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**DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR PAUL** Spoonley has brought me to Auckland's Long Bay Park, the city's most visited park. Attracting around 1.5 million people every year, it's a microcosm of our country in general and our biggest city in particular, great groups of us spread across its shaded grass every weekend.

Spoonley is a sociologist by profession, but a people-watcher by choice. He steadily interrupts himself to comment on people we pass by; who they are, what they're doing, what they look like: "Those are Iranis or Iraqis... Pasifika over there on your right... Look at the height of this guy... What's he doing hitchhiking like that?"

When he can't figure out where a group

of people are from, he stops to ask. "Philippines," says a young man, swatting away a fly.

"This is a gateway city," says Spoonley, walking on. "Basically two-thirds of all migrants come in to Auckland and stay in Auckland. You've got the earlier waves, Pasifika next to us here, and more recent waves. Some of these will be refugees, some of these will be business and skilled migrants."

The catalyst for the new New Zealand was the 1987 Immigration Act. Under it, immigration selection criteria changed from a focus on ease of assimilation into a white, Anglo-centric culture to a policy that most prized capital and skills.

Two hundred and thirteen different ethnic groups now live in New Zealand. One in eight New Zealanders is an Asian. As recently as 2006, it was one in 11.





Any city made up of more than 25 per cent ethnic migrants is known as 'super-diverse'. Now at 40 per cent, Auckland is more diverse than Sydney, London or Los Angeles. The only city in the OECD with a higher proportion is Toronto.

The dominant driver of that diversity has been migration from Asia. In 1991, about five per cent of Aucklanders were Asian. Today, it's 23 per cent. By the 2020s, Spoonley believes, it will be 27 or 28 per cent.

That rapid influx has resulted in geographical distortions too. 'Ethnoburbs' or 'ethnic precincts' have arisen on Auckland's North Shore and in East Auckland, where Asians are the dominant ethnic group.

"When you look at the size and rapidity of the change," says Spoonley, "it's very, very unusual." But at the same time, it has happened relatively harmoniously. After

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New Zealand's ethnic composition has changed rapidly since the late 1980s, and has done so free of cultural tensions that have accompanied such change elsewhere in the world. Many Somali immigrants, pictured, have gathered around the Mt Roskill area in Auckland, part of a clustering phenomenon demographers refer to as 'ethnoburbs'. Still, New Zealand has relatively low levels of ethnic segregation compared to other similarly diverse countries.

an initial backlash in the 1990s, led by the publication of newspaper articles headlined 'Inv-Asian', and much political posturing, New Zealanders' attitudes towards the Asian community have been generally and increasingly positive.

But what do we mean when we say Asian? Asia is made up of 50 countries, among them Tajikistan, Mongolia, Bhutan, the Maldives, Pakistan, Iran, Brunei, Georgia, Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

"Asia is a complete nonsense term," says migration studies specialist Professor Richard Bedford. "It spans 60 per cent of

the world's population and most would never call themselves Asian.

"New Zealand is developing a trend of having wide group labels," he says. "We are going to have to change that thinking or we will run ourselves into trouble."

Bedford is concerned that our country's growing focus on Asia will lead to a risk that we will ignore developments closer to home, in Australia and the Pacific Islands.

Although, again, what does it mean to be from the 'Pacific Islands'? In 2001, Pacific studies lecturer Melani Anae wrote: "There's no generic 'Pacific community' >





but rather Pacific peoples, who align themselves variously, and at different times, along ethnic, geographic, church, family, school, age/gender, youth/elders, island born/NZ born, or occupational lines, or a mix of these.”

We have to be careful with stereotypes, says Bedford: Tonga is said to have the world’s highest number of PhDs per capita; migration from Fiji is booming and most come under the skilled migrant category; of 61,000 Cook Islanders in New Zealand, 47,000 were born here.

“People do struggle because of stereotyping. There’s a lot of discrimination in the labour market,” he says. “If you are subject to negative stereotypes and come to believe you are an underclass, it breeds behaviours—you don’t feel you have any hope. It might mean crime or drugs. If you are denied work, you still have to live. It’s

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Esta Hutchins bought her first home in Blockhouse Bay, Auckland, where she is now among a growing number of New Zealanders living alone—a trend being driven in part by people choosing to marry later in life or coming out of relationships in mid-life. It’s estimated that by 2033, more people will be living alone than living with another person. Understanding the implications of such change is critical for the way we plan our society.

hard to break out of a stereotype.”

Paul Spoonley steers us out into the strange hinterland of Auckland’s north, the ravaged landscape of what was once the city’s urban fringe and is now both one of the country’s fastest-growing residential areas and a symptom of its change.

We cross a short green buffer zone created by developers who have spent almost two years reshaping its contours and preparing it for the 2500 houses that will soon be built there. Asian building crews—“Look at the gloves,” says Spoonley—work

out the front of sections that will soon extend deep into what was so recently farmland.

“There are some interesting things about these developments,” he says. “There are no dairies. There’s no shopping. Normally in a development like this you would have facilities, but there’s nothing.”

Nearby, parts of the area around Oteha Valley Road are more developed, heavy with gated communities, often targeted at older residents.

“This is intensive housing Auckland-style



in the 21st century," says Spoonley. "You have got these very distinctive housing developments beginning to occur. But look for a dairy. Look for anything that provides a service function. There's nothing.

"These have all been built in the last three or four months," he says, gesturing with his hands as we drive past an improbably large cluster of houses; "*Choom-choom-choom-choom.*"

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**JUST OUTSIDE CHRISTCHURCH**, growth is similarly impressive. The population of Rolleston South West in Selwyn District increased nearly nine times between 2001 and 2013, from 225 to 1974. Rolleston North West more than trebled its population, from 492 to 1797 in the same period. (The population of Selwyn District as a whole grew by 33 per cent between 2006 and 2013, while the country's next fastest-growing territorial authority was Queenstown-Lakes, at 23 per cent growth.)

That's a result of earthquakes forcing people from the central city, and partly also due to people wanting to move to a pleasant new subdivision not far from an economic centre. Selwyn District has been New Zealand's fastest- or second-fastest-growing district since the early 2000s.

"We've done our bit to free up land," says David Smith, who leads the strategy and policy team in Selwyn. "There's enough land to meet demand, and we'll continue to make sure we meet demand. Take-up has been rapid, much more than we expected it to be. But if we get below comfort level, we will bring more on line."

Smith speaks of land in parcels to be "brought on line", supplied to meet a demand as if it could be flicked on at the mains. This is the benefit of having great swathes of fields available for development, ready to be literally divvied up into cute streets. But the strategy hasn't always worked. Early in the development's life, politicians were hands-off and growth had few constraints.

"They said, 'Off you go,' and off they went," says Smith. Developers descended at pace, building big houses on big sections, with little consideration of wider planning issues. "There are a lot of culs-de-sac you

drive into now and don't know how to get out."

Rolleston sprawls. Critics like to say that you need to get in your car to drive between shops. But that's changing, says Smith. Where once this place represented the worst of ad-hoc 'greenfields' developments, now the council is planning and setting policy around urban development. "We're more directive now of where we want the development to go and how we want it to look," says Smith.

Careful re-zoning has meant the potential for a greater variety of housing: smaller sections, smaller homes, townhouses, apartments. Elderly people, professional couples, singles: these people can't afford,

**"The fairy tale we tell ourselves is that it's all happy families, but that's actually not the case." The proportion of households containing couples with children has halved. Families made up of two parents with children are no longer our most common family type.**

or don't want, to live in four bedrooms on 800 square metres. "That's the point of our zone changes," says Smith.

While most of country's population drifts ever more steadily towards cities—those chaotic hubs of energy and commerce—Selwyn is sucking people out of the earthquake-ravaged centre of Christchurch and into its quiet, well-ordered streets.

Researchers and academics look at how we have lived in the past and how we live now and use that data to make predictions about our future. But our world is not always shaped by the steady accumulation of predictable events. A former demographer at Statistics New Zealand suggested that demographers in the 1940s didn't see the baby boom coming. Our lives turn on moments of massive and unexpected upheaval. In that regard, the rapid growth

of Selwyn District may not be so much an outlier as a harbinger of things to come.

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**THE FIRST TIME** Esta Hutchins tried to buy a house at auction, she told everyone she knew. Her mum flew up from Christchurch. But by the end of her eight-month search, and many failed auctions, she told nobody. She found it exhausting and upsetting as a single woman competing against couples whose combined capital and income vastly exceeded her own. She had started out looking in areas she wanted to live, then worked her way down the property ladder: "I thought, 'I can't afford Sandringham, but maybe Mt Roskill.' I would go and look at places and think, 'I don't even want to live here, but I still can't afford it.'"

The rundown \$320,000 house she eventually bought in Blockhouse Bay in Auckland's south-west was still a stretch, so she got a flatmate, but that flatmate moved out after 15 months and she has been by herself since.

Fifty years ago, only one in ten households contained a person living alone. Today, it is one in four. In her solitude, Hutchins now has much company.

"This is a major sociological shift," says social researcher Mervyl McPherson. "It has an impact right across our society. It's fundamental to how we plan our society. Single-person households once were transitory. Now they're a lifestyle choice."

"I missed my flatmate when she left," says Hutchins, "but you soon get used to it again. I'm quite a social person and often have people over, so it's not a major."

In the mid 20th century, researchers considered the terms 'household' and 'family' to mean the same thing. Not any more. Not by a long chalk.

It has happened so quickly. Auckland Council senior researcher Alison Reid says that when she saw in the 2006 census the number of people living alone, she was surprised by how huge it was. "The fairy tale we tell ourselves is that it's all happy families, but that's actually not the case."

Single people are only the beginning. The proportion of households containing couples with children has halved. Families made up of two parents with children are





no longer our most common family type. A generation ago, there were twice as many couples with children as without. Today, the two groups are the same size.

There are even new acronyms for our new ways of living: LATs (Living Apart Together) are couples who maintain a relationship while living separately.

“People think of diversity in terms of ethnicity,” says McPherson, “but we’re getting increasingly diverse in the way we live.”

Between the censuses in 2006 and 2013, Auckland accounted for half of New Zealand’s population growth. The next 11 biggest cities were responsible for just 25 per cent. And Statistics New Zealand predicts that Auckland will account for more than 60 per cent of the country’s population growth over the next two decades.

But while cities appear to be thriving, the regions are largely in decline. Natalie

Many small towns and settlements in Northland are being affected by declining populations. Sometimes these settlements are located within larger areas that otherwise appear to be doing well—although Pukenui is struggling, for census purposes it is part of Houhora, the population of which grew by 11 per cent between 2006 and 2013.

Jackson, director of the National Institute of Demographic and Economic Analysis (NIDEA) at Waikato University, says growth has permanently ended in much of New Zealand and zero growth or decline will eventually be the case in all but the main cities.

“Councils are struggling to understand why they are not growing and how to deal with that,” she says. “One-third of territorial authorities are in decline and most will never grow again. It’s about making decisions on how to deliver services to populations that aren’t growing.”

Although the populations of most of New Zealand’s 16 regions grew between 2006 and 2013, there were declines in 20 of the 67 territorial authorities that make up those regions. Low birth rates combined with ageing populations mean that, for many others, growth will not be sustainable. Parts of the country are ageing significantly faster than others and solutions need to be found on a regional, not just a national, scale.

“Current arguments, such as the importing of health-care workers from the Philippines,” wrote Jackson in 2011,



“is less likely to be a reflection of ‘jobs that New Zealanders don’t want’ as much as it’s a lack of New Zealanders where many such jobs are.”

Japan, which has one of the world’s oldest populations, is closing down around 400 towns where decline has become terminal. Parts of Europe are facing a similar predicament. Jackson says it’s a possibility here too.

Because the 2013 census data so far refers to ‘census area unit (CAU) levels’, rather than towns, it’s not easy to say where this might happen first, but it’s possible to make some informed guesses. Between 2006 and 2013, there were major population declines in the CAUs of Taihape (16 per cent), Cape Runaway (17 per cent) and Hokianga North (14 per cent). Otangarei in Whangarei District lost nearly a quarter of its people over the same period. And then there are the military towns.

Steve Vine moved to Waiouru in the central North Island as a 16-year-old in 1977. He hated it, having just come from Wellington, where he had lots of friends. But still, more than 4000 people lived in the town then, and once he made friends, he grew to love it.

It’s an army town, so army decisions have an outsized impact. With fewer permanent staff at the military camp, the population has dropped steadily. Between 2001 and 2013, it declined by more than half, from 1647 to 738.

Vine used to go down to the pub and drink with 30 or 40 people. Now there may be two or three. In the town’s heyday, there

**In the town’s heyday, there were six rugby teams. Now there are none. Only one of the two original golf clubs remains and it has barely a dozen members. Vine’s business, Waiouru Motors, used to have four employees. Now it’s just him.**

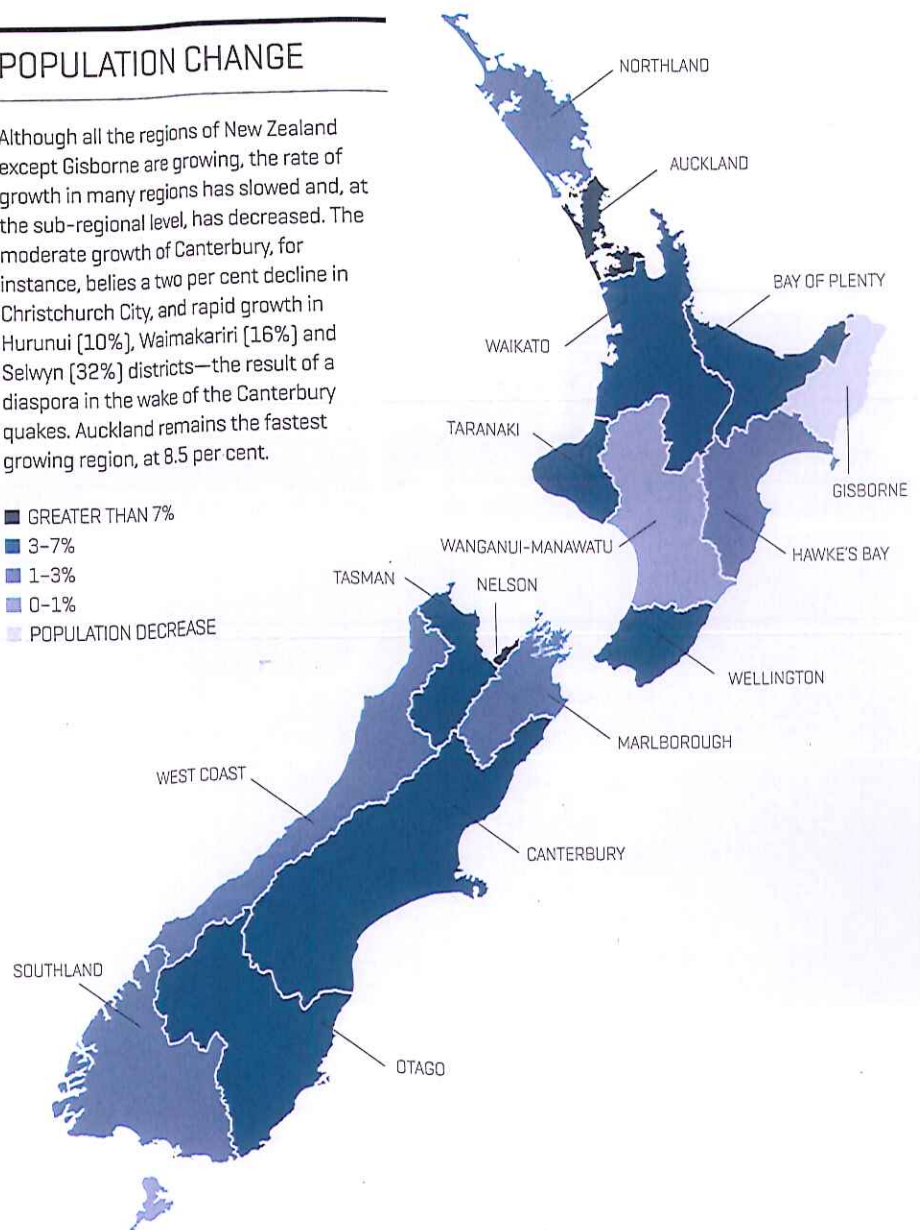
were six rugby teams. Now there are none. Only one of the two original golf clubs remains and it has barely a dozen members. Vine’s business, Waiouru Motors, used to have four employees. Now it’s just him.

“It’s the things that make a difference to a little town,” he says. Still, Vine doesn’t

## POPULATION CHANGE

Although all the regions of New Zealand except Gisborne are growing, the rate of growth in many regions has slowed and, at the sub-regional level, has decreased. The moderate growth of Canterbury, for instance, belies a two per cent decline in Christchurch City, and rapid growth in Hurunui (10%), Waimakariri (16%) and Selwyn (32%) districts—the result of a diaspora in the wake of the Canterbury quakes. Auckland remains the fastest growing region, at 8.5 per cent.

- GREATER THAN 7%
- 3-7%
- 1-3%
- 0-1%
- POPULATION DECREASE



Vine doesn’t expect that Waiouru’s going to disappear, because he doesn’t think the army will abandon the site: “They’ve got 80,000 hectares of land to blow up,” he says. “I’m a born Waiouruan. I’d hang in there. I still do a lot of work for people from Ohakune, Raetihi, Taihape. I’ve got a pretty good customer base—it’s not just Waiouru. I own a house here too and there’d be no resale value, so I’d have to think about that as well.”

It’s a bind that many residents of small regional towns may find themselves in; worse still if they become trapped by >

want to move away. He appreciates the modest cost of living. For \$260 a year he can play golf whenever he wants—a quarter of the membership fee of the cheapest city clubs.

“It’s a good little community. I wouldn’t still be here if I didn’t like it in some way.”





The nature of families has changed radically in New Zealand over recent decades, with families comprised of children from previous relationships being more common, and the advent of families with same-sex parents. Ellie and Evelyn enjoy family time with Stella and Leo—Evelyn's children from a previous same-sex relationship. While such changes in family form have generated attention, changes in structure are far more important from a demographic point of view: family size, the age gap between generations and where family members live.

declining values, their property worth less than they owe the bank. And though Vine cites a wide client base, it includes towns that are also in decline—Ruapehu District has waned 12 per cent since 2006—an insidious commercial reality not seen on this scale in rural New Zealand before.

Even in many regions where the population is growing, the long-term outlook is for decline. The people moving to areas such as Nelson, Tauranga and Queenstown-Lakes are generally older—they are not going to replace themselves—so the

growth they create is temporary: “When the age structure gets older, you are hurtling towards the end of growth,” says Natalie Jackson.

Although there is a marked contrast between massive growth in our major urban areas and depopulation outside them, it doesn't have to mean the end of small towns, and other countries where these population movements are more advanced have shown the way. In Australia, the federal government redistributes income unequally to ensure the regions

receive what they need, using a system known as horizontal fiscal equalisation. In the United Kingdom, attempts have been made to stimulate growth by moving government departments to struggling towns such as Hull. Such steps are not necessarily the answer, but they help.

“People are starting to realise we're all in this together,” says Jackson. “Local councils are not private, they affect all of us.”

Steve Vine has to work long hours at his business to make up for the steady decline of his adopted home town, but this doesn't concern him greatly. “You're in Waiouru,” he says. “What else are you going to do?”



**LIKE MOST OF** New Zealand, Christchurch's population is ageing and its fertility rate is dropping. But unlike most of New Zealand, Christchurch urgently needs people to



come and rebuild it.

New Zealand's economic growth forecasts are based on a six-year Christchurch rebuild. If that rebuild gets pushed out to, say, 10 years, projected GDP will drop. The economic case for migration, at least in Christchurch, is crystal clear. But migrant workers pose another problem: what happens when the rebuild is complete?

These are challenges beyond the scope of demographic or economic projections.

Similarly, a lot is at stake in the \$500 million, 60,000-hectare irrigation development on the central plains west of Christchurch, which will involve linking the Waimakariri and Rakaia Rivers with a 56-kilometre canal. The expected impact of the development is a doubling of the labour force on local farms to 700 and the creation of 1700 further jobs beyond the farms.

Communities are already growing up around the project. The village of Hororata, for instance, has a main street that consists of a coffee shop and a garage. It will be boosted by the arrival of a workforce of 150.

Pokeno, a Waikato village of 500 known for bacon and big ice creams, is another small town benefiting from a big influx. It's in the early stages of a boom that is expected to multiply its population by a factor of 12 over the next 50 years.

In August last year, dairy company Yashili was granted permission to build a \$220 million infant formula plant in the town. The facility is expected to provide jobs for about 120 people. A 400-hectare housing development is also being built, and Pokeno School is expected to grow from 150 to 800 pupils over the next decade or so.

The opening of a motorway bypass in 1999 meant that thousands of motorists who once passed through Pokeno each day would forever pass it by. Many predicted the town's demise, but few foresaw a major industrial and housing development—how could they? Pokeno is undoubtedly an outlier in a nation filled with towns in decline, but it offers hope.

Growth, however, creates problems and distortions too. Within our cities, prosperity is not evenly distributed. As we drive slowly along Clyde Road in Christchurch, University of Canterbury geography lecturer Malcolm Campbell points out grand >



## MAN DROUGHT

THE PHRASE 'MAN drought' was first used by Australian demographer Bernard Salt in 2005 to illustrate the imbalance in the genders in both Australia and New Zealand. But since then, census data has indicated that the issue has become less significant across the Tasman.

In New Zealand, however, the 2013 census shows that the drought is still on, with 95 males to every 100 females at all age groups across the population, and 91 males to every 100 females in the 25–49 age group, where the problem has been most referenced.

Economist and researcher Paul Callister—one of the most prominent voices on the issue in this country—says that the 2013 census shows that imbalance has got worse in all parts of the country except Canterbury, where earthquake-related migration is likely to have played a major part in preventing the gender gap widening.

Migration is a driver: immigrants are more likely to

be women, while those leaving New Zealand are more likely to be men. Men are also more likely to die young. Some of the drought can also be accounted for by the fact that males are less likely to fill out census forms.

There is a second drought, too, involving a shortage of well-educated males to partner with well-educated females. However, rather than a purely demographic trend, this problem relates to what is known as assortative mating—the tendency to pair with someone similar to yourself. This drought is caused partly by declining male participation and achievement in education, but also by the historic tendency of women to 'marry up' academically. [Women are starting to adapt by marrying males with lower formal qualifications.]

Well-educated males are the main beneficiaries, with a greater choice of partners, while lesser-educated people from both sexes have a smaller pool of prospects—yet another reason to pursue a good education.

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homes on big sections with elaborate facades and tennis courts, owned by captains of industry and the city's upper crust.

Clustered on either side of the roundabout at the intersection of Clyde and Ilam Roads is a small gathering of shops. A new dental clinic has been built on the far side, and then the houses begin again, but on this side of the road it's state housing.

"I would say the difference between the areas is basically a Western kind of thing," says Campbell. "You notice it in housing particularly, but then it shows up in things like educational achievement, health, stuff like that. It's not that far away and you're talking something like \$1.5 million down that street and \$250-\$300,000 at this end."

Campbell specialises in spatial microsimulation, which is a method of computer modelling that he describes as being something like the computer game 'The Sims' or 'SimCity'. By inputting data from the census and social surveys into a model, he is able to predict social consequences for which researchers have little data—primarily for social, economic or health policy scenarios.

"If the rich area happens to be in a certain school catchment area, then that school will more than likely perform quite differently from a school that has a catchment area that is solely made up of more deprived housing," he says. "Generally speaking there will also be two steady earners to be able to afford the mortgage on the property and that will be a stable environment compared to someone who is a single parent and struggling to bring up children. Multiply that over a lifetime and it makes quite a difference."

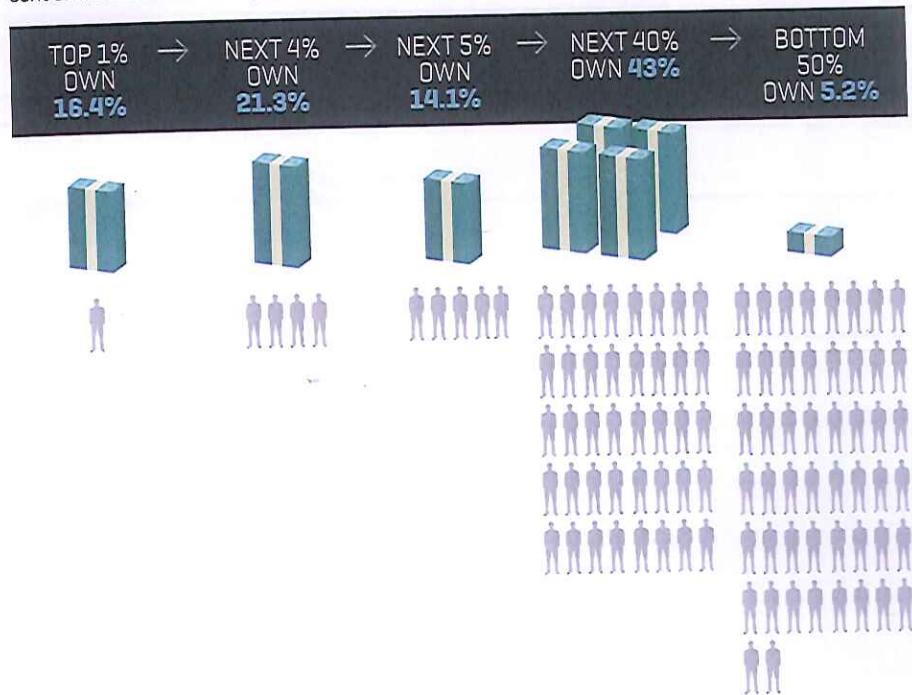
"People who have well-paid jobs and are highly educated and have 'normal' families would look very different to people who are constantly struggling on a minimum-wage job with not many qualifications. So those two groups of people don't really understand each other."

"They live together, in my opinion, much more in this country than where I come from. The clues are much more subtle here. People don't drive flash cars, for instance, but housing seems to be one of the few indicators of obvious wealth."

"Is it a more egalitarian society, then?" I ask.

## DISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH

There is a large discrepancy between the world's wealthiest one per cent and its poorest 50 per cent. In 2011, the OECD published 'Divided We Stand' a report expressing concern about the economic, social and political challenges created by growing inequality and unravelling of the social contract. In New Zealand, the growth in inequality between 1985 and the late 2000s was the second fastest among all OECD countries. Yet social inequality remains poorly understood here—the most recent data is from a study of net worth now a decade old, which revealed that one per cent of the population held 16 per cent of the wealth while the poorest half of the population owned just five per cent.



"Not any more, statistically. But it did used to be, until about the early 90s. That's when the income-inequality measure actually changed quite drastically in New Zealand."

Between 1985 and the late 2000s, inequality grew faster in New Zealand than anywhere else in the OECD except Sweden. By 2008, the average income of the top 10 per cent of New Zealanders was nine times higher than that of the bottom 10 per cent, up from six times in the mid-1990s.

An Oxfam report on inequality published in January this year drew media attention to the issue by pointing out that the world's 85 richest people have as much wealth as its poorest 3.5 billion. That report followed on from work by the World Economic Forum that reported widening income disparities as the second greatest worldwide risk in the next 12 to 18 months.

One of the effects of the rising inequality here is a sharp change in the shape of our cities, with the rich moving increasingly to the centre and the poor being forced to the periphery—'shunted', in the words of Victoria University of Wellington geographer Philip Morrison.

"We are seeing an increasing suburbanisation of the poor," says Morrison. "It's not unique to Wellington. It's happening in almost every major city in the world. In Wellington, it's very marked because of the geography. Ironically, it has made Wellington even more interesting to people looking for a more homogenous lifestyle."

"This is what social housing can look like," says public health professor Philippa Howden-Chapman, standing on the street and gesturing up at the Central Park Apartments in central Wellington.

The apartments, built by the Wellington >





City Council in 1969, were given a \$34 million upgrade in 2012 as part of a \$400 million joint project by central and local government to improve housing in the capital.

“Just because people are on low incomes, why should they have to live in poor housing?” says Howden-Chapman, whose own house, an Edwardian villa, is just up the road in Maarama Crescent. “My grandparents and parents had a house, so I can have a house. This is a place for people who haven’t had the advantages of capitalising on the assets of their forebears.”

Central Park occupants pay 70 per cent of market rents. It has created a cross-section of socio-economic groups with different skills and life experiences than could otherwise afford to live in this part of the city. “It makes for a much richer life,” says Howden-Chapman. “We don’t have to push out, push out all the time,” shoving the city

towards the suburbs. “You can do interesting things close to the city.”

Eighty-seven per cent of New Zealanders now live in cities. The University of Otago’s four-year Resilient Urban Futures project, which Howden-Chapman leads, has received \$9 million from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to examine how we can make these good places to live.

At its core, the study looks at two ways of developing our cities—condensing our lives into smaller, denser areas that are already developed, or sprawling out into

greenfields at the periphery. What will be the effects of each option on our health, housing, transport affordability, social lives, environment?

Cities are complex systems, says Howden-Chapman, and it’s important that they are studied that way. One part of the Resilient Urban Futures project is creating a model to evaluate individual transport and land-use policies in Wellington.

The project looks at the interactions between social, economic and physical processes and the natural environment: the distribution of housing and employment,

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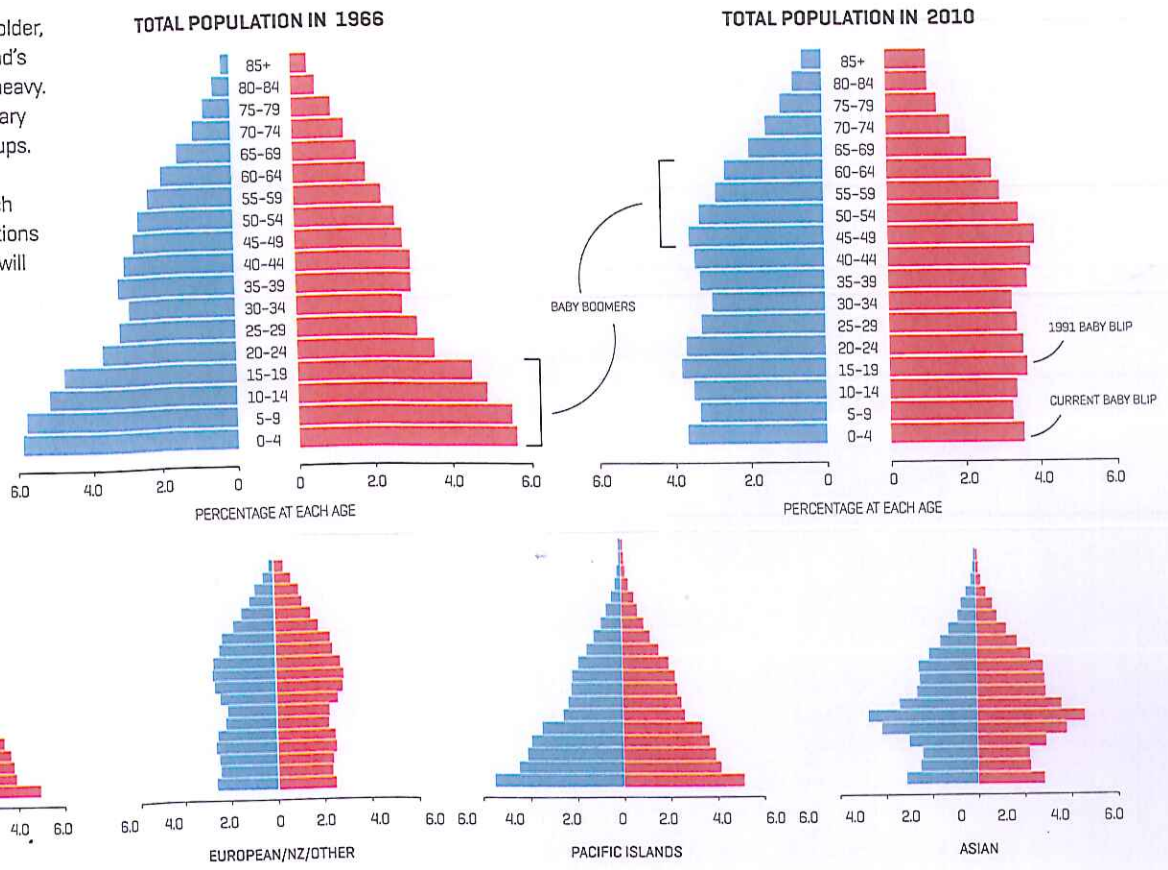
Annette Kennedy teaches line dancing for seniors at the Blockhouse Bay Community Centre. In 25 years, every one of the baby boomer generation will be over 70 and the proportion of elderly in our cities higher than ever before. Activities that keep older people active and socially engaged into old age are critical for their wellbeing and social cohesion.



## AGE-SEX STRUCTURE, 1966 AND 2010

As the baby boomers grow older, the structure of New Zealand's population is growing top-heavy. However, the implications vary radically among ethnic groups. Maori and Pacific Island communities will have much larger working-age populations to support their aged than will their European or Asian counterparts.

■ MALE  
■ FEMALE



traffic flows, energy consumption, carbon emissions, effects on ecological systems, and impact of potential natural disasters.

Howden-Chapman stands next to her economist husband Ralph Chapman in the Chews Lane development, just off Lambton Quay in central Wellington. Ralph has a courier bag slung over one shoulder and is pushing his bike. He's happy because for the first time ever, he says, Wellington City Council has allocated a decent amount of its budget to improving cycling.

He points out the ground floor of an apartment complex that begins several storeys above our head, straddling the lane. The number of people living in the Wellington CBD exploded between 2006 and 2013—13,000 people live here now. And it's not just Wellington. In Auckland, the population of the CBD grew from 2000 residents in 1991 to 27,000 last year.

"I think it's market-driven," says Chapman. "There is huge demand from people to live in the city, in townhouses or apartments, and the Wellington City Council has decided to stop standing in their way.

"If you take away the constraints like the parking requirement, that can lower the costs and make it a lot easier. The council has also done things consciously like make the city more walkable. Finally they got around to spending \$5 million a year in the latest budget on cycling."

But at the same time, the growth of the city centre has driven up prices and driven out the working classes—particularly those who work nearby, or who would like to: "It lowers the quality of life of people like firemen and nurses who can't afford to live in close proximity to their jobs," says Howden-Chapman. "The only way these

people can stay is if there is a deliberate attempt to keep them there."

"The challenge is not to see the changes in the city politically," says Chapman. "There are huge forces in conflict, basically. There are people trying to live sustainably and people who don't care at all about that. It's a battle between them."

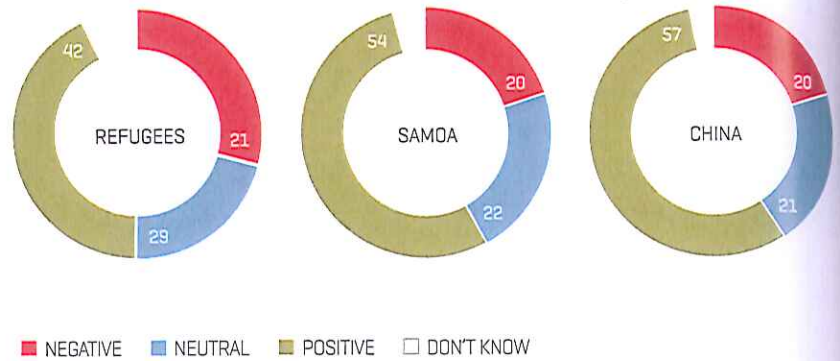
Around the intersection of Willis Street and Karo Drive in Wellington, you can watch the future roll through on the unfinished approach to the road of national significance.

"Basically what they're trying to do here is make it very easy for people to get on the motorway north," says Howden-Chapman, standing on the corner. "You've got people walking to school and they've now got to basically cross an arterial road," she says. "If you want to get over there, you've got to cross three times."



## ATTITUDES TOWARD MIGRANT GROUPS

We are in the Chinese century. The proportion of Auckland's Chinese residents now born in mainland China dwarfs the proportion born elsewhere and is set to continue growing—see graphic below right. But although New Zealanders have grown warmer toward migrant communities since the early 1990s, there is still a strong positive bias toward those from Anglo-Saxon countries rather than those from the Pacific or Asia—see graphic adjacent. Elsewhere, Chinese businesses and activities have not only added cultural and economic diversity, but also innovation and important links to international markets—what the Asia-New Zealand Foundation which commissioned the study suggests are important dimensions for burgeoning city economies.



“We want a city that takes account of the needs of the young as well as the old, as Wellington does, apart from that wretched road of national significance.”

Cities provide a place for older residents to get out and be among people, see others, be tourists in their own back yards. It's an issue of increasing concern, as the number of New Zealanders aged over 65 is expected to double in the next 25 years to about 1.2 million.

New Zealand's declining birth rate and the steady emigration of many of those of childbearing age are driving up the country's median age. One of the big implications of this is an increase in the dependency ratio: the number of people who are working compared with those who are receiving benefits.

In the mid-20th century, the dependency ratio was at 4:1; now it's steadily heading towards 2:1, a ratio where problems start to emerge with the availability of tax revenue, and not just for superannuation. It may eventually hit 1:1.

The tools for dealing with the issue are crude, says Spoonley. In other countries, where the problem is more evident than it is here, governments have responded by increasing the age of eligibility for superannuation. Here, a likely solution will be to increase that age to 67, and to means-test.

“The problem,” writes Natalie Jackson in her seminal 2011 report, “is not the increased number of elderly, but the

**While many parts of the world, especially Europe, have been viewing immigrant groups negatively, New Zealanders' attitudes have moved in the other direction. We are part of a relatively small group of countries in which this is the case, but even as measured against these nations, we are growing ever more positive towards Asia.**

relative lack of young. If the fertility rates of the baby boomers' children had remained as high as those of their parents, the increasing numbers of elderly would be no problem at all. Their numbers would be easily supported.”

One suggestion is to invest more heavily in children, with the dual aim of increasing their future productivity and taxation to help pay for the costs of their aged forebears, and to benefit the young themselves as they save for their own retirement.

But the benefits of such measures are distant, while the costs are not.

“If just a small proportion of the current 15–19-year-old cohort leaves New Zealand and doesn't return,” writes Jackson, “New

Zealand employers will be faced with a labour shortage of crisis proportions. We are not talking about 20 years hence when new technology may require fewer workers, but rather a situation that has already begun, is significant outside of the main centres, and will become painfully evident within the next five years.”

Jeanette and Neil McCarthy have been delivering meals on wheels since the 1980s. Now 78 and 81 respectively, they have overtaken many of the demographic they have long cared for.

“If you think,” says Neil in the lounge of his home in Manurewa, South Auckland, “of this huge number of people—baby boomers, they call them—they're about to hit retirement, and I would have no doubt that a huge number of those people, because of the active lives that they have led and the modern facilities that have been available to keep them well, will live to 100.”

Neil and Jeanette have three children and eight grandchildren, and they worry about the lives they will lead.

“This housing thing is becoming a big problem,” says Jeanette. “Will they be able to have their own home? Will they have to live in apartments or will they be able to afford to have their own home? I worry about those sorts of things. I think it's going to be so difficult for them.”

They are right to be concerned. In Auckland, the median cost of





housing relative to the median income is at a historic high that places it alongside some of the most expensive cities in the world. Our other major cities are not far behind.

A disturbing divide is also opening up between Auckland's south, where the McCarthys live, and the rest of the city: "There is a real growing geographic distribution of wealth and advantage in which the south is not doing as well as the north," says Alison Reid at Auckland Council. "A lot of people are doing well in Auckland, but a lot aren't."

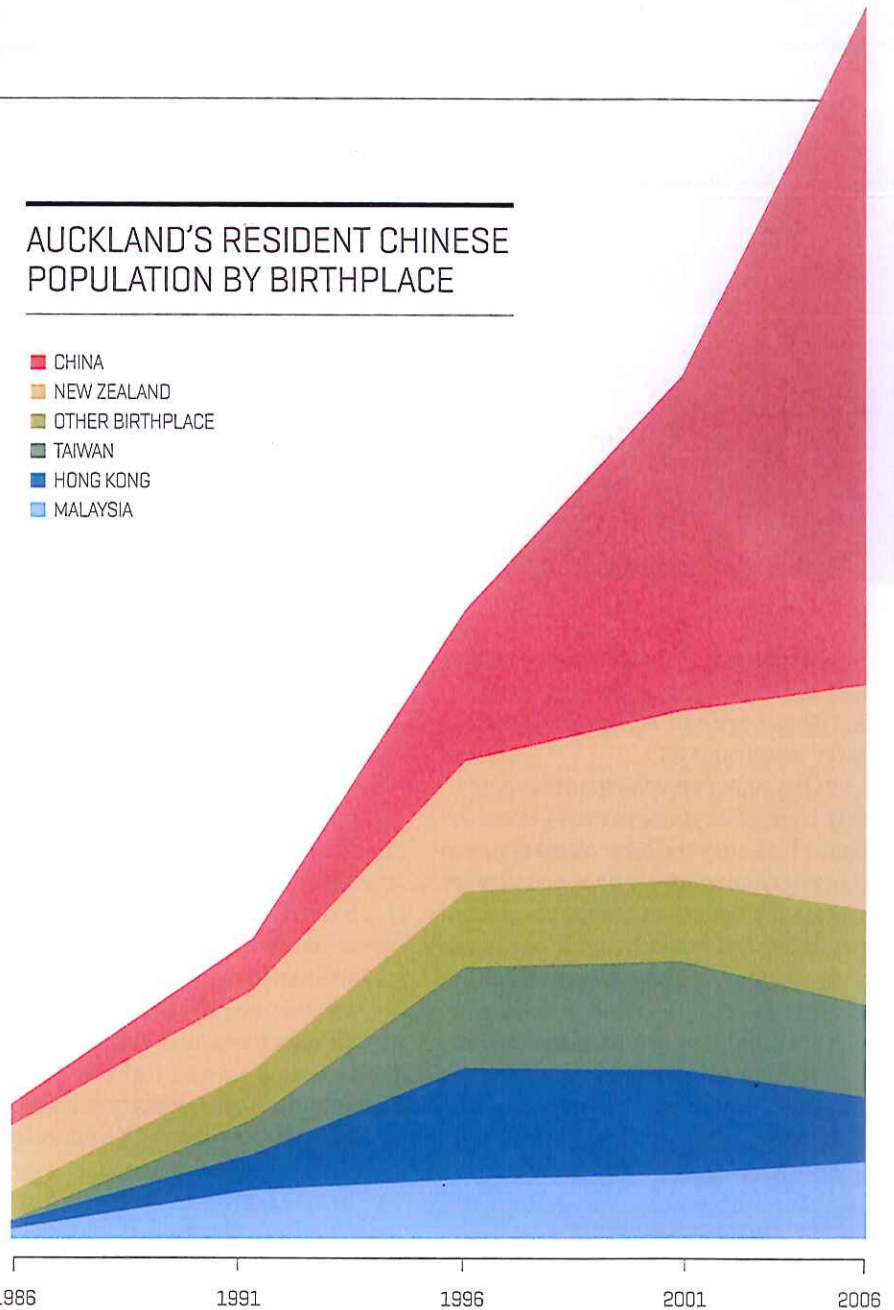
The council has launched a programme called The Southern Initiative, aimed at improving the lives of those living in the south, but the cumulative disadvantage passed down from generation to generation is well entrenched.

The McCarthys are far from poor—they live in a pleasant house in one of the nicer enclaves of Manurewa—and they're in good health. But the older we get, the more support we need. Since the economic reforms of the mid-1980s, the financial burden of care for those most in need has shifted steadily away from the state and towards the individual, or, perhaps more accurately, their family.

"When I look back on who we have delivered meals on wheels to—in almost all cases they've been to ethnic European people," says Neil. "I can't recall delivering meals to Asian people or to Polynesian people or to

### AUCKLAND'S RESIDENT CHINESE POPULATION BY BIRTHPLACE

- CHINA
- NEW ZEALAND
- OTHER BIRTHPLACE
- TAIWAN
- HONG KONG
- MALAYSIA







Indian people and I think the reason is that they have a different... how shall I put it?"

"They have a different family structure," says Jeanette.

"They have extended family support," says Neil. "The younger members of the family look after the older members, even though they might be infirm, and they are all part of a bigger community as opposed to mother and father living in one house and 10 kilometres away a daughter and her family.

"With the increased amount of ethnicities that exist here and will exist here in future, will this change? I believe it might."

It may have to.

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**IN AUCKLAND'S LONG** Bay Park, Paul Spoonley notices a large man aggressively confronting a park ranger. As we drive past, the man picks

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Members of the Chinese community meet twice a week during market days to play Chinese chess at Wesley Community Centre in Mt Roskill. While New Zealand is increasingly diverse, three-quarters of the country's population is still of European ethnicity. How ethnic groups react to this mixed cultural heritage will determine much about how we live in the future. People need time to adjust to our place in the new Asian century, says sociologist Paul Spoonley.

up and throws the ranger's bike.

"Just stop over here," says Spoonley. He opens his door and half gets out of the car.

The man sees Spoonley looking and approaches him, yelling as he walks: "You alright mate? You all good? You all good buddy?"

"You OK?" asks Spoonley calmly.

"Yeah. He just won't f\*\*\*ing leave me alone, eh?"

The man notices me: "You all good?" he says, crouching down, peering through the window.

"Yes," I say.

"Yeah, well he won't leave me alone. This is my car here. He won't leave me alone. I'm telling him to leave me alone."

Things are tense, uncomfortable, possibly dangerous.

"Okay," Spoonley says, closing his door gently, "let's get out of here."

The man bangs on the window three or four times: "You all good?" he yells again. "You all good?"

A little further up the road, Spoonley asks me to stop so he can tell the other park rangers about the man.

"Sorry about doing that to you," he says



later. "I worked in a freezing works for five years and I was a slaughterman. I worked in a gang of seven, and five of them were Mongrel Mob members. I am very much a middle-class Pakeha but those sorts of guys, I spent a lot of my younger life with.

"We cannot afford to socially and economically exclude these communities," he says. "That sort of public anger, the 'What are you looking at?' sort of thing. There are social costs to exclusion."

Just inside the sliding doors of the Dahua supermarket in Northcote, Spoonley enthuses over the leafy greens. An estimated 80 per cent of the businesses in the precinct are Asian.

"Have you been in one of these lately? Look at the variety," he says, waving an arm across the expanse of the produce aisle. "You are getting all the choys. And see, it's in Mandarin script as well as English."

We continue through the aisles, up into the meat section where a customer is chatting happily with one of the staff. "Have you heard English spoken so far?" says Spoonley. "Most of the language spoken here is Mandarin. Asia comes to Auckland. Asia comes to New Zealand."

A pile of Chinese newspapers sits on the floor near the exit. It's with what sounds like wonder that Spoonley points out it's just one of 28 Asian publications, most in foreign languages, printed in Auckland.

Outside, in the carpark, he admires the surrounding strips of shops and businesses: "Look down here, look at all of this: Your hair studio, your video, your pharmacy, everything that you would want. And you can deal in Mandarin.

"Countdown is about the only non-Asian business. There will be one or two others but I am struggling to pick any. Can you? So I think 80 per cent is probably conservative."

In the 1990s, Northcote was seen as a low-cost housing area with a drug problem. The centre was going through a slump. Rental rates took a dive and the Asian business community began to move in. It wasn't advertised as an Asian development.

"It's one of what we would call an ethnic precinct," says Spoonley. "We haven't seen this before in New Zealand."

Kai Luey was born in Westport in 1941.

When he was growing up in Wellington, he and his family were, he says, unwanted aliens. They were called "Ching Chong Chinaman". He felt isolated, and hated being Chinese.

Luey graduated from the University of Canterbury with a bachelor of engineering degree with first-class honours in 1965 and spent 30 years working his way up the hierarchy of multinational companies both here and overseas, becoming general manager and managing director of firms within the Morgan Dulmison Group based in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand.

Career progression, he says, was frustrating for somebody of Chinese ethnicity. He felt he had to prove that his performance, abilities and enthusiasm were far superior to those of his contemporaries.

Luey left New Zealand for Australia,

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assuming he was not coming back. But a corporate takeover changed that, and on his return he became heavily involved in the Chinese community, taking up leadership roles, becoming the national president of the New Zealand Chinese Association, and receiving the Queen's Service Medal.

Relations between ethnic groups in this country have improved, he says, but they are far from perfect.

"Although we are accepted at lower levels, they don't want you in managerial positions. They've got a club in New Zealand, an Anglo-Saxon club, and it's cronyism of the highest order. It's a group, and if you're part of the group, you're accepted," he says. "I didn't find my way in; I'm only on the fringes."

Exclusion, tolerance, acceptance: New Zealand has reached stage three, says Luey, but it still has a long way to go.

"People no longer fear us, like the yellow peril, but there's still the thing of liking your own, so I accept it.

"I hope for a future that's harmonious, in which people get on together and get opportunities to show their worth. Not favourable treatment, just equal opportunities."

New Zealanders' attitudes towards Asia have become noticeably warmer since the strong anti-immigration sentiment of the 1990s. While many parts of the world, especially Europe, have been viewing immigrant groups negatively, New Zealanders' attitudes have moved in the other direction. We are part of a relatively small group of countries in which this is the case, but even as measured against these nations, we are growing ever more positive towards Asia.

"If you asked me the reasons," says Spoonley, "I would say first of all we went through the hard stuff with biculturalism, so in terms of recognising ethnic minorities—in this case, an indigenous minority—we did that early.

"We are a small country and the irony is that we spent a lot of our colonial history keeping Asians out. Post-2000, that has changed enormously. And also, a lot of us are immigrants."

Asians are expected to overtake Maori as the country's largest ethnic minority by the 2020s. In Auckland, already 23 per cent of the population are Asian, which is almost double the number of Maori and Pacific people combined, a percentage that is likely to rise into the high 20s over the coming decade.

In the 20–24-year-old age group, Asians outnumber Maori across New Zealand. In the 1996 census, it was the other way around, by about 3:1. It's significant because young Maori will be competing with Asians for jobs.

"This is a major change in terms of consumption of resources," says NIDEA's Natalie Jackson.

At NIDEA, Tahu Kukutai has examined the changing population dynamics of Maori in New Zealand. She says the high degree of visibility of Maori here makes them unique among international indigenous populations, which have been dwarfed by immigrant communities.

Size matters, she says, at least in part



because of the weight it gives Maori at the ballot box: Maori aspirations and concerns are more likely to be paid attention if they are a powerful voting presence.

Little surprise, then, that Maori attitudes towards Asians have been less positive than those of other groups. Research by the Asia New Zealand Foundation in 2011 shows that Maori attitudes towards Asians have been relatively negative, particularly on economic and social or cultural issues. These attitudes, they say, reflect the increased competition for employment, concern that Asian cultures and languages are competing for attention and resources, and a perception that Asian immigrants do not adequately acknowledge the Treaty of Waitangi.

It points to a tension, the foundation suggests, that deserves more attention.

“Maori will always be tangata whenua, mana whenua,” says Kukutai, “but our visibility will decrease. What does this mean for Maori-Pakeha relations? For inequality?”

The rapid urbanisation, loss of language and decline in birthrate that Maori experienced in the second half of the 20th century were among the most rapid and disruptive changes to any ethnic group anywhere. The effects are still being felt. As our country shifts, the strong sense of connection to place among Maori may come into conflict with the steady decline of the regions, the places to which Maori are connected.

“It never really struck me that we were Maori until I was 10 or 11,” says Maori leader Traci Houpapa. “We went to stay with friends of ours, Pakeha. We went eeling and caught these magnificent eels. We thought, ‘Great, dinner.’ Their mother gave them to the cats.”

Houpapa’s mother was Pakeha and her father was Maori, but he wouldn’t speak the language at their home in Taumarunui, although her mother encouraged it: “He would say, ‘It’s a waste of time. It’s a Pakeha world now.’ But something in me said, ‘This is important.’”

“In fifth form, only three people were taking it. The dean said, ‘Why are you doing this? It’s a waste of time.’ I had to do exams in the library by myself. I was told, ‘You’re just a nuisance, Traci.’”

Houpapa is now chair of the Federation

of Maori Authorities, the first woman to hold that position, and also a Tainui executive committee member. She is a partner in a strategic consulting firm and holds a range of directorships and ministerial appointments, including with Landcorp and the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women. She was made a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to business and Maori. Houpapa sees a bright future for Maori as an economic nation. It’s been growing successfully and sustainably over 20 or 30 years, and Treaty of Waitangi claim settlements are only a small part of it—\$1 billion on an economic base of \$37 billion.

“I expect Maori to continue to do well, with a continued emphasis on bringing the halves of people together, participating at all levels of society. Where we are recog-

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nised for who we are. This is a really great time in our history. It’s exciting,” she says. “Don’t get me wrong. I’m hugely proud of my Pakeha family. When people stand and recite their whakapapa and say who they are and where they’re from, then I always acknowledge my Croatian, German, Irish side. It’s very much about who I am.

“I ended up here because of the decisions and determinations of those canny koro and kuia who saw potential in me and who invested their time and energy and shared their stories of a world that you and I are living in now—their hopes and dreams and aspirations. I was hearing across the ages, things can and should improve.

“They always talked about all of us—Maori and Pakeha. They never just talked about what’s good for Maori. They talked

about what’s good for all of us.

“One of the women, Doreen Chase, she said, ‘No one has taken your tinō rangatira-tanga away from you, Traci. It’s like a muscle. Use it and it grows’. She was absolutely dismissive of those people who said the crown has taken our mana, the crown has taken our tino rangatiratanga. She said we have it, we’re not using it, we’re not nurturing it.”

Thinking about the structure of New Zealand, flexing our nationhood, as Doreen Chase suggested, is valuable for all New Zealanders—part and parcel of understanding the new New Zealand, the radically different and diverse society that we have become in a few short decades.

In Christchurch, those changes are writ large upon the new city plan, rolled out over empty lots in the CBD.

“The scale of destruction is quite traumatic, but the prospect of getting a new city redesigned from scratch makes it exciting,” says Malcolm Campbell. “You learn to be quite comfortable with change. That’s a life skill a lot of people never get.

“Resilience is an overused word,” he says, “but when you hear people here tell their stories, they’re quite stoic. I think it’s a New Zealand thing. It’s part of the reason I’m attracted to this place.”

Adversity was the shared experience of any settler to this archipelago, whether Maori, Pakeha or recent migrant. Crossing large distances, often at great risk, giving up a life elsewhere for a new land and an unknown culture; it takes strength of character. Though we’re diverse and changing rapidly, this resilient spirit might be the one characteristic that binds all New Zealanders—a valuable quality for an uncertain future. ■

*Greg Bruce is a freelance writer, communications and philosophy grad who is one of a declining proportion of New Zealanders living in a regular nuclear family. This is his first story for New Zealand Geographic.*



FROM THE ARCHIVE  
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A Musical Migration, Issue 125, Jan–Feb 2014

Edge City, Issue 37, Jan–Mar 1998

The Great South Road: where cultures converge, Issue 61, Jan–Feb 2003





## GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

CHAMPION TABLE TENNIS player Li Chunli (coaching), represented New Zealand in four consecutive Olympics and won a gold medal at the 2002 Commonwealth Games. She now runs her own table tennis club in Panmure, Auckland. Table tennis and other minor New Zealand sports such as badminton are experiencing a boom, while traditional sports like netball, rugby and rugby league are struggling to recruit Asian players.

"They don't know the sporting structure, what sports are available," says Jenny Lim,

the Asian community sport co-ordinator at Harbour Sport. "Look at where they've come from. In Malaysia, there might be a badminton court in the park, or you can bring a football and play football. Here we've got fields you need to book. A group of Koreans might turn up with a football and get kicked off. They're not aware of the structure and how it's set up."

Lim says that school principals have pointed out how few Chinese children play in the playground. They want to see an increase in physical activity. But it's not just about the physical

benefits, she says. "Sport plays a big part in everyone's life in New Zealand, whether you like it or not. It's on the news every night. The All Blacks are everywhere. We believe sport in general is a really powerful vehicle to encourage integration into the community."

While previous waves of Pasifika and South African migrants reinforced the strength of our dominant sports, the same is not happening with the increasingly diverse range of people now arriving. As New Zealand's population becomes ever more

diverse, traditional sports such as rugby, rugby league and netball are struggling to connect with the new arrivals, while sports such as badminton and table tennis are beginning to bloom. But there are exceptions. "I work closely with Max, who is a Chinese rugby player," says Lim. "He says, 'On the street, people sometimes yell racist things at me. But when I play rugby, people ask me if I'm going to be back next week. I feel like I belong.'

"Sport can help you integrate," she says, "make you feel like you belong."