January 2006

Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia

Alison Green
Bond University

Mary R. Power
Bond University, Mary_Power@bond.edu.au

Follow this and additional works at: http://epublications.bond.edu.au/hss_pubs

Recommended Citation
Alison Green and Mary R. Power. (2006) "Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia" ,.

http://epublications.bond.edu.au/hss_pubs/74
Defining transnationalism boundaries
New Zealand migrants in Australia

Alison Green and Mary Power

ABSTRACT: Strong connecting threads link the lives and cultures of Australians and New Zealanders through their shared history, expressed in such terms as ANZAC, 'Australasian', and 'Antipodean'; their relative isolation from other Western cultures; and the ease of trans-Tasman travel. Nonetheless, many New Zealanders living in Australia, even though becoming 'Australianised', demonstrate an enduring allegiance to New Zealand. Concepts of national identity, transnational identity, and personal identity explain how people standing at the boundaries of their culture make sense of, and accommodate, new influences. Through analysis of data from interviews and surveys with New Zealanders living in Australia, this paper examines the construction of a new transnational identity that migrants compare with their previous national identity.

Background and conceptual framework

New Zealand migrants are the second-largest overseas-born group in Australia, after British (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004). In June 2004, an estimated 445,000 New Zealanders were living in Australia (Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, 2005). Academic research on trans-Tasman migration, while sparse, has focused on demographics, with little emphasis on either the interplay of factors motivating New Zealanders to move across the Tasman, or the impact migration has on their lives (Carmichael, 1993).
Using a social constructionism framework (Shweder, 1991), this paper examines how concepts of national identity, and transnational identity (Glick-Schiller & Basch, 1995; Glick-Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992) show how people standing at the boundaries of their culture make sense of their identity and accommodate new influences. Brewer’s Optimal Distinctiveness Theory (1991; 1999) helps explain the enduring allegiance to New Zealand demonstrated by New Zealand migrants in Australia.

Concepts of national identity are partially ‘myth’ (Bell, 1996; Brown, 1997) or ‘invention’ (White, 1981), created out of evidence selected to fit an ideal, often not consciously. New Zealanders derive their national identity from the cultures and histories of two main groups, Maori and Pakeha’ (New Zealanders of European descent) (King, 1991; Patterson, 1992; Walker, 1989). However, it is recognised that groups are composed of many voices (Collier, 2000), and affected by local as well as national identity (Cohen, 1982). White suggests that in looking ‘at ideas about national identity, we need to ask, not whether they are true or false, but what their function is, whose creation they are, and whose interests they serve’ (White, 1981, p. viii).

Formative in New Zealanders’ sense of national identity are military campaigns where they fought alongside Australians at Gallipoli to create the ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) tradition (Sinclair, 1986). Also central in discussions of New Zealand identity are mentions of egalitarianism (King, 1991), rural heritage (Bell, 1996, 1997; Brown, 1997; Sinclair, 1986), a strong work ethic (Sinclair, 1986), dislike of formality, and criticism of people perceived to be ‘too big for their boots’ (Brown, 1997). New Zealanders have described themselves as practical, down to earth ‘do-it-yourselfers’, for whom anything is possible using a bit of ‘Kiwi ingenuity’ (Brown, 1997). While many of these characteristics could be applied equally to Australian identity, the idea of a single Antipodean culture is not acceptable to New Zealanders, who desire to retain their separate identity (Catley, 2001; Stewart & Harvey, 2003).

Largely taken for granted when unchallenged at home, national identity can become central or defining when part of a minority overseas. Cohen points out ‘People become aware of their culture when they stand at its boundaries’ (Cohen, 1982, p. 3). This concept of boundary maintenance of national identity (Barth, 1969) is most visible ‘at its boundary of difference’ (Oliver, 2001, p. 5) with another similar culture. Oliver’s examination of Scottish nationalism, for example,
revealed that Scottish-ness was often explained in terms of differences from the English (2001; 2002). Similarly, New Zealanders living in Australia often defined themselves in relation to their differences from Australians.

Standing on the boundaries of several different societies, including Britain, Australia, and the Pacific Islands, New Zealand is what Cohen calls a ‘peripheral society’ (Cohen, 2000). In addition, it is geographically isolated with a population of only four million. These factors contribute to New Zealanders’ fierce patriotism (Stewart & Harvey, 2003). Brewer’s optimal distinctiveness theory (1991; 1999) predicts that minority group identity is strengthened because, in defining themselves, people need to assert their difference from a dominant majority. Therefore, optimal distinctiveness theory suggests, somewhat paradoxically, that living in Australia would increase New Zealanders’ patriotism and sense of New Zealand identity.

Social constructionists argue that the ways in which people categorise the world result from their participation in social practices, institutions, and other forms of ‘symbolic action’ (Shweder, 1991). In the symbolic construction of common identity, symbols such as sports teams (the All Blacks), icons (the silver fern), and shared rituals (the haka) generate a sense of shared belonging (Cohen, 1982), uniting the community’s members and representing it both to its members and to outsiders (Bergin, 2002; Jenkins, 1996).

In addition to maintaining their national identity, New Zealanders who move to Australia exhibit transnationalist characteristics (Glick-Schiller & Basch, 1995; Glick-Schiller et al., 1992). Transnationals are immigrants who build, maintain, and reinforce multiple and constant economic, social, and emotional interconnections with more than one country (Vertovec, 2001; Waters, 2003); whose personal and working lives involve ‘multiple & constant interconnections across international borders’ (Glick-Schiller & Basch, 1995, p. 48); and who ‘remain intensely involved in the life of their country of origin’ (Gold, 1997, p. 20). Transnationals expand their perception of home to encompass ‘both here and there’ (Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004 p. 1180), experiencing attachment to two countries simultaneously (Gold, 1997). From a transnationalist viewpoint, migration concerns networks of groups, families, and people from the same community, rather than individuals or households because ‘networks migrate’ (Vertovec, 2003).

**Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia**
Focus of research
This paper focuses on three areas of inquiry: how migration to Australia affects New Zealanders' national and transnational identity, how New Zealand migrants maintain the boundary with another similar culture in Australia, and how the cultural identities of New Zealanders change as a result of living in Australia.

Methodology
These focus questions were investigated through analysis of qualitative data of migration narratives from in-depth interviews with 31 New Zealanders living in South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. A written survey, developed out of analysis of key themes from these interviews, completed by 307 New Zealanders living in Australia, provided support for qualitative findings from a larger sample.

Interview participants
Interview participants included a diverse sample of New Zealanders, whose length of time in Australia varied, and whose age, migration origin from within New Zealand, occupation, and experience of other countries also varied. Of 31 interviewees, 12 were male, 19 were female, and 15 self-identified as Maori. Interviewees were aged between 20 and 76 years and had resided in Australia for periods ranging from six weeks to 28 years, with two-thirds having lived in Australia for between two and 10 years. The majority of participants were aged between 20 and 34 on arrival in Australia, although the age range on arrival was between 18 and 58. They worked in professional, administrative, trade, and semi-skilled jobs. Full-time homemakers, retirees, students, and a recently arrived job seeker were also interviewed. Some participants had lived or travelled extensively in other countries, while for others, moving to Australia was the first time they had been out of New Zealand.

Data collection procedures and interview process
Interviews were conducted between February and August 2004, and were semi-structured, using a grounded theory approach (Dick, 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), in which data from participants drives the research. Each interview began with an open-ended question that asked participants how they came to be in Australia. Later interviews included issues raised in earlier ones, such as similarities and differences between New Zealand and Australia, ties with New Zealand, interviewees' sense of cultural identity, and comparisons of themselves with those

Australian Journal of Communication • Vol 33 (1) 2006
38
who had stayed in New Zealand. The interviewer tape-recorded and made partial transcripts of the 30-45 minute interviews to provide written quotes (Kvale, 1996). Nvivo software was used to systematise iterative interpretations, which led to the categorising of interview segments and the combination of recurring themes and ideas into major themes. The rich data provided by interviewees, while not generalisable to the whole population of New Zealanders living in Australia, provides insights into the complex nature of migrant perceptions of identity and culture.

**Survey**

Using themes identified in the qualitative interviews, a written survey of New Zealanders living in Australia asked 29 questions covering background information about the respondent; reasons for moving to Australia; maintenance of social, emotional, and financial ties with New Zealand; current national identification; whether they had become Australian citizens; how (if at all) they had changed since moving to Australia; likelihood of returning to New Zealand to live; and overall satisfaction with their decision to live in Australia.

The survey was distributed using convenience and snowball sampling (Faugier & Sargeant, 1997; Penrod, Bray Preston, Cain, & Starks, 2003) between February and August 2005. Of 633 surveys distributed, 318 (52%) were returned, with 307 being included in the results (respondents who were, themselves, adult migrants to New Zealand were excluded as they may have had dual cultural and national identities). The majority (89%) were distributed to New Zealanders living in South East Queensland, with small numbers of surveys sent to New South Wales, Victoria, ACT, South Australia, and the Northern Territory.

**Respondent characteristics**

Of 307 survey respondents, 42% were male and 58% female. Eighty-one percent identified as Pakeha/Caucasian, 11% as Maori, 5% as both Pakeha/Caucasian and Maori, and 3% as Pacific Islanders. The majority (61%) were aged between 18 and 34 when they arrived in Australia, with 19% aged 35-44, 12% aged 45-54, and 8% aged 55 and over. The majority (54%) were aged between 35 and 54 when surveyed, with 4% aged 18-24, 20% aged 25-34, 16% aged 55-64, and 6% aged 65 and over. 35% of respondents had lived in Australia for 11 or more years; 27%, 6-10 years; 20%, 0-2 years; and 18%, 3-5 years.

**Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia**
29% had lived in countries outside Australia and New Zealand, and 28% had lived in Australia on more than one occasion.

**Discussion of results**

*Cultural and national identity*

Data from 31 narratives and 307 surveys from New Zealanders living in Australia revealed that respondents both retained a New Zealander identity, and adopted an expanded or 'transnational' identity.

*Retention of New Zealand national identity*

Participants frequently used Maori words and phrases and mentioned symbols of New Zealand identity, such as the All Blacks. They regarded fellow New Zealanders positively. In particular, New Zealanders were seen as being 'good workers'.

Eighty-two percent of survey respondents said they would describe themselves as New Zealanders if travelling to a country outside Australia or New Zealand. Continued loyalty to New Zealand sporting teams was evident, with 80% supporting New Zealand in competition with Australia. Only 6% supported Australia; the remainder had no preference.

However, while two thirds of survey respondents (67%) indicated that their hearts (emotional attachment) were mostly in New Zealand, 33% felt that their hearts were mostly in Australia. Only one of the 31 people interviewed declared that they had no emotional ties with New Zealand.

*Positive Qualities of New Zealand/ers*

Interviewees frequently mentioned New Zealanders' positive characteristics. They described New Zealanders as sought-after workers in Australia, with a better work ethic than Australians.

The large majority of survey respondents defined their contribution to Australia as being through their skills and attitudes to work, supporting interview respondents' views of themselves as good workers.

*Transnational identity*

'Transnationals' lives involve 'multiple and constant interconnections across international borders' (Glick-Schiller & Basch, 1995 p. 48), which describes many New Zealanders who could be classed as 'living'
in both countries as they maintain multiple connections with New Zealand, while living in Australia. This is evident in the migration of family networks; the development of networks of New Zealand friends in Australia; the maintenance of social, emotional, and economic ties with New Zealand; and frequent travel between Australia and New Zealand.

Migration of family networks
Of the survey respondents, 51% had family members living in Australia on arrival. Of those who identified as Maori or mixed Maori/Pakeha ethnicity, the figure was 60%. Following settlement, 53% of our sample had encouraged other family members to move to Australia, with the figure being higher again, at 76% for Maori.

Also citing family in Australia as a motivating force for moving were 18 of the 31 interviewees. In turn, new migrants encouraged other family members to move to Australia to be reunited with them. In one interviewee's case, her eight children, their partners, and children, had all moved to the Gold Coast. Such family networks are common.

Six months after we came ... Mum and Dad came over ... Then ... my sister and ... her seven kids ... Had they not come I might have found it ... hard to stay. But ... 'cause they did come over it's ... been like living in New Zealand ... My immediate family are all here. (Woman in mid 20s)

Maintenance of social, emotional, and economic ties
Participants maintained multiple social, emotional, and economic ties with New Zealand. The majority (57%) phoned New Zealand at least once a fortnight, and 53% e-mailed New Zealand at least once a fortnight. Of these, 25% phoned weekly, and 12% several times a week, while 21% e-mailed weekly, and 24% e-mailed several times a week. Economic ties existed for 18%, who indicated New Zealand as the source of part, or all, of their income.

Comings and goings
Both interview participants and survey respondents made multiple trips across the Tasman, and entertained frequent visitors from New Zealand. In the last three years, 88% of survey respondents indicated that they had had visitors to stay on at least one occasion, with 65% hosting visitors on three or more occasions, and 37% five or more times. In the
same period, 82% had returned to New Zealand at least once, with 34% making three or more visits.

Try to and go back at least once a year ... We’re thinking about going back in a few years ... cause New Zealand’s our home. (Woman in mid 20s resident in Australia for six years)

We get so many visitors ... you never have ... time to feel homesick ... Always got people coming over ... You’re only ... 3 1/2 hours away. (Woman in mid 30s resident in Australia for six years)

The above data and comments from interviewees show that transnationals expand their perception of home to encompass ‘both here and there’ (Waldinger & Fitzgerald, 2004, p. 1180), with almost half of the survey respondents indicating simultaneous attachment to both countries (Gold, 1997). In terms of where they belong, 42% saw themselves as belonging in both countries, 30% as belonging in Australia, and 28% as belonging in New Zealand. Even migrants who had lived in Australia for more than 20 years had current knowledge of political, social, and physical events in New Zealand and had retained their New Zealand identity. New Zealand migrants saw themselves as having an enhanced sense of identity that included both their past and their present.

Boundary maintenance
The second focus of inquiry examined how New Zealanders maintain the boundaries of their national identity when living in a similar culture. Analysis of migration narratives shows that New Zealanders living in Australia engage in a process of constant comparison and ‘boundary maintenance’ (Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1982), to prevent their New Zealand identity merging with an Australian identity. While it has been suggested that Australia and New Zealand are virtually one country (Catley, 2001), participants considered there were significant differences. Over 80% of survey respondents said moving to Australia seemed like moving to a different country, rather than like moving to another part of New Zealand.

As Oliver found in his study of Scottish identity, where participants drew boundaries with British or English identity (2001; 2002), many
interviewees drew boundaries between New Zealand and Australian identity. Migration to Australia allowed them to reflect on their own culture, resulting in an enhanced appreciation of the importance of their New Zealand culture, now that they were living in Australia. This was especially true for Maori participants.

We ... have our heritage and ... background ... That's what makes us ... such a strong culture in Australia ... Because we're/ outside ... our ... country ... it's magnified and we use that and we have to because otherwise we lose who we are ... A lot of New Zealanders ... been here for years ... still ... at heart, know who they are, know their background. (Maori man in late 20s resident in Australia for 10 years)

My Maori side wasn't strong when I ... came as a teenager but has become so through involvement with Maori here. I became fluent in the language in Australia. (Maori community worker in her 40s)

New Zealand culture differs from Australian culture
The boundary of New Zealanders' national identity was maintained by engaging in constant comparisons between the two cultures. Twenty-seven of the 31 interviewees cited differences marking the boundary between Australians and New Zealanders. Two contradictory themes emerged. The first was that New Zealand was a better place than Australia: having better race relations, being a better place to raise a family, being less influenced by the United States, having less corruption, and producing ‘better workers’. The second theme was that Australia was a better place than New Zealand as it was safer; it had less racial tension; Maori were freed from constricting racial stereotypes; Australian communication styles were more honest and direct; and Australians were more positive, more accepting, and less judgemental.

New Zealand is superior
Better race relations
While the Maori influence on New Zealand was frequently mentioned as a distinguishing boundary between New Zealand and Australian identity, there was considerable ambivalence around this theme. While some interviewees perceived Maori culture to be what made New Zealand superior,

Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia
Zealand unique, making unfavourable comparisons with Australia’s attitude towards its indigenous peoples, others spoke about dislike of racial tension.

**Maori culture Makes New Zealand unique**

Some interviewees missed Maori culture, seeing it as a defining part of the identity of all New Zealanders.

> The Maori culture has been more successfully interwoven into the New Zealand culture ... for instance ... Government departments answer the phone with kiaora [hello] ... Even though I’m not Maori that feels part of what it is to be a New Zealander ... Growing up in New Zealand there is a ... rich sense of diversity ... They all mesh together Maori, Pacific Islanders, whereas here ... there’s a huge division ... The Aboriginal culture’s very separate to the Australian culture. (20 year old, female, university student)

**Support for New Zealand’s policies towards Maori**

As well as viewing Maori culture as an integral part of the culture of all New Zealanders, some interviewees made unfavourable comparisons with Australia’s attitude towards its indigenous peoples.

> In our travels [around Australia] the ... people we met were in the Hanson camp with regards to the treatment of Aborigines ... See them as second class citizens. In New Zealand Maori are likely to be the school teacher, the lawyer and your dentist ... As a New Zealander you look at Aborigines and feel very sorry for them. (Man in early 60s resident in Australia for seven years)

**Better place to raise a family**

Several young women interviewees volunteered the view that New Zealand was a better place to bring up children, linking this to drug use in Australia.

**Less American influence**

Interviewees viewed New Zealand as more politically autonomous than Australia and expressed pride over New Zealand’s principled stance against American influence.
The Australians are very Americanised, the Kiwis are very Canadianised ... They're softer and more relaxed. Where the Americans and the Australians are full on in your face. I ... like being a Kiwi ... A small country but a lot of principles ... Australians are so easily manipulated. ... we're just puppets here. Kiwi's very individual. (Man in early 50s resident in Australia for eight years)

Australia is superior
Australia is safer and has less racial tension
On the other hand, other migrants had a less rosy view of New Zealand people and policies, citing racial tension as a contributing factor in the decision to move to Australia. This was especially true for Pakeha migrants. Nearly one-third (30%) of survey respondents, of whom 87% percent identified as Pakeha, indicated that social or political problems in New Zealand were a contributing factor in their decision to move to Australia.

Some interviewees claimed the New Zealand government's policies towards Maori put non-Maori New Zealanders at a disadvantage, whereas Maori participants spoke of being tired of 'Maori bashing', and of factionalism within, and between iwi (tribes). Ten of the 31 interviewees cited racial tension as a motivating factor in their move to Australia, or something they were pleased in hindsight to have escaped.

The main reason we came was the racism in New Zealand. It was awful ... I was sick of going places and being intimidated ... [Here] I can go out at night with my family and feel safe ... In New Zealand ... I was intimidated ... every day. (35 year old man talking about being a young male in a town where 1/3 of the population was Maori)

In New Zealand they're so much into the indigenous thing ... wore me down after a while ... All you heard about all the time, what they're going to do for Maori ... You turn the news on and it's ... some Maori issue ... Here ... Australia encompasses dealing with more cultures. (Woman, in early 50s, resident in Australia for three years)

Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia
Australia provides freedom from racial stereotypes
Maori interviewees had a different perspective on the racial tension in New Zealand.

It [living in Australia] puts us in an environment where there are much greater opportunities for Maoris ... It gets us away from all that Maori bashing. (Maori man aged 60, resident in Australia for 16 years)

Australians' communication style is preferable
Interviewees mentioned differences between the communication styles of Australians and New Zealanders, with most saying they preferred the more direct and honest communication style of Australians. Participants regarded Australians, in general, as more positive, more accepting, and less judgemental than New Zealanders

Boundary spanning
Migration narratives suggested that trans-Tasman rivalry, demonstrated by good-natured banter, was a defining part of the relationship between Australians and New Zealanders. This banter often revolved around sporting successes or failures. There was also reference to the ANZAC tradition 'As neighbours ... we will always support each other'.

Underlying the banter was recognition that Australians and New Zealanders are very similar, have a shared past, and need to stick together, particularly now that Australia is populated by people from diverse backgrounds. The influx of immigrants from Asian and Islamic backgrounds and the threat of terrorism were perceived to be unifying factors, emphasising a boundary between Western and other identities.

Despite the banter there is ... an acceptance by Australians that we are comrades ... Especially now terrorist issues are ... in the news ... Many Australians are ... wary of the Arabic ... the Mediterranean ... and the Asian ... can trust Kiwis ... Because of world events ... change in attitude ... When I first got here ... jest about dole bludging. Now it's ... 'you're our best mates' ... Definitely, best mates. (Woman in late 40s resident in Australia for 16 years)
To summarise, New Zealanders living in Australia communicated a sense of distinctiveness from Australians and vigorously engaged in boundary maintenance activity. However, ambivalence was evident in expressions of this. Migrants believed that New Zealand was superior to Australia in some aspects, and that, in others, Australia was superior to New Zealand. Resolving these ambivalences appears to be an ongoing process for New Zealand migrants to Australia.

Adaptation and change
The third focus of inquiry was on the way the cultural identities of New Zealanders had changed as a result of living in Australia.

Convergence with Australian identity
Participants considered that they had changed as a result of interaction with Australians: 60% of survey respondents saw themselves as more positive, 58% as more relaxed, and 42% as more tolerant, since coming to Australia.

Interviewees found what they saw as Australians’ more positive approach to life appealing.

Australians are loud and boisterous ... happy and outgoing ... don't take much nonsense ... Call a spade a spade. I quite like that. New Zealanders are ... more English, more reserved. (Woman in mid 30s, resident in Australia for nine years)

New Zealanders are prim and proper with a stiff upper lip. Here ... you shoot from the hip, say what you think ... But I would rather have it like that. You know what they think, and they don't bear any grudges. (Man in early 60s, resident in Australia for seven years)

Perceiving Australia as a more relaxed and accepting society, interviewees indicated that these characteristics had influenced them.

Australians are more laid back, not so conservative ... Not so prim and proper ... They're more free spirits. They want to have fun ... want to enjoy the moment 'and that's what I want to do. New Zealanders ... take themselves too seriously ... can't

Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia
get over themselves sometimes. (Female in early 50s, resident in Australia for three years)

**Divergence from previous New Zealand identity**
As well as converging towards the Australian identity, interviewees reported divergence from their previous New Zealand identity, from ties and obligations of family relationships, and from what was perceived as a conservative society that encouraged racial stereotyping.

I notice ... when I go back to New Zealand, nothing’s changed. They’re [siblings] still in the same life ... Still do the same things ... still complaining about the same things ... It’s like stepping back in time ... It’s me that’s changing ... to suit the lifestyle ... New Zealand’s very conservative ... Australians are not afraid to ... get out there ... Australians are very tolerant and accepting ... New Zealand will ... belittle you ... make a spectacle of you ... They’re not as tolerant ... Not as accepting to people being different ... Back in New Zealand I was quite judgmental ... Over here they’re not judgmental. (Woman in 30s resident in Australia for seven years)

We felt a little oppressed and in ... a rut in New Zealand ... because we’re Maoris ... at home you think you can’t do those things ... Here ... we felt ... like everybody else ... like we could do anything we wanted to do. (Maori woman resident in Australia for 14 years)

In each of these cases, moving to Australia enabled the participants to experience greater personal freedom from pressure to conform to the expectations of others.

**Expanded identity**
Participants felt their horizons had expanded as a result of living in Australia: 51% of survey respondents saw themselves as more international in outlook, since moving to Australia.

Where I come from there are no other cultures. There’s only us and us. There’s no Asian culture ... no Indian culture ... Melbourne ... was very eye opening. (Man, moved to Australia at the age of 19 from small North Island town)
Enhanced loyalty towards New Zealand and appreciation of New Zealand culture

Interview participants expressed an enhanced loyalty towards New Zealand, often expressed symbolically as support for the All Blacks.

I never used to like rugby ... But when the World Cup was on ... I got quite patriotic because I was away from ... home. (20 year old female student, resident in Australia for one year)

Situated identity

Identity is dynamic and constantly being reconstructed (Brewer, 1999; Oliver, 2001). In addition, the self, or face, the individual portrays is a situated identity (depending on the situation and the other participants in the interaction) (Ting-Toomey, 1988). Interviewees retained their New Zealand identity, but there were some situations when they identified as Australians. For example, a New Zealander living in Australia would identify as a New Zealander during trans-Tasman sporting clashes (true for 80% of survey respondents), but identify as Australian and take pride in the success of Australian sportsmen and women internationally, as is evident in this example.

Interviewer: What do you see as your identity now?

Definitely a Kiwi, but, if the Aussies are playing England, I’m an Aussie. (Man, resident in Australia 10 years)

In summary, research participants generally considered the move to Australia had led to positive changes in their lives while allowing them to retain their allegiance to New Zealand.

Conclusion

The migration stories of many New Zealanders living in Australia interviewed and surveyed for this study show evidence of transnational identity, where the identities merge in connecting new experiences with familiar ones. Paradoxically, an important part of this transnationalism is maintenance of the boundary between New Zealand and Australian identities. Symbolic boundary marking and boundary maintenance behaviour, such as banter between New Zealanders and Australians, highlights distinctions between the two countries. In reflecting on the impact of migration on their identity, New Zealanders interviewed for this study also attributed a positive, or negative value to these differences.
Depending on the nature of the judgment, the characteristic 'is either strengthened and sustained, or ... deserted' (Cohen, 1982, p. 5). Identity is dynamic and constantly being reconstructed (Brewer, 1999; Oliver, 2001). New Zealanders participating in this study adapted and changed at the same time as retaining and sustaining their identity as New Zealanders. Similarly, the boundary of similarity and difference is not fixed but continually negotiated, reinforced, or reappraised (Oliver, 2001), enriching and deepening cultural understanding in the process. New Zealanders living in Australia are ideally placed to provide insights into the cultural identity of New Zealanders, and the cultural relationship between New Zealand and Australia, as it is a 'boundary condition of peripheral societies that their gaze is simultaneously outward and introspective' (Cohen, 2000, p. 12).

Note
1. The term 'Pakeha' is used in this article as a shorthand way of distinguishing New Zealanders of European extraction from self-identified Maori, although it is recognised that it has negative connotations for some New Zealanders (Tilbury, 2001). Other alternatives, for example ‘Kiwi’, used by some respondents, were more ambiguous.

References

Australian Journal of Communication • Vol 33 (1) 2006


Defining transnationalism boundaries: New Zealand migrants in Australia


