the 'broken promise' of science and technology for the post-WWII generations, asking what happened to the 'flying cars' he and his peers were encouraged as children to anticipate owning when they grew up. Graeber covers similar ground as Falk: (a) technological advances were in fact slowing by the 1950s and 1960s, even as the "awesome space race" (p. 73) made innovation appear to speed up; and (b) US spending on science and technology has always served military goals.

Graeber recalls that "end of work arguments were popular in the late seventies and early eighties."[xlviii]. But instead of the imagined 'robot factories,' mass production for Western consumption was shifted to wherever widespread poverty and international development agreements meant that labor could be obtained cheaply enough to maintain and increase the monetary profits delivered to private, corporate shareholders/owners. Much as propaganda machines of media and advertising may seek to blind us to the facts, those living in the wealthy West: in "Europe, North America and Japan [have] an uneasy awareness that the post-work civilization was a giant fraud."

> Our carefully engineered high-tech sneakers were not being produced by intelligent cyborgs or self-replicating molecular nanotechnology; they were being made on the equivalent of old-fashioned Singer sewing machines, by the daughters of Mexican and Indonesian farmers who, as the result of WTO or NAFTA–sponsored trade deals, had been ousted from their ancestral lands.[xlix]

Graeber compares the "astounding dreams" and peaceful aims of the Soviet leadership, up until the 1980s, with the military aims of the US:

> for instance, the [Soviet] attempt to solve the world hunger problem by harvesting lakes and oceans with an edible bacteria called spirulina, or to solve the world energy problem by launching hundreds of gigantic solar-power platforms into orbit and beaming the electricity back to earth.[l]

Graeber characterises the Soviet approach to technology as 'poetic' as opposed to the 'bureaucratic' approaches born in the West, and overgrowing all global culture.

> From this perspective, all those mad Soviet plans—even if never realized—marked the climax of poetic technologies. What we have now is the reverse. It's

> not that vision, creativity, and mad fantasies are no longer encouraged, but that most remain free-floating; there's no longer even the pretense that they could ever take form or flesh. The greatest and most powerful nation that has ever existed has spent the last decades telling its citizens they can no longer contemplate fantastic collective enterprises, even if—as the environmental crisis demands—the fate of the earth depends on it.[li]

But here Graeber overlooks a more obvious binary: the Soviet dreams were for everyone, while Western dreams were of 'private' visions of wealth, luxury and freedom. The 'Jetsons' version of everybody owning a flying Mini was a fantasy, but today, a tiny percent of the population do have 'flying cars' called 'private jets/helicopters'. The childhood promise came true by about 2000 for that elite upper crust where Donald met Andrew. Since the economy has been globalised, such uber-wealthy individuals can be accurately termed 'global owners'.

As Māori/Indigenous academics, if we look *away* from these links between power, profit, and cross-cultural relationships between Māori and Pākeha, we end up *participating* in the 'lopsided structures of imagination' that support the bureaucratic structures of violence, which, in turn, protect our own privileged university positions. This complicity is clear in the expectations placed on Māori academics to make everything comfortable for their non-Māori colleagues, while taking responsibility for ensuring their department becomes culturally compliant—the terminology keeps changing, but the underlying condition of White normativity remains in place. Employer institutions expect their Māori academic staff to resolve issues; they are usually much less interested in having their Māori scholars undertake critiques of the ignorance and propaganda that underpin dominant Eurocentric systems, including university systems.

Earth to the West

What I am calling 'global owners' corresponds to Lewis's predicted class, 'the Conditioners.' Though the name sounds quaint today, his description of them as operating 'at their own whim' is disturbingly relevant to the actions of those uber-wealthy global owners (consider, for example, how much we know about a conversation between Meghan Markle and Oprah Winfrey, whether we want to or not). That Western culture and education thinks it can find redemption in Indigenous philosophy is a sign that 'the West has stepped outside the Tao' (using these terms while remaining aware of their inherent risk of reification and caricature) and possibly was already doing so in 1943 when Lewis wrote his essay. The history and spirit

of capitalism, broadly conceived, seems to lead up to that 'sui generis' step, which could take a generation or more to complete, and involve only a tiny subset of the human population.

Western culture at its pinnacle, as represented by the lives of these powerful individuals, with so much capital at their disposal they effectively are global owners, has moved beyond religion, ethics and morals; beyond truth, science and critical thought; beyond compassion and responsibility. In this sense Western culture has moved beyond a sense of what it means to be human into a phase Lewis aptly dubbed as 'post-humanity.' If, as Graeber notes, the future survival of the earth depends on 'fantastic collective enterprises' to solve the environmental crisis, the extreme individualism of global culture is possibly where the problems begin and a place to start with addressing them. Standard terms such as 'the environmental crisis' reflect the way in which Western thought reduces nature to a glorified resource bank. By way of contrast, the Gaia concept of the living Earth originating in Indian philosophy aligns well with Papatūānuku, the Māori concept of the Earth Mother.

An identity as Māori, and therefore Indigenous, offers me an ethos aligned with the interests of planet Earth in a way that has been lost by mainstream Western culture. Indigenous cultures, including Māori, insofar as they retain a working philosophical base of Indigenous cognitive resources, can still operate 'within the Tao' but globalised Western culture has stepped outside a humane framework. Even for individuals like myself, who are bicultural and comfortable in both Māori and Pākehā spaces, the liminal space invoked by cross-cultural educational relationships is a frightening, humbling, awe-inspiring experience , because it reminds us that the world in which we are living is one in which humankind have 'stepped outside the Tao' - an idea we could re-phrase in terms of the Matrix, agnotology, Indigenous knowledge, or any one of many other frameworks. Fundamentally, an Indigenous politics such as Kaupapa Māori aligns with Earth (Papatūānuku or Gaia) against the rapacious logic of capitalism that concentrates wealth and power in the hands of a tiny number of individual humans, at the expense of the planet ark and all its inhabitants.

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