

REPRESENTATION, RACISM, POWER AND MASS COMMUNICATION
CARMEN PARAHI, RAWIRI TAONUI

20 MARCH 1 pm

>>RINGA HĀPAI: My name is the Dr Atakohu Middleton and I'm a journalist and senior lecturer in the school of communication studies at Auckland University of Technology. Now some housekeeping before we get under way. There are some rules for interacting as you can see on the screen. I'll just give you a little bit of time to read those. Essentially play the topic not the person.

As the discussion unfolds in the next hour, you're welcome to send questions through, make comments and share links and we will address them later in the session. Can we have the next slide please. So please use the Q&A button to send questions for the panel. And we'll address those later on.

I would at this stage like to thank two people whom you can't see, but whom are very important to this enterprise. Moderator Jared Nicol and our tech support Charles Rolleston for keeping the technical side moving today. An online webinar of this scale is a major feat. We have had precisely 1,122 registrations for this webinar.

Now, as there are some challenging issues up for discussion, we'll now do a karakia to centre us all and focus on the topic of the hour. (Karakia).

So let's refresh our memories. As I said, the abstract for this session has been slightly reworded for clarity since the programme came out a few months ago. Representation, racism, power and mass communication. Media can carry social power and influence for owners and leaders and may reflect and favour their world views over others if internal and external checks and balances are lacking. Unchecked media can cause harm to others by excluding the authentic voices of communities, stigmatising and marginalising people, surfacing prejudice creating negative stereotypes and perpetuating racism. The internet has amplified the issues around representation power and mass communication with users being able to access all forms of communication. Algorithms delivering what readers have preferred to view in the past can play a role in amplifying misinformation and disinformation, increasing prejudice and creating conditions that increase inequality.

So what does it all mean? How do people keep themselves informed but safe too? What responsibility do media companies have to acknowledge and counter the prejudices that may lie within? What are some of the solutions?

I'm delighted now to introduce you to two people with a wealth of knowledge on these issues. Carmen Parahi is a senior editor at Stuff and was the driving force behind the media company's historic 2020 apology for its many decades of misrepresentation of Māori. Carmen runs Stuff's Pou Tiaki section which focuses on stories from and about underserved communities. Last year Carmen was named editorial executive of the year in the Voyager media awards. Carmen is from Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Hine and Rongowhakaata. Tēnā koe Carmen.

>>MS PARAHI: Tēnā koe.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Dr Rawiri Taonui is an independent writer, researcher and advisor on Māori, indigenous and intercultural human rights, equity, diversity and anti-racism. He was Aotearoa's first professor of indigenous studies and, during the Covid pandemic, has undertaken extensive quantitative analysis of its impact on Māori. Rawiri is on the Human Rights Commission's national anti-racism task force. Rawiri is of Te Hikutu and Ngāti Korokoro, Te Kapotai and Ngāti Paeahi, Ngāti Rora, Ngāti Wheru and Ngāti Taonui. Tēnā koe Rawiri.

To start, I'm going to ask each of our speakers to speak to the abstract and then we'll see where the hour takes us. Carmen, I'd like to start our kōrero today by turning to you. This kaupapa, representation and mass media, is something that you've catalogued over many years. In your mind, what responsibility do media companies have to acknowledge and counter the prejudices that may lie within?

>>MS PARAHI: (Te reo Māori). So yes, I am the Pou Tiaki editor and actually of recent Pou Tiaki Matua at Stuff. Pou Tiaki, contrary to public discussion in the last few days, Pou Tiaki is kaupapa Māori, it was instigated a couple of years ago, so it is a kaupapa, it is a strategy within Stuff to focus on fair representation of Te Ao Māori; at the same time as we uplift the voices, stories of Māori and behave as journalists for Māori to represent Māori fairly, at the same time we also have to increase the equity for other underserved communities.

So that is what Pou Tiaki it is, it is more than just a section on the Stuff website, it is more than just doing a story here and there and a voice here and there, it is about a commitment to do better because we know we've failed in the past. A couple of years ago we started the Pou Tiaki journey to -- and it started with a group of journalists at Stuff who disliked the way we were continually representing Māori and other communities, particularly Māori. And so we gathered together as a whānau Pou Tiaki to approach our leaders for better representation of Te Ao Māori.

And from that point came a set of actions. Part of those actions was Tā Mātou Pono, our truth, which was to investigate Stuff to find out what we'd done and how we'd represented Māori in our papers. So our papers are 160 years old, and so we went that far back to look at what we'd done. And in the project Tā Mātou Pono, we discovered that we had marginalised Māori, that we had helped create stereotypes, that we had been racist in the way we'd reported on Māori and that we hadn't fairly represented Māori over the years through the decades. There are some really good points, of course, but generally we hadn't.

And so after we'd investigated ourselves we then asked ourselves if we had to apologise for all we'd done, so we did. And it's hard work, right? So we're trying to turn around 160 years of prejudice within a media organisation and within papers. Journalism is a British construct, it came with the first settlers from Britain, and those papers really did -- were set up to support the views, political views, economic positioning of settlers from Europe, and because of that that is its history, that is the history of journalism in this country. So that's what we've had to work with.

And it's hard these last couple of years because everyone wants the change to happen now. And when I think about Te Tiriti, 182 years it's taken us to get to this point, we're still having this discussion around Te Tiriti and trying to get it into everything that we do in Aotearoa, to talk about anti-racism. It's 182 years since the Treaty and we still haven't got to where we need to be.

So I'm a very impatient person and I've always just thought that I would have solved, that we would have solved the problems and the issues within journalism within media organisations in two years. That's quite ridiculous of me to even think that. So what I realise is I can only do the work I can do now and can only then pass it on to others to take up the challenge as well.

So it is really just understanding that we only just build on the work of everybody else. So I only build on the work of people like Wena Harawira, Tini Molyneux, Derek Fox, Whai Ngata before then. It was our reo Māori, our Ngā Tamatoa before then, it was our great leaders who came into politics, our Te Aute old boys, and before them it was all our ancestors that were part of the signing of the Treaty.

So all this work to get us to this point. We've got a long way to go, but at least finally we're having honest conversations within Stuff, challenging conversations, full physical stand ups sometimes, but that has been my experience as a journalist since I started in 2001 in news rooms that this is -- that we've had to do this.

But luckily I worked in Māori media at TVNZ and at Māori Television, and in those cultural safe places I was able to, you know, really keep myself safe and continue in this industry, because it's a hard slog for Māori journalists to be in it, but, you know, we love journalism. It's a brilliant profession, there is a role for the news media to play as the fourth estate to hold power to account.

The problem that we've done is that we haven't held power to account on behalf of Māori or on behalf of all underserved communities. So now we've got to turn this around. We're asking for better journalism, we're asking for better organisations to understand yes, more te reo Māori, yes more Māori voices, but also to understand our role in a Te Tiriti framework and also to understand how we must stick up for -- how we must also ask hard questions of power and authority for Māori.

For example, if we hadn't have done this work, I know that we wouldn't have been asking what's happening for Māori when it comes to the pandemic. I know that if we hadn't have apologised and if we hadn't made all journalists aware that you must ask questions for Māori as you do for the general population, you must ask specific questions for our community.

So I know if we hadn't have done that in the pandemic time we would have really struggled to really lift the voices of Māori. So being able to work with -- I mean I really have to acknowledge the work that Rawiri's doing, Rawiri Taonui's been his one research bandwagon who's been relentless and so good in providing a solid evidence-based voice for the issues facing Māori communities.

So without us doing that work and ensuring and elevating the voices of Māori, I think we would have struggled through this pandemic to get those voices really shining and really, really push the politicians to really back their stuff up, right. And I just wanted to, you know, send out a massive mihi to all our Māori Health experts, our nurses, doctors, all of our hauora workers who are out in the communities doing all the work they've been doing, because they're the ones that have just shown us that it's possible, by Māori for Māori, we have the solutions within our communities.

So there's some really hard stuff going on in the media, it's going to take time, and there are a lot of people that are impatient that want us to just solve all the solutions, get rid of all the racism, to really create equity in the media, but we just -- we're not there yet, it's just step by step by step. And sometimes I get very aggrieved and I just want to give up sometimes to be honest.

But what keeps me going is remembering that I'm there, building on the back of other people. But also people like one of my ancestors, Sir James Henare, and it's his whakatauki that keeps me going, actually, to just remember that despite the criticisms that come from within Stuff, within the media, within Māoridom, because we get criticised all the time; despite all of that what he has said keeps me on track. (Te reo Māori). You have come too far not to go further, you have done too much not to do more.

So that's the only thing really that keeps me -- that and knowing that this Pou Tiaki is kaupapa Māori, it was started by Māori, it had a very -- it's got a kaupapa foundation, it's got a Treaty base because it's in our company charter now, we're just working through what that looks like, how do we action this, these are the -- so I've come here hoping to engage with everyone in a state of curiosity and hope that I can also get ideas from people, but also just to acknowledge a lot of the great work that everyone else is doing, and yourself, Atakohu, with all the work you've been doing around Māori media and what that means. More of our people need to see your kōrero e hoa so that they can understand that Māori media -- the media is there, it has a very strong role and I believe in the high ideals of journalism, but I also believe we can do better when it comes to representation.

So there's much for us to talk about today and I better shut up because I'm taking over Rawiri's time. He always has a lot to say, Rawiri, so I'll just hand over the baton e hoa.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Rawe Carmen, rawe e hoa. Rawiri, to you now. So when you ponder the issue of representation, racism, power and mass communication, what springs to mind?

>>MS PARAHI: And there's always one that never turns on his microphone.

>>MR TAONU: I was just practising. (Te reo Māori). (Different language greetings). So I'm Rawiri. Just a bit about my background, I've been writing columns for the media I think for about 24 years now. Along the way I won three media awards. My primary experience with media racism really came at a personal level, so at one time I had a weekly column for a particular newspaper and there was a change of editor and the new editors didn't like my stuff so I got a message that my column would be terminated and I had a month's notice, so I left pretty much straight away.

But it just so happened that a journo from that newspaper quite liked my columns and suggested I pop them into the media awards, so I wrapped up three or four columns, I think, and that's what ended in the day and I popped those in. And then the media awards were on a Friday night at the casino in Auckland, and my wife's a really keen Warriors supporter and they were playing a big game on the Friday night, so I had to sort of choose

between the rugby league or the awards. And since I was just starting out and I was only like two years into my first lectureship I thought well, you know, that's not really going to work out so I went to the rugby league instead.

And then the following morning I obtained a copy of said newspaper I'd formerly been writing for and looked up the winners for the media awards and there was this nice piece, 13 winners and there was a list of names and I wasn't on the list of names. So I thought hey good choice I went to watch the Warriors have a great win on the Friday night.

The following Tuesday I received my award in the post and I'd won the section, in those days best columnist on the human condition, and I ended up as joint runner up to Paul Holmes as columnist of the year, which was pretty amazing. So I went back to the original article and where it said 13 winners and then I counted the names and there were 13 winners but only 12 names, and I realised that my name wasn't included because they'd only just fired me.

My other experience in the early days of writing columns was I'd get a steady stream of hate mail, mainly through written mail and I used to -- my main strategy for dealing with that was actually to throw them in a box and when I was in a good mood I'd pull them out and read them. Some of them are quite humorous, you know, one guy used to write to me anonymously on a regular basis, he'd have my column in his letter. It was really funny because he used to screw it up and then flatten it out and fold it and it would have these big marks on it.

In about 2009 I had a phone call from my Vice Chancellor at Canterbury asking if I would -- they'd received a complaint, and I said what's that about, and he said "you wrote a column saying Māori First World War veterans didn't get the same support when they came back from the war as Pākehā war veterans", I said "yes, that's correct, I did write that column and that is an historical fact." And the Vice Chancellor's office said to me "well we're going to write them a letter about academic freedom and things like that and just wondered whether you'd do the same." I said "no, I'm not going to be able to do that" and he said "why is that?" He was a bit taken aback, it was a big surprise. I said "well, the thing is I get a regular stream of hate mail and if I was to start writing back to everyone then you'd be paying me to write letters to racists, and that would be quite time-consuming." And the person I was speaking with "is that for real?" I said "I've got a box here", and I put my hand in the box and pulled one out, "here's one, it says 'F U you black C'. And then here's another one, 'your ancestors were all cannibals'", which is

actually quite true, I'm named after a cannibal, you know, he's a tall, handsome, good-looking cannibal and so on like that. So I said "respectfully I have to decline."

Now with the sort of developments that have come along in terms of Stuff and the wider recruitment of Māori journalists into the media generally, you know, Te Aniwa Hurihanganui at TV One, Te Rina Kowhai at Newshub, Maxine Jacobs at Stuff and a whole range of others. We're now sharing the racism so I get a bit less of it. And you know, I'd just really like to thank Carmen for her efforts in that regard.

I still am a recipient of that stuff, particularly during Covid there's been a pick up. I made number 13 on the crimes against -- Covid crimes against humanity hit list where we're going to be arrested and put on trial and some of us hung. I was trying to break into the top 10, but the next time I saw the list I'd actually been promoted to 20. But at least I was off the dreaded 13 I guess.

But we've had to sort of put in a bit of security and that, we have had one visit at home from someone where we had to deal with just before Christmas. So there are all those kind of general things to monitor at a personal level. But as I said, it's wonderful to have that shared more generally amongst Māori journos around the motu, I don't feel so lonely. But those are all the sort of issues that just come with part of, you know, being part of someone who participates in the media from a Māori point of view.

I went on later to win two other media awards and I was made aware in 2008 and 2009 that because I wasn't a professional journalist that there were moves to dismantle what they used to have in those days were Pacific columnist of the year and the Māori columnist of the year, because the last two awards I won were in the Māori category. And I was at an awards ceremony in Wellington and it was made known to me that people weren't very happy with that, and that's one of the things they were looking at. And ultimately those awards were disestablished, I think, in about 2010.

But, you know, with the regular racist flattery I get, I still realise I'm doing a good job so I'm not too bothered either way. My most recent one is I had an e-mail from someone saying I was, you know, "I'm a retired lab technician and with respect to Covid you're not a real doctor, you're an arts doctor" and so on and so forth. I just wrote back a short reply and said "well, it's interesting that no-one says that about Michael Plank or Shaun Hendy, one's a physicist, one's a mathematician. But you are correct, I'm not a medical doctor and I can't diagnose the rash now proliferating across the back of your neck, but I can diagnose and recommend treatment for racism. So I recommend that you isolate

at home, take two 30 minute doses of te reo Māori each day and undertake a rapid anti-racism test and not leave home until such time as you test negative, thank you."

Heoi ano, I'm happy to engage with the questions and offer what I can where I can. It's a real honour to be here and discuss these sorts of issues which are really, really important for our society as we move forward, both in terms of Te Ao Māori but also in terms of our greater emerging diversity. Heoi ano, (te reo Māori) tēnā tatou.

>>MS PARAHI: I think that Stuff will take up that checklist of yours, Rawiri, and maybe make that public, publish that on our Stuff website as well, I think that's a really excellent antidote for racism, yeah, through this pandemic time.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: No, love your anti-racism prescription, absolutely fabulous. Rawiri, I've got a couple of questions here, I've got them for both of. I'm going to start with one that's aimed at you Rawiri. So this is from Miriama and she says "ngā mihi nui ki a kōrua e ngā rangatira. I relied on reporting from you both in my thesis, engari she wanted to ask about the 2004 special rapporteur's report and Stephen Hagan identifying that racism in the media is a particular issue in Aotearoa. What traction or incentive is there to establish an independent monitoring commission?" I'd like to put that to both of you. Who'd like to start?

>>MR TAONUI: E te tuakana.

>>MS PARAHI: What you're the tuakana -- just kidding. So actually I really like that idea.

We've been thinking about that because we have -- so the news media in Aotearoa are watched over by the BSA, the Broadcasting Standards Authority and the Media Council, and that's actually a really good solution, thank you very much whoever suggested that, sorry I've forgotten the name.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Miriama.

>>MS PARAHI: Because that is actually something I will put on my list now because I really like that idea. And it hasn't happened, and why wouldn't we consider that as something for us to do either as part of the Media Council or the Broadcasting Standards Authority, both of those organisations are -- at the moment there's discussion around whether they need to be all together, because most media organisations are in our multi-media organisations where we're not just TV or we're not just radio or not just print, or digital now. So that is very excellent. I really love that idea, it's now on my list of things to do and take from this kōrero so thank you very much.

A couple of years ago after we did the apology, Māori journalists from across the industry, we finally got together. We used to collaborate and work together really closely

at the beginning of the 2000s, but then we just became disparate and we just got on with our work, as you do, head down bum up and trying to do the work you can within your own organisations.

So we came back together again, and so what that means is that we are trying to rebuild and re-establish the work that we've done. And because of that, because we've come together, not that it's just for us to hold the -- hold everyone to account, but it is really just to amplify our voices again and to really take a strong stand, and that is to also -- we had a lot of influence over the public interest journalism funding rounds, and so we were able to talk to that. And as part of that, Whariki from Massey University were able to create a report that they just put out this week, so I can send that to -- put that into our kōrero today, the link to it, so that you can see some suggestions that they made around what we could do to improve representation and deal with racism in the media sector.

Yeah. I'll get that and send it to -- that's me, that's all I've got to say.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Ka pai. Rawiri, so what traction or incentive is there do you think there is to establish some sort of monitoring commission?

>>MR TAONUI: It's a good idea. There's probably two options in there; one is to have an independent, stand-alone body that might deal with complaints around racism. The other one is to, inside those -- the existing structures like the BSA, is to restructure that in a -- in terms of a mainstream and a, say, perhaps Te Tiriti or multicultural stream.

One of the things I'm quite keen on is creating a korowai that marries issues of racism against Māori in the media in terms -- alongside racism against other ethnic groups like the Chinese Asian community, the Indian community, you know, we saw New Zealand First have a good go at that just before the last election, and also the Islamic community. Sometimes in these initiatives we have a bifurcation between Māori as tangata whenua and kind of everyone else on the other side. But it's really important to remember that racism against the Islamic community, Asian community, Indian subcontinent community, Pacific Island communities, it's really just another expression of the racism that we've always endured, and we've endured it for the longest and more intensely, particularly during the times (inaudible) things like that, and we would be stronger if there was a coming together of those energies and understandings and going forward.

It would also help breakdown the Pākehā monopoly over racism, because they are the Pākehā monopoly likes to deal with Māori racism over here, Pasifika there, Islamic community there and it's kind of like the unspoken is that they monitor all those groups.

But in fact on people who were the main recipients of racism or main victims, we should actually come together and put things back from our point of view.

So tautoko that, I remember that report, and hats off to any student that's gone and dug that report out from 2004, it was like it was yesterday, but gosh it's 18 years ago. You should get first class honours for that thesis I would imagine.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: I'm sure that Miriama will be delighted to hear to hear that. Thank you for your input both of you. Carmen, I've got a question for you relating to something you said earlier, but I'm going to just read out a comment from one of our participants Maria, she says "kia ora Carmen, not a pātai, more of a comment of tautoko. You are setting the pace, Carmen, it's like the long game, transformation efforts demand pace, persistence and leadership. The changes you have made in media driving the way to transform how Māori kōrero is shared and shifts away from the constant colonial deficit rhetoric, keep up the awesome mahi", that's from Maria.

I have a question for you. Obviously you and I both come from news rooms, and you were talking before about how news rooms and journalists need to do better, and I was curious to find out what you thought "doing better" meant. So I suppose my question to you is, what is it that mainstream journalists don't understand that they need to understand to do a better job?

>>MS PARAHI: First of all, I just wanted to say thank you Miri, really appreciate your kind words because often I don't get a lot of kind words when it comes to trying to do this work, so it's really nice to hear some support where we can, and also to remind me patience, it is a long game this work, sadly.

So what are the things that I've learned the most in the last two years? Actually particularly through Tā Mātou Pono, which was our project we did to not only look at how we had portrayed Māori at Stuff and through all of our newspapers, but also in part 2 of Tā Mātou Pono which was looking at the history of Aotearoa. And the one thing that stood out for me was kuaretanga, so ignorance. And it was -- all of us are ignorant of our history. We don't know what we don't know, we therefore can't contextualise the issues of the day. So if you don't know your history, you don't understand why we are -- why there is a massive amount of focus and reporting on Māori communities, Pasifika communities in the pandemic.

The context to it is because we have been dealt some serious heavy blows by suffering from institutional racism in the health system, and therefore that puts, not just

that, but also poverty and other issues that have come because of colonisation and systemic racism in those systems.

Because we don't -- if we don't contextualise what's happening now by knowing our history, it means when we do our news we just do a straight off the bat without the context of that issue. So that's the one thing that I've learned the most.

And so I really -- so one of the things we did do really well at Stuff, I have to say, is that we backed a call a few years ago for history to become taught in schools. So that generation, generation alpha, who by all accounts are going to be quite a scary group of young people, generation alpha, they will get the benefits of knowing our history. They will be able to contextualise modern day issues around climate change, hauora, education, the justice system. So when I talk about our journalists, and it's our academics it's all people, we don't know our history -- therefore we don't know what's -- we don't know how to contextualise what's happening now.

So what we've been talking to our journalists about is to just really understand that it's not as simple as Māori -- low vaccination rates amongst Māori, oh they're -- we could have been reporting like they're just lagging. Māori are lagging, Māori need to do better. When in fact the kōrero was turned around to, the Government needs to do better, our district health boards need to do better, we are not focused enough on Māori to get them to equity around vaccination, to help our journalists understand that the reasons for it is a lack of trust in the system, a lack of trust with authority, lack of trust with the Government. So there's all these things that we've been trying to teach our journalists to understand and contextualise what's happening in the pandemic, and that's just one example of it.

And also, when they go to the 1 o'clock stand-ups, in the past when we go and we would talk to authority, we'd just lump everybody in together. But what it meant was that was a very Eurocentric view, a very monocultural view on the issue, and therefore we were just getting the answers for monocultural New Zealand, or Pākehā New Zealand rather than different communities needed different solutions. But they equally need journalists to stand up for each and every single community that has been under-represented in the past. And that's what we're trying to do in Pou Tiaki, but gee it's trying to teach individual journalists to understand the history, and I think that's one of the big issues.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Interesting. Rawiri, is there something you'd like to add to that?

>>MR TAONU: I agree with what Carmen says about understanding the history. At the end of the day we're not going to stand a chance of eradicating racism from our society unless we understand our history. And ultimately the two biggest things we have to understand about

our history is A, that our history is racist, and the kind of racism that we've experienced since contact, western colonial racism, has been the most virulent form of racism to ever have existed on the face of the planet. That's just the bottom line.

The second other aspect of our history that we need to understand, and it is the fundamental tension between rangatiratanga and kāwanatanga, is that the Treaty never ceded sovereignty to the Crown. The two texts are not really translatable, you know, there is all sorts of intellectually elastic sorts of exercises to try and make that fit, but the bottom line is they are quite different, Māori signed the one in te reo mainly and all the discussions were held in that context.

The fact is, is that at the end of the day the biggest historical fact that we have to take on board is that the Crown didn't obtain sovereignty over the country in 1840, rather they inquired it over the following 60 years or so taking land, Māori resisted taking land, then it was warfare, then it's unjust legislation, it's the abrogation of our fundamental human rights, so if necessary people would be imprisoned without facing charges and for lengthy periods of time, and we had all this other violence alongside it. And when we get on top of those two things then we're going to relax quite a bit more as a nation, and that will make a difference, not only in the media, but in several other aspects of our society.

The other ones that are really important here, I mean, you know, as I referred to before, there's an increasing number of really cool and younger generation Māori journos out there, you know, I try and maintain relationships with them and also not only talk about the news, but also just how they're going in terms of their writing life and reporting life, because it's just such a really great thing to witness.

But over and above that, the media's not going to change just because we have more -- an increasing number of busy brown reporters. What it's going to take is a change of leadership. I really take my hat off to Carmen, I know what it's like to confront racism in an institutional context, and that's really, really challenging every day, it goes right to your heart and soul, you're really vulnerable and, you know, the only way you're going to survive that is A, if you're an alcoholic, and two, if you've got some kind of strong wairua and inspiration and whānau support around you. And the second one's better than the first one.

I take my hats off to her. But at the end of the day, what we need to see in the media, particularly in our major media organisations like Stuff, The Herald and so on and so forth, you know, in radio and television, is Māori leadership of mainstream news. Not just Te Karere, not just Te Ao Māori news, but the editor.

If I reflect back on what that would look like in a university, rather than the Māori lecturer always going to the Pro Vice Chancellor, or the Executive Committee, or the Vice Chancellor and making really polite, you know, slightly firm suggestions and waiting for those to be accepted, when you're the CEO, you just write memos, "we want things to be this way, thank you everybody", and that's the sort of future that we need to shape in our media. Heoi ano, kia ora tātou.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: That's great. Let's turn to some questions from our lovely audience. So here I have one from Tenaya(?), and she says "I'm a first year student at Massey University for a bachelor of social work. I would just like to ask, is there anything a social worker can do in regards to the bias in the media against Māori specifically?" I'm actually going to turn to you first, Rawiri, for this one, because of course social workers are tertiary education, and you might have some ideas here about what social workers trained in universities might be able to do in regards to the bias against Māori in the media.

>>MR TAONU: One of the things that the discipline of social work can do was come up with more programmes for conducting welfare amongst the racist community to educate them out of the straitjacket of their assumptions and prejudices, that's one of the key things.

In the current situation, obviously in terms of frontline social work, it's about understanding what's happening to the communities that you're dealing with, Māori communities and so on and so forth.

Many years ago before I went to university, I was a detached youth worker through the Department of Internal Affairs, the detached youth work scheme was set up by Rob Muldoon in the wake of the 1978 what they called the Moerewa riot. So my job was frontline street work with gang members, what they used to call in those days street kids. And the difference between what our team did and what mainstream social workers did, is mainstream social workers had a deficit understanding of what they would call at-risk youth in those days, whereas we had a cultural insider (inaudible) understanding of their situation and how Māori came to be in that position. That's really a big, big -- the big challenge for social work or work in and around youth suicide is to understand the history, the colonial history and the racist history that's got our people there.

So just as a quick example, 2018 OECD report had New Zealand with -- ranked New Zealand with the highest rate of adolescent suicide in the OECD. Now the reality of that is, if you extract the Māori statistics from the national statistics, the national statistics were only averaged in the OECD. It's the Māori statistic that was the worst in the OECD.

And it was because of our proportion of the population just pushed the national figures to that far end.

If you did the same with the Aboriginal community in Australia, so Australia ranks about middle in OECD for adolescent suicide. And that's because the smaller percentage of the Aboriginal community in those figures, their stats get smudged over by the national rate per population, but if you extract those, then it's the Aboriginal First Nations people who have the worst figures in the OECD, followed by New Zealand, then followed by First Nations Canada and so on and so forth.

And social workers need to click on to those sorts of realities and why those realities exist rather than the, you know, this person's got a mental problem. They haven't got a mental problem, our society's got a racist problem. Kia ora.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Okay. I've got a question for you, Carmen. I'm just thinking looking at the time and thinking about turning the discourse to what we know has worked. So just linking back to what you said, Carmen, you talked about that people are ignorant, they're kuare and they don't know what they don't know and they tend to leap for stereotypes and crass generalisations.

So in terms of your work in the media, especially in the last two years, what, I suppose, success stories have you seen in terms of people's attitudes changing, can you give me some idea of what sort of processes have you seen people go through, because for a lot of non-Māori we know that they find it very confronting to confront their own racism. And I know because I spoke to one of your reporters before the apology that a lot of the reporters who are looking at the stories of the past were quite shocked by what they found and felt terrible about it. So can you give us some idea of what sort of positive steps you have seen people take, and how that's ended up, what the hua have been, the benefits?

>>MS PARAHI: Yeah, so just doing the investigation itself and talking about it internally and then getting reporters to be a part of Tā Mātou Pono, one, and then two, has switched it up. So for example, a Pākehā journalist who did sports forever, through this lens and being part of this project, he changed his whole perspective and he's not the only one, there are a lot of journalists that have said "oh wow, you can actually teach an old dog new tricks." So that's been said a few times.

But I saw in the commentary threads today from our audience decolonisation training, so two things have happened in that space. So one, we actually will be rolling out a programme internally at Stuff to do that for all of our journalists. Because they actually want to know. They want to try and do better as well, so they -- so a reporter recently said

"Carmen, I'm having troubles with" -- not trouble, but "I'm trying to engage with iwi and struggling to do that." I said "okay, it's going to take you 27 years, because that's how long it takes to build a relationship with iwi", but just kidding aside, so -- but to understand why he wasn't able to do that and actually understand their history on the issue that he's dealing with. So by understanding their history of the issue, he actually started to change the way he was looking at the story and realised again this is about contextualising why certain things are being done.

So we will be rolling out training internally, that training will then become available for other organisations as well as journalism schools. The other part is there is training being undertaken so that Whariki report that we put up there, that is also being made available to all media organisations to get funding through the New Zealand On Air public interest journalism funding, you actually have to have a Māori media company come in and support their work in that space as well. So there is actually a lot of education and development going on internally. We don't -- and you can actually just physically see the shifts going on everywhere. It's going to take time, we're going to keep fucking it up, like stuffing it up, sorry, stuffing it up, right. So I make mistakes, we make mistakes at Stuff and, you know, we try to apologise for it as soon as we can if we -- when we can.

But I think that is -- there's just so many little shifts, so many big shifts going on. And I don't think people really fully understand that that is happening. It should have happened a long time ago, but sometimes things just -- it's all about timing when the stars, moons, planets, when the maramataka aligns then we're good to go. So there is a lot of good stuff happening but it is taking time.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Thank you Carmen. Rawiri, so in your experience working in this anti-racism space, what sort of positive shifts have you seen on a societal or an individual level as people come to terms with their own racism or their own thoughtlessness perhaps?

>>MR TAONU: Well I can just say at a personal level, you know, obviously what Stuff has done is landmark, that's put a line in the sand and it's really awesome to see. The recruitment of young Māori reporters, you know, more broadly across mainstream has been really great. But I also have some relationships with different reporters who are Pākehā and who are much better than the Pākehā reporters you used to get 20 years ago. You know, generally a little bit younger, but really talented, skilful writers and reporters, but also have a much broader understanding of the racism that abounds, so that's really encouraging.

A couple of other things I think going forward, obviously I'd like to see more Māori CEOs, so send a whole crew an e-mail saying "please take Friday off and have a special long weekend, come back on Monday, decolonise", thank you.

But some more practical things that we can do, you know, like during Covid we've seen different media outlets produce fact-checking and stuff. A really good initiative in the media would be Stuff material that fact-checked racism and the history of our country. And it would be more powerful if that was formed in terms of a partnership between journalists, but also people that are part of civil society and at the frontline of those kind of things in the community.

You know, one of the problems with the misinformation, the counter-misinformation effort is that Stuff's had its fact-checking, I think Radio New Zealand. But it's kind of isolated from civil society, so it's not really gained enough traction and we've been nowhere near as broadly organised as the Covid misinformation spread is. But something around racism and via a partnership, that would be really awesome to see, kia ora mai tātou.

>>MS PARAHI: One thing we haven't really talked about, and I apologise we should maybe have talked about this earlier, was with the media we actually -- we do -- we have to abide by a set of rules, regulations, and we have to stick with that, right, and we're trying to improve that space. But what we haven't talked about is the social media and the massive impact that has had on racism as well. And that has amplified the racism towards Rawiri, to a lot of our journalists as well, to myself. And that racism as well as -- and the prejudice. So in our Pou Tiaki team we've got two wonderful reporters who both have disabilities, and we received an e-mail from someone who was just nasty about raising up the issues of disability. And we've got a lot of that stuff around in our social media, there's no -- there's no checks and balances in there, there's nothing to stop the racism and hate that comes out towards our Muslim community, towards our Māori community, our wāhine Māori who have been really vilified and Rawiri as well.

So that is really big issue, there is no-one -- there's no checks and balances on social media and that's really where we really need to focus, which is what Rawiri was talking about where we've actually started to fact-check a lot of the stuff, misinformation coming out of social media, disinformation is the biggest one. I knew the world had lost the plot when we had anti-mandate protesters calling Tame Iti a kūpapa. When that happened I knew we've lost the fucking plot, I'm sorry we've lost the plot now, when this is the type of kōrero and rhetoric bollocks that's coming out of social media.

So that to me is very, very harmful. We've got more controls around media, Māori Television, radio, we've got way more there, but we don't have around social media, and that is a kōrero we really need to get on to really quickly because that is -- like the media, compared to all the voices and stuff and information coming out of social media, where this much compared to that much, and it's very troubling. We are struggling in the media to control the rubbish that is coming out of social media.

>>RINGA HĀPAI: Kia ora, Carmen, yes, we could spend hours and hours and hours talking about social media, it is a problem. Tēnā tātou everyone, I wish we could keep going with this fascinating conversation but we do have a time limit here and we do need to wrap up, unfortunately. I'm sorry we didn't get through everyone's questions, but thank you everybody out there for engaging.

I would like to especially thank our two manuwhiri, Carmen and Rawiri, and all of you out there in cyberspace for your interest in this session and your engagement, it's been lovely. I'd just like to acknowledge the many sponsors who have made this event possible, and I would like, once again, to acknowledge Jared and Charles for their sterling work behind the scenes. Now a recording of this session will be available via YouTube and Facebook under the title Te Tiriti-based Futures.

I'd just like to draw your attention to the marathon for social justice, kei te muri o te ahi, that means in the heat of battle. So in partnership with Pecha Kucha, which probably some of you know about, the final day of Te Tiriti-based Futures and Anti-racism will be a platform for emerging voices. So we're going to have an epic 12-hour marathon of sort, interactive talks from students and recent graduates who will be pushing the boundaries in anti-racism here and internationally. So if you want to have your minds stimulated and possibly blown I would recommend that to you.

So now what I'd like us to do, I'm just going to do a closing karakia to release ourselves from this kaupapa. Once again, thank you very much everyone for coming, it's been a really stimulating hour and I hope you go on to enjoy many more sessions in this conference. (Closing karakia). Tēnā tātou katoa.